



## Bengal Engineering College to Bengal Engineering and Science University, Shibpur – Sailing through 150 years

The nucleus of the Bengal Engineering and Science University, Shibpur (BESUS) was formed in 1856 as one of the four engineering colleges in India. The objective then was to feed qualified manpower for Public Works and Survey Departments and also for different companies engaged in the development of railways in India. At the beginning, it was located at the Writers' Buildings, Calcutta and was affiliated to Calcutta University in 1857.

In 1865, the college was amalgamated with the Presidency College and designated as "Presidency College Civil Engineering Department". In 1880, it was transferred to the campus of 121 acres in Shibpur, under the name "Government Engineering College, Howrah". It was affiliated to the University of Calcutta in April, 1880. In 1887, it was further renamed "Civil Engineering College, Shibpur". A Government order in 1921 re-designated the institution as "Bengal Engineering College" and it came to be known popularly as B.E. College, Shibpur.

During Second World War, the workshops and the testing laboratories were used by the Defence Department for training a large number of technicians for munitions factories, armed forces and the technical wing of the Air Force. In the post-war period, the Government of Bengal keenly felt the need for further expansion and appointed a high power committee to suggest recommendations for development of technical education in the Province.

In 1954, post-graduate courses leading to Master of Engineering Degree in Civil, Electrical, Mechanical and Metallurgical engineering were started. During the same period, the doctoral programme was also introduced and to supplement research activities in the college, a Sisterhood Relationship Scheme with the University of Wisconsin, USA was introduced under the Technical Co-operation Mission of the USA in 1954.

In recognition of the services rendered to the nation for close to a century and a half, the Institution was elevated to the status of a Deemed University in 1992. The transformation helped considerably in building a system that would strengthen the research activities in a wide range of disciplines through grants from different funding agencies.

"Science" as a discipline was very much integral to the Institution's teaching curricula even during the late 19th Century. The tradition carries on now more explicitly with post-graduate degree courses having been started in major Science streams such as Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics and Geology, and also Management Sciences.

Upgrading the Deemed University to a full fledged University in October, 2004 offered an opportunity to BESUS to reiterate the pledge to earn recognition as a research-intensive university.

### Let us join hands – An appeal

Bengal Engineering and Science University, Shibpur (formerly Bengal Engineering College) set up in 1856, is completing its 150 years of glorious existence in the current year.

To commemorate this anniversary, in a most befitting manner, the University has planned a year-long Celebration Programme commencing from 24th November (the foundation day) 2006 involving all alumni, current students, faculty members, officers, staff of the University as well as its academic partners and well-wishers.

Such celebration assumes a special significance at this stage when decision regarding upgradation of the University to the level of IIT / INI is pending at government level and it has evoked warm responses from many of our illustrious alumni; academic partners, industries and well wishers. Our 100-year celebration in 1956 was graced by the then Hon'ble Prime Minister of our country, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and in keeping with our tradition, we have invited our Hon'ble Prime Minister, Dr. Man Mohan Singh to grace the 150th celebration.

I, on behalf of the university and the Organising Committee of 150th celebration invite you to join our celebrations and extend your sincere cooperation, financial support and guidance to make the celebration a grand success.

Yours sincerely,

S. K. Sen  
Chairman  
BESUS

Organising Committee  
150 Years Celebration, BESUS

N. R. Banerjea  
Vice-Chancellor,