



Global Alumni Association Newsletter, Bengal Engineering & Science University, Shibpur

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Alumni web team: A team of alumni working to maintain the alumni web site and all web based operations.

For comments or suggestions: Contact alumni web team at gbecaa@yahoo.com. Please send us your local chapter / batch news and events to be included in the next newsletter, deadline November 30, 2005.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

FORMATION OF GLOBAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AND ITS ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BE COLLEGE

The editorial is based on an article written by Mr. Jyoti R Sengupta, 54CE, Toronto, Canada in association with Dr. Arun Deb, 57CE, PA, USA in BECAA, NJ Annual Magazine. Additional comments received from several alumni also influenced the following article.

Since early 2004, BEC administration, faculty and alumni have initiated the planning to celebrate the 150th anniversary of BE College. During this planning, a number of faculty and alumni had suggested that converting BEC to an Institute of National Importance (INI) would be the proper way to honor its contributions in advancing the technical education in India. In order to coordinate these activities, a number of alumni interacting among themselves thought a centralized body (Global Alumni Association) would be most suitable to represent all alumni in this 150th anniversary celebration as well as to lobby the governments to ensure this conversion.

However, the thoughts of forming a GAA are not new. As BEC is not what it used to be, a number of alumni from different locations have been trying for the last fifteen/twenty years to improve the conditions of BEC in different ways. One group helped to install LAN system at BEC, a second group solicited donations from alumni and private company to set up VLSI Laboratory, few other groups offered scholarships to the needy students, another group started alumni lecture series while other group organized the alumni website and newsletter. Although each one of them has been successful, their effects have been limited and it did not reach all alumni. As each group worked on their own, total efforts and time spent by these groups were substantially more than if they were organized by a central body. The alumni involved in these groups felt that in order to achieve economy of scale and to sustain all these activities for a long time, it is essential to have a global alumni association.

Efforts by small groups could not be scaled up and in most of the cases; these initiatives were taken by individual alumnus with the help of his/her few friends. It is difficult for any individual to keep the activities going for a long time without any organizational help. In order to continue these activities, expand them to other areas and at the same time preparing for the 150th celebration and trying to convince the governments



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the benefits of conversion to IIT, the formation of a global association became essential. Without any organized body, all these activities would have come to a halt after the anniversary is over. Primary objective of the Global Alumni Association will be to help BEC to regain its status as a premier engineering institution. Alumni association is now part and parcel of almost all major educational institutions and it is no accident that all successful institutions around the world have very active alumni body.

In order to develop a plan to form such an association, a number of meetings were held in Calcutta when a no. of senior alumni from U. S., Canada and other countries were in town. After several rounds of discussions in Calcutta during December 2004/January 2005, those alumni constituted a Core Committee to draft the Memorandum of Association and the Regulations for a Global Alumni Association. It was decided that the Registered Office of GAA would be in BESUS Campus and the Association would be registered under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961, as it will be easier to make for the alumni to work with BESUS community in assisting the alma mater in every possible way. The Association has since been registered.

It is needless to say that GAA would represent all alumni of BEC/BECDU/BESUS. As the make-up of the organization has not been formalized, it is certain that GAA will have representatives from all alumni associations (Chapters) established around the world that will present the collective view of that chapter in any matter under discussion. With this approach, it will be possible to have representation from all alumni possible around the world. There may be some alumni who are not registered with any chapters or there are not enough alumni to form a chapter. They will be encouraged to join GAA through a chapter close to their residence.

Although the structure of the GAA has not been finalized, some alumni have suggested that GAA should have two separate functional bodies.

- A Steering Committee consisting of Chapter Representatives: The function of the Steering Committee would be to make policy decisions, give directives to the Executive Committee and to raise funds for the various Alumni projects such as a regular recurring expenditure for operating the GAA office at the campus, infrastructure addition and revamp and other special projects. Chapter representatives would vote through Internet to elect president, vice-president etc. and would function through Internet.

- An Executive Committee consisting of alumni primarily based in Calcutta and other parts in India and overseas alumni who visit India on a regular basis: One of the Executive Committee members will be the Principal Spokesperson of GAA and represent it at all meetings with BESUS and other Official bodies. This person aided by other members of the Executive Committee will supervise the operation of the GAA campus office and report to the Executive Committee for direction on any matter that is not clearly covered by the mandate set by the Steering Committee. The Executive Committee will give direction on any urgent matter requiring immediate action. The Executive Committee will seek concurrence from the Steering Committee on any matter that might result in a long-term commitment and liability of GAA.

What should be our action plan? First of all, WE MUST CONVINCING ALL ALUMNI TO JOIN GAA SO THAT, WORKING TOGETHER, WE CAN BRING BACK THE OLD GLORY OF OUR BELOVED BEC. We need to make a list of all existing Alumni Associations in India and abroad and persuade them and their members to join GAA. We will then discuss and get a consensus on the structure of GAA. An ad hoc executive committee has been formed from alumni in India. Now we need to elect the formal Committee and elect the Office Bearers. Second task will be to set up an office for GAA. Some alumni have raised the question why do we need a separate office for GAA? So far many successful alumni projects, initiatives and activities are carried out without any membership fees from alumni. However, to institutionalize the whole process and coordinate the activity to go to the next level, we need to involve larger global alumni community. This can only be achieved if we can set up a proper process with a physical office and have proper resources to run those operations. As the GAA office will have to interact extensively with BESUS administration, it has been decided that it will be located at the college campus.

The GAA Office in BESUS campus will maintain an up to date list of all alumni with addresses, telephone nos. and e-mail addresses. Since full time staff will support this office, it will provide all support to alumni in regard to their needs to communicate with BESUS, such as getting transcripts, mark sheets or duplicate copies of certificates. It needs money to set-up and run the alumni office. Also it is important to set up a process to sustain the recent momentum on IIT/INI initiative and to celebrate 150th anniversary of our Alma mater. Paying memberships will bring seriousness and commitments to the alumni activities. Although no formal membership fee has



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been finalized, tentatively, an annual membership of \$US 30 or life membership of \$US 300 for all alumni living outside India has been decided.

We urge all alumni to be active and participate in GAA to make it a success and help BEC to get its proper recognition for its contributions to the development of India. Several alumni sent their comments on GAA. It has been compiled and will be sent out to all alumni registered to www.becollege.org and this distribution list via email in a week.

BESUS IN THE NEWS

BESUS Upgradation to IIT



The web team and the alumni have been enthusiastically following the recent surge of news reports on the upgradation of Bengal Engineering and Science University to IIT. The following is a synopsis of the recent news reports published by major media outlets.

On August 18, 2005, Yogesh K Upadhyaya wrote a guest column on the Rediff.com website titled "March of the IITs" (source: <http://us.rediff.com/money/2005/aug/18guest.htm>). The article reported the developments on the process by identifying factors like funding requirements and selection criteria for students. It also stated that each of the selected institution had to present a vision document on the expansion plans. The column concluded with an analysis of the likelihood of each of the institutes being selected for the said upgradation.

Soon after, The Telegraph followed up with a news report on Friday, September 2, 2005, written by Mita Mukherjee. In that report titled "Twin-IIT offer leaves Bengal cold", the reporter alleged the West Bengal State Government in general and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in particular of not being completely supportive of the upgradation of Jadavpur University (JU) and Bengal Engineering and Science University, Shibpur (BESUS), to IITs. The author stated that "Bengal may be changing in many ways but the fresh winds have left one area well alone — education, where the CPM is loath to cut control". The article referred to "B.C. Roy's historic blunder" for turning down the proposal to establish the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Calcutta, which went to Delhi instead, and quoted another academic saying that "History will repeat itself if the present government fails to see things in the proper perspective". A special correspondent wrote a follow-up on that article the very next day, and indicated that "Although other state governments have already shown interest in the proposal, the West Bengal State Government has neither accepted nor rejected it." In support, the higher education minister Satyasadhan Chakraborty was quoted saying "It is not that we are against the Centre's proposal, but we have to thoroughly examine the conditions laid down by the Centre before accepting it."

On September 6, the criticism of the WB State Government (WBSG) reached another high when an editorial piece in the leading Bengali daily Anandabazar Patrika, put them to task. The editorial unabashedly blamed WBSG for jeopardizing the State's rare opportunity for being the first in India to have three IITs. It also stated that perceivably, there was a two-fold benefit for the State in allowing the upgradation: acquiring national importance, and partially relieving State's financial commitments towards the two institutions. The reason for the state's indifference was cited as their reluctance to give up the power and control over the two universities.

Subsequently, Times of India, arguably putting an end to the speculation over the State Government's role, followed with a report on September 10, 2005. The report stated that "West Bengal's higher education department (on Wednesday) gave its nod to giving both Bengal Engineering and Science University (BESU) and Jadavpur University the level of "universities with potential to be upgraded to the status of IITs". The report quoted BESUS' Vice Chancellor saying that "The minister has told us categorically that the state government has agreed in principle to the proposal of the MHRD to upgrade the two universities". However, WB Higher Ed. Minister, in a TV interview said JU and BESUS are two fine universities and WBSG does not want to



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relinquish their control in the name of improvement.

Later, PTI, rather late on catching up with the developments, published a brief report on September 17, on the upgradation of the seven institutes. The same day, Indian Express, while reporting on a related issue ("IITs to teach life sciences, law soon"), referred to the same.

A chronology of the developments and media publications on this matter is available in the news archives at our website www.becollege.org.

GAA – BESUS CONNECTION

Sandip Sinha Memorial Scholarship announced



Friends of Sandip Sinha, 1991 ME decided to honor their batch mate, hostel mate and classmate by awarding Sandip Sinha Memorial Scholarship and Admission Grant to the bright but needy students and prospective students at BESUS via unified alumni scholarship program. It is unfortunate and sad that Sandip is no more in this world. Last year on Oct 26, 2004, he had an accident while he was at the TTC (under ground train) in Toronto and died on the spot.

*More information available at <http://www.becollege.org>;
Please visit the news archives.*

Successful Alumni Projects Series

BESUS alumni successfully implemented many projects at BESUS. All those projects were sponsored by alumni around the world. As not everyone is aware of so many successful projects implemented at BESUS, alumni web team will publish a series on successful alumni projects at BESUS. To begin with, a recently published article on VLSI Laboratory by BECAA, NJ has been reprinted at:
<http://www.becollege.org/news/VLSILabForBECAA.pdf>

If you have questions about BECAA NJ Alumni Magazine, please contact Dr. Arun Deb, 57CE. The magazine was published at BECAA's annual reunion on September, 2005.

We intend to publish articles about the LAN project, Mini-auditorium project, Alumni Scholarship Program, Purabi Das School of Information Technology (PDSIT), Mobile Computing Project in our website at www.becollege.org.

Alumni team is working to set up another new Lab - VoIP Lab at BESUS. Once the project document is available, it will be distributed to all alumni groups for sponsorship. Please stay tuned for further information about the VoIP Lab.



Alumni Scholarships for 2005-06

For the first time in the history of alumni activities, alumni scholarships provided by multiple chapters have been coordinated. This year alumni groups/chapters from Mumbai, Kuwait, Oman, UAE, USA and Canada joined Vivekananda Youth Circle (VYC), an organization of BESUS faculty, students and alumni, to co-ordinate all scholarships via a unified process. Based on the applications, VYC in association with VC, Finance Officer, Controller of Examiner, and Several Deans interviewed all the applicants and selected 33 students to award scholarships for year 2005-06. Mumbai will award 4 scholarships, Kuwait will award 2, Oman will award 5, UAE will award 8, USA and Canada team will award 14 scholarships. Each scholarship will pay Rs 10,000. In addition, 3 book grants have been announced. BESUS and VYC will arrange an award ceremony in early November (after Puja Vacation) and distribute the individual checks/drafts. To learn more about the unified alumni initiative, please contact gbecaa@yahoo.com.



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GAA ACTIVITIES

An appeal from GAA Ad-hoc Executive Committee

Our Alma Mater, BE College, of earlier years, will be 150 years old on November 2006. BEC administration, faculty and alumni have initiated the planning process for this celebration. During this planning, a number of faculty and alumni had suggested that upgrading BEC to an Institute of National Importance (INI) would be the proper way to honor its contributions in advancing the technical education in India. While some of the alumni started letter-writing campaign, others used their personal connections to lobby for this issue to the Central and WB Governments. As you know, this campaign has produced some positive results and brought national attention to the college. It has been selected as the 3rd best among seven institutions most ready for upgradation to an IIT and a recent survey has placed BEC as the 10th best engineering school in India.

While these things were going on, a number of alumni interacting among themselves thought a centralized body (Global Alumni Association) would be most suitable to represent all alumni in this 150th anniversary celebration as well as offering support to the governments to convert BEC to an INI. To translate these thoughts into a reality, a number of meetings were held starting 2003, in Kolkata when a number of senior alumni from U. S., Canada and other countries were in town. After several rounds of discussions in Kolkata during December 2004/January 2005, they constituted a Core Committee with senior alumni like Mr. S.S. Chakraborty ('57CE), Mr. Amitava Ghoshal ('57CE), Dr. Arun Deb ('57CE) and others to draft the Memorandum of Association and the Regulations for a Global Alumni Association. It was decided that the Registered Office of GAA would be in BESUS Campus and the Association would be registered under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961 to make it easy for the alumni to assist their alma mater in every way possible.

Since the Registrar of Societies, Firms and Non-Trading Associations, West Bengal sometimes requires the signatories to the Memorandum to be physically present in his office and affirm their signatures in his presence, all signatories chosen were from the alumni resident in Kolkata. This was merely for the purpose of obtaining registration.

The Association has since been registered.

We now appeal to all alumni (Bachelor's and/or Master's and/or Ph.D.) of Bengal Engineering College/Bengal

Engineering College (Deemed University) to join the association, so that we may unitedly help the University to attain an international status. The formal letter for membership and the application form may be down-loaded from <http://www.becollege.org> website. While the formal letter for membership and the application form may please be sent to Dr. S.K. Karmakar ('83ME), Professor, Mechanical Engineering Department, Bengal Engineering & Science University, Shibpur, Howrah – 711 103, India, by mail or by e-mail to skk@mech.becs.ac.in, payment of Life/ Annual Membership Fee may kindly be made as follows:

For alumni resident in India: Payable to GAABESU, S. B. Account No. E/377147, United Bank of India, B.E. College Extension Counter, Howrah – 711103, India.

For alumni resident in U.S., send your tax-exempt membership fee to: BECAA, c/o Mr. Asok Chakraborty, 3 Wells Court, Bloomfield, NJ 07003, USA

For alumni resident in other countries, they either can directly send membership fees to GAABESUS or identify a local representative to collect fees and send them together to GAABESUS.

While the ad-hoc committee would be looking after GAA for the interim period, we intend to hold elections for members of the Executive Committee, in December 2005, provided we have a sufficient number of members. An alumnus can continue to be a member of the alumni association in his/her country/area or his/her batch/class and at the same time be a member of GAA – there is no bar.

We also appeal to you to examine the aims and objectives of the GAA as formulated in the Memorandum of Association and forward your comments/observations/ suggestions, so that we may draw up a plan of action based on consensus/mutual interactions for achieving our common goal.

(Bye-Laws, Application Letter and Application forms for the GAA are available at www.becollege.org. If you want the same e-mailed to you, send a request to gbecaa@yahoo.com)

BESUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Seismic safe construction technique from BESUS

(Excerpt from the original article published in The Telegraph, Friday, August 19, 2005)



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Calcutta lies in segment III of the seismic zones, a “moderate-damage risk zone”. But it is close enough to segment IV, a “high-damage risk zone”, to wake planners up to the possibility of a Bhuj-like disaster.

The central government, under its National Urban Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction Programme, has been insisting on the civic body to enforce “seismic-free” rules in the construction of buildings.

In response, the civic authorities held a four-day session this week to train masons in seismic-safe construction.

Altogether, five civil engineers and 15 masons attended the session in the first phase, held under the guidance of Sekhar Datta, of Bengal Engineering and Science University. City architect (south) Somnath Pal said the masons got a daily honorarium of Rs 100.

Civic assistant engineer (building) Rihan Sanyal said the masons were taught about “reinforce detailing” for concrete piling and casting, as mentioned in the guidelines of Seismic Code in IS 1893, part III.

The special reinforcement binding technique will make buildings quake-safe within a “predictable” limit. The construction cost, experts say, will rise by within 20 per cent.

For the complete article visit the news archives at www.becollege.org

Marvelous machines - Robotics Research at BESUS

(Excerpt from the original article by PRASUN BHATTACHARYA published in The Telegraph, Monday, August 22, 2005)

Imagine a device like a human hand, capable of performing complicated surgery with more precision than the most adroit of surgeons. Or, a robot climbing up the stairs and dousing a fire on the 12th floor of a 20-storeyed building.

You may see such marvels right here in Calcutta, if the extensive research undertaken by Bengal Engineering and Science University, Shibpur, in mechatronics and robotics continue yielding results as it did in the past few months.

“Mechatronics is the field of technology that deals with electronically controlling a mechanical device and is a rather new subject. This can revolutionize the way we live or even

die,” explained Subhasis Bhaumik, lead researcher of the mechatronics and robotics unit of the university’s department of applied mechanics.

To popularize this field and make people aware of the capabilities of machines based on this technology, the university has launched an elaborate campaign.

“We are planning to invest around Rs 2 crore to set up a school of mechatronics and robotics on our proposed second campus. Initially, a post-graduate degree in the subject will be awarded to 20 students,” said Biswanath Datta, dean of research.

Besides, the university plans to launch a big campaign to involve industry in its research.

“Without the industry’s involvement, such research cannot be financially viable,” Datta said.

He added: “Indian engineering industries are still not aware of the limitless applications of mechatronics. We will hold a series of seminars and workshops on the subject jointly with industry to spread awareness of mechatronics.”

Lead researcher Bhaumik and four of his co-researchers have already developed machines based on mechatronics that can revolutionize the way we work.

Already, around Rs 91 lakh has been invested to set up two laboratories of mechatronics and the two devices Bhaumik and his team developed.

EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

International Conference: Civil Engineering in the New Millennium: Opportunities and Challenges

An international conference on “Civil Engineering in the New Millennium: Opportunities and Challenges (CENeM-2007)” is scheduled for 11-14 January 2007. The conference would be organized by the Department of Civil Engineering, Bengal Engineering and Science University (Formerly Bengal Engineering College, Estd. 1856).

Call for Abstracts: Abstracts within 300 words on the conference sub-themes must reach the organizers not later than December 31 2005. Abstracts should clearly indicate the purpose, results and conclusions of the work to be



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subsequently described in the full length paper. Acceptance will be based upon review of the abstract by an expert panel of reviewers. Abstracts should be sent by e-mail to: seminar@civil.becs.ac.in

Address all communication to:

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Further details can be found at:
<http://www.becollege.org/news/CENeM.pdf>

HELPLINE

An update on Ramjiban Chauhan – Mali at Oval Ground

Puspa Sourav Biswas 2003EE updates on fund raising for Oval Mali who lost his house. An appeal was published in the previous issue of the newsletter.

Please extend your helping hand towards Ramjiban Da -
Account Detail - E/360406 (UBI BEC Extension)
Name- Ramjiban Chauhan

You can send it directly via Online Transfer or you can send your cheques / Drafts to the address of the PICSA) at:

PICSA,
Bengal Engineering & Science University
PO-Botanical Garden, District- Howrah
Pin-711103
West Bengal, India

Till now around Rs 67,000.00 has been raised and target is to raise another Rs 50,000.00.

OBITUARY

Anil Barnwal (Mech-2004, Richardson)



Himadri Singha, 2004 ME <himadrisingha@yahoo.co.in> wrote:

“Another shocking news: **Anil Barnwal (Mech-2004, Rich)** expired on September 12, 2005. Anil was working in Blue Star, posted in Calcutta. On that day (12th Sept), he was on his way to work on his bike around 9 am in morning while a mini-bus pushed him from the back and he lost his control, consequently falling down. The place was Strand Road, Howrah, a one way road. Another mini bus from opposite side smashed him. We, Mech-04 batch, have decided to arrange a Memorial Scholarship in his name for one or two Mechanical students every year. Amount and criterion are yet to be finalized. May his soul rest in peace.”

Dhiren N. Datta (Civil-1941, MS – Colorado 1949)

Mr. Datta passed away at age 87 on August 10 in his home at his Calcutta home. He had a very distinguished career as water and power resources consultant in India, USA and UNDP. From 1942-1946, He was in charge of reclaiming large low-lying areas in Sylhet for agriculture. India Government deputed him to work with TVA and US Corps of Engineers from 1947-1949. From 1963-1972, Mr. Dutta was a member of the Central Board of Irrigation and Power in India. He represented India at the VIIIth International Congress of Large Dams at Edinburgh, (ICOLD) 1964. His paper on Investigations in Karstic areas at the Xth ICOLD at Montreal won him a gold medal in 1970.

May his soul rest in peace.