

Global Alumni Suggestions to the VC, BESUS

Prepared by the alumni web team

<http://www.becollege.org>

June 6, 2005



Foreword

On behalf of BESUS global alumni web team we congratulate, Dr. N R Banerjea, VC, BESUS for his commitment, leadership and vision to upgrade our Alma Mater to one of the top-10 engineering institutes in India and in the process of converting BESUS to an IIT/INI. The global alumni community has been showing a tremendous interest and passion and wants to be part of this history-making process along with BESUS senior management, faculty and everyone involved in the daily operation of our Alma Mater.

We are happy to see the great progress being made by our senior alumni to form a global alumni association which will serve and engage all its alumni, faculty and students. The association will assist in fostering a lifelong intellectual and emotional connection between the college and its alumni and will also lend a hand to enhance the capability of BESU, Shibpur. Many of our distinguished alumni exchanged ideas on how to create a road map to upgrade BESUS to an IIT/INI. However, as the alumni association has not yet been formalized and there is not a proper channel available to communicate effectively with global alumni, the web team requested all alumni to send their suggestions on what BESUS should include in its proposed road map to upgrade BESUS to an IIT/INI. We received around 50 suggestions from alumni representing 7 decades and all major alumni hubs around the world. We compiled and edited them. From those, we created an executive summary. We included individual suggestions at the end of this document.

We hope the VC and his team will use these suggestions in developing the road map for BESUS. We also hope this effort is a great start to the long journey which BESUS will take to realize its long cherished dream to bring back the old glory of our beloved Alma Mater.

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Executive Summary

Vision for the Future

- BESUS must have its vision clear about what it wants to be in 10 years from now. The educational institutions are getting into a range of activities right from UG teaching to cutting edge research, patenting and production. In order to set priorities, BESUS must go through a strategic planning process. The management should develop a document (between 2 to 10 pages) that will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school, the activities it wants to pursue and the steps to be taken to excel in the identified areas after rectifying the weaknesses. IIT Bombay went through this exercise about five years back, rather late, but it has helped IITB a great deal to set their priorities.
- Research, Research and Research should be BEC's mantra. As such, it must create an environment that fosters faculty to excel in research. An academic institution irrespective of its location makes advancement in surroundings where there is an environment that fosters innovation, creativity and excellence. Academic excellence is achieved through quality research and innovation.
- Diversification of the student body: BESUS MUST shed its 'provincial' image and stereotype and don a prominent national color. It can only be achieved by making the entrance examination truly national in character or by being a part of AIEEE. As a full fledged university, it must have some latitude to implement this quickly (possibly on and from 2006). Also, efforts should be made to admit students from abroad (start with SAARC) to improve the vision and culture of its students.

Infrastructure development/improvement

- The campus needs to be expanded. Good quality separate UG and PG hostel accommodation for students, family accommodation for PG students and better apartments for faculty members are required. Additional hostels for increased student body are needed. Upgrading of the existing hostels and campus as a whole, including but not limited to water supply, waste treatment facilities and landscaping is required. Additionally, there should be proper accommodation for participants in the short-term training programs.
- The University should not function like a commercial organization on an 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM schedule. Departments, laboratories, libraries and all resources need to be accessible to the students till late hours (e.g. departments 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM, computer center and library till midnight and research laboratories on a 24/7 basis). Infrastructure should be supportive, safe (security guard to accompany students from college/laboratory to the hostels) and encouraging to the proposed changes.
- More space is required for existing as well as newer research laboratories and research facilities. A separate building is required for a bigger library and a larger collection of books and journals. Students should be encouraged to use the library (must have a well-lit and comfortable reading room.) and culture of studying in the library needs to be created. The reserve section of the library should keep copies of the textbooks for each of the courses that the university offers. Web edition of journals should be subscribed to. Collaboration with Jadavpur University to enable access to each other's libraries should be considered.
- Wire the entire campus so that everybody has easy access to the Internet. The administration, faculty and student body will find it easier to interact among them through the Internet. Encourage students to buy their own computers and share them with friends whenever possible. Also set-up computer clusters at different locations of the campus so that needy students can use them. All courses should require course work to be done in computers and the use of the Internet's immense search capability.

- Building a good canteen and an auditorium; providing good in-house facility for documentation; replenishing the gymnasium and bookstore are some of the other suggested improvements. Plan for the future to build a multipurpose arena (indoor stadium/convocation center/assembly hall) for 5/6000 people.

Curriculum Modifications

- Curriculum requires nothing less than a paradigm shift - A complete overhaul of the curriculum is essential. Undergraduate education should not be super specialized but must provide students with a wide variety of knowledge, including literature. Even though students come in with their field of specialization already designated, first three/four semesters must be spent on a more general education. Students must be required to complete a certain number of units in Sciences, Mathematics, and Language/Literature. Students need to be encouraged to take course work beyond their own study areas. They must realize that all of the areas, including Language/Literature, are equally important and are counted towards their GPA.
- Curriculum should be flexible enough to allow students to take optional courses outside the department and/or study-abroad options with associate university/universities. New programs (dual degrees like BE+MBA; integrated master's like BE+ME; interdisciplinary studies like major in CE with a minor in Economics; etc.) should be introduced. Curriculums from M.I.T./Columbia/Carnegie Mellon/ Berkeley can be followed to upgrade the curriculum.
- New programs should be introduced after careful evaluation. A board comprised of faculty, administrators and professionals currently affiliated with BESUS as well as interested alumni should systematically research and evaluate the new programs. The evaluation methodology should include current as well as future potential; suitability and possible synergy with current programs; and finally a cost-benefit analysis in terms of effectiveness from an academic standpoint. In a nutshell, targeting new programs should be done in a scientific way and should not be merely reflective of trends.
- English is now taught in the 1st semester in a way that is boring to all. It does not improve the English language skills to students from Bengali medium schools. It may be more effective if it is taught in more than one semester and the course is designed to meet the demands of international standardized tests. Students' lack of communication and presentation skills must be addressed.
- Seminar courses should be introduced where the students would present short seminars during the end of a semester on a selected topic. This should be done from 3rd year onwards. It will not only allow the student to have a better understanding of the subject but will also improve their presentation skills. Proper credits should be given to the participating students.
- Students need to be forced to work much harder and in a manner that they enjoy school. Homework assignments should be emphasized; Instead of assigning the same homework for the entire class, the class should be divided into groups and each group should have separate homework assignments. Master's/PhD students should help the professors in this task. Questions for the tests should not be exactly the same as the homework as is the norm now. One or two questions should be harder than the rest so that the students' performances can be differentiated.
- Modify the examination system so that students do not have to memorize formulae (e.g. open book exams). Introduce courses where students can prepare research papers in the final year under faculty guidance and give seminars on that. "Take home examination" may even be tried with a wrinkle like one-to-one interview with the respective professor to ensure that the students prepared the answers themselves.
- A major change in the evaluation patterns for the students is required. Instead of putting too high of a proportion to midterms and end terms, the evaluation pattern can be changed to something that many IIMs follow: the concerned professor should have flexibility to decide the exact evaluation pattern but he must allocate the marks over 4 or more criteria [which can include mid-term, end-term, individual/group project reports & project presentations, etc.].

Faculty

- Complete overhaul of hiring procedure: Diversify faculty. Faculty must be recruited through nationwide searches. All new faculties must have Ph.D. No alumnus from BEC will be hired unless s/he has graduate degrees from other IITs/INIs/foreign universities. Bright students passing out from BESUS should be tracked, and once they complete their PhDs from outside schools, they should be offered a position in the faculty. Efforts should be made to recruit qualified professionals from the industry to join the school as Adjunct Faculties (part-time).
- Promotions for the faculties should be based on their productivity in research (publications in refereed journals, guiding graduate research, etc.) and capability to bring in research funding and not by virtue of their seniority. Institution of awards/rewards on publication of papers in refereed journals and/or for receiving grants from Government/Industry should be considered. Faculty should get students involved in the research/projects.
- Faculties must declare their office hours for the students at the beginning of the semester. The students would get academic help from the teachers at that time. Periodic evaluations of faculty should be conducted, including but not limited to student feedback at the end of the semester (customary in most institutions in the west) and most importantly, evaluations should be acted upon instead of just following them as a practice. Faculties should present seminars on their research works at least once a year.
- Faculty responsibilities should be clearly outlined, and faculty members should be trained accordingly to pursue them. Faculty members should be given academic targets outside of class room teaching including but not limited to publishing of academic papers (at least one publication in a refereed journal per year) and professional projects (at least one every two years) with mandatory student involvement in the same. There should be a policy on continuing education for faculty members to keep them updated with the latest developments in their fields. They must update their lecture notes regularly. The students should be exposed to various types of sessional/studio projects every year.
- English must be the medium of instruction, not simply on paper but in actuality. It must be kept in mind that in today's world no engineer can succeed in his/her future profession without a thorough command of English. Rather than rebuking or making fun of the inability to communicate in English, the faculty should ensure that those who are deficient in that area get intensive training in the first year to overcome it. The faculty also must be trained and encouraged to deliver lectures in English only. Teachers should be encouraged to mix with the students and provide suggestions on how to enhance their careers. All US universities have the concept of faculty advisor, which should be adopted by BESUS.
- In fulfilling the responsibilities to the students, the faculty members should, to the best of their ability: (a) encourage and protect the students' freedom of inquiry and expression in their pursuit of knowledge, (b) guard the classroom against external pressures, (c) teach their subject to the students in accordance with the best standards of scholarship in the discipline, (d) respect the confidential nature of the relationship between a professor and his/her students, (e) refrain from exploiting their relationship with their students for personal advantage, (f) entertain and deal reasonably with questions relevant to their subject that are raised in the classroom, (g) acknowledge properly any significant assistance which is received from their students and (h) meet their obligations to, and comment on the work of each student only in appropriate place and manner, with justice and consideration for each student

Collaboration

- Although collaborations with other leading universities abroad involving program development, exchange programs for students and faculties, faculty training, development of curriculum, collaborative research and professional ventures, curriculum and infrastructure development, and resource sharing are some of the things to be considered, it is difficult at this stage. However, it

should be explored through the alumni network (especially who are faculty or senior administrators in foreign universities.). Non-faculty NRI alumni have already initiated several collaborations in some of those areas (started: VLSI Laboratory for training and research, Alumni Seminar Series to communicate research activities and higher education opportunities overseas and proposed External Guide project to help graduate students in research). Administration must take advantage of these initiatives and interface with the alumni for expanding them.

- BESUS should immediately explore the possibility of collaborations with other WB institutions such as IIT-Kharagpur, Jadavpur University, Calcutta University, IIM-Calcutta, etc. Once, it is established, it can then be extended to other IITs/INIs, National laboratories and Industry. In addition, BESUS should develop a system where its alumni who are in academia or R&D in India can provide technical help to BESUS faculty (through collaborative research or spending sabbatical at BEC or co-guide for graduate students).
- BESUS must interact with ministries of technical departments of the West Bengal Government, neighboring state governments as well as the Central Government. MoRTH spends a lot of money in the Transportation Sector through IITs and other institutions. BESUS should avail such opportunities.
- Collaborations with the industries must be enhanced. Management and faculty should proactively approach the industry rather than waiting for them to come to the campus. At IISc faculty works simultaneously with the industry. This brings in a lot of funds and each professor must contribute 40% of the money to the department. This money is used for the students. The main advantage of this is that there is a lot of money available in the department for students' use in addition to the government grant. This helps every department to be economically self-sufficient. Periodically industrial leaders need to be invited to interact with the students by arranging for guest lectures etc., and to apprise the faculties as well as the students of the latest trends in the industry. Suggested action is also likely to enhance employment opportunities of the fresh graduates.

Placement/Human Resource Development Cell

- This should be an independent department managed by a professional placement officer. It will not only help graduates to find employment but will also guide them in choosing a particular career path. He/She must be a proactive person. Part of this department's activities will include arranging seminars for students to let them know of the different career options available (employment, graduate studies in engineering in India/outside India, MBA programs, all-India competitive examinations, etc.).
- BESUS should encourage the students to take tests (such as GATE, TOEFL, GRE, GMAT, CAT, IAS, IES) so that the students have a number of post-baccalaureate career options and can arrange for coaching by the faculty or outside groups to prepare the students for those tests. The students in their second semester of third year should start being part of this program. The department must track the students who appear in these tests and find out from them the usefulness of BESUS coursework for those tests.
- The department personnel must know how to market the students and behave professionally in dealing with the recruiters (prompt response to the recruiters' call, greet them at the correct time when they arrive at the school, provide an office with a telephone for their interviews, ask them if they care for tea/coffee/drinks etc.).

Alumni – BESUS Interface

- In all highly regarded universities around the world, one can not help but notice the involvement and generous financial support of their alumni for maintaining the reputation of those institutions. One of the biggest assets of 150-year old institution is its alumni body, spread all over the world. It is gratifying to note that BESUS authority has realized the potential of the enormous capacity of its alumni to help the mother institution to regain its past glory. The challenge is to

institutionalize the alumni activities through proper process so that it reaches from individual or small group to an enterprise level.

- Many of BESUS' distinguished alumni are close to retirement. BESUS can invite those alumni from the IITs or other reputed institutions to spend 2/3 years and mentor present faculty to build state-of-the-art research facilities with grants. This will help BESUS in two ways: a) to involve alumni in rebuilding the Alma Mater and give them opportunities to pay back their debts they owed; and b) to train the present faculty by internationally recognized experts and change the overall process and mind sets in the process.
- Alumni who are faculty abroad can help attracting the best students by promising that the top three students in any department will get assistantships in the universities they are affiliated with. One alumnus from a Canadian University has recruited students from BESUS and another alumnus from a New York University is willing to do that. The alumni office can maintain a list of faculty who may be willing to consider this for each field.
- Alumni of BESUS are already involved with many initiatives from LAN, VLSI Laboratory, Seminar Room Upgrade, Scholarships, Alumni Seminar Series, and Alumni Co-guide Project to running the alumni web site and many such causes. Unfortunately, almost all of them are being run on individual passion and drive and needs to be done on a global basis. Alumni office, once established, should coordinate these activities. Otherwise, it may not last long.
- Established alumni (who are interested) from industries, good universities and governments should be invited for seminars/talks/presentations as frequently as possible, thus exposing the faculties to the current research trends and the students to the current big projects in the vicinity, the employment scenario in their fields of activities, and the approach they should follow.
- BESUS needs to set up an Alumni office (such as Office of the Director of Alumni Activities with his/her staff who may be under the placement officer.) to reach alumni using the latest technologies. It is not a new concept in India as all IITs have Dean of Alumni who runs the alumni operation. The director will collect alumni details (batch, dept., present mailing address, e-mail address and office address if possible) and send them newsletters from the school.
- In-campus alumni office should be equipped with high-speed Internet connection, computer, Internet-FAX, VoIP phone for calling alumni worldwide. A person who has excellent command of English and Bengali should run it. The person has to communicate with alumni worldwide, listen to their needs and solicit donations for the alumni funded projects at the university. This person would be a real liaison officer between the university and the alumni worldwide. The alumni office will foster a culture among students of giving back to Alma Mater through prominent display of name of alumni donors for donating money or kinds to the university. Arrange an interactive session with successful alumni donors to the present students.
- This office should ultimately take over the functions, now performed by the web team of <http://www.becollege.org> and should work with GAA when it is registered. These efforts will keep the alumni interested about their alma mater and they, in turn, will help to make it a better institution. Alumni should be allowed to be the members of the BESUS' Executive Committee. Two/three representatives chosen by alumni should be in that committee.
- The alumni office would be responsible for keeping track of the achievements of BESUS alumni and publicize them through the media. It will also encourage the alumni to emphasize their associations with BESUS when receiving any honour/award from professional organizations/universities/industries. This will not only bring recognition to BESUS but may also help in getting grants/funds from outside agencies/industries.

Miscellaneous

- University web site should be more attractive and informative with individual department's own web pages. The web pages should be updated regularly. Examples of beautiful and nice university web sites can be found on the Internet.

- Students should be encouraged to spend time in the laboratories whenever they have extra time. All they have to do is set up an appointment with the person in charge of that laboratory.
- Promote sports and extra-curricular activities among students; special achievers should be helped for greater achievements like playing at national and international level. Improve quality of food served in the hostels.
- Student fest (REBECA) has become only an event for enjoyment. During REBECA, there are very few creative things among the displays and some of them are too stereotypical in nature. Like other IITs, BESUS departments should arrange individual technical competitions and other inspiring events that must be coordinated by the students only. Necessary funds for arranging all these should be made available.
- Assist recent graduates without a job: recent graduates should be allowed to appear in campus interviews and a kind of batch clearance system should be implemented.
- Involve current and recently graduated students to understand the status of the existing system. Since, they are the ones experiencing the reality (for others, it is their past). Their views and thoughts can only reveal the aspects to be improved.
- Establish an Audio-Visual Communication Laboratory to increase the proficiency in reading, writing and presentation skills among the students. Make a High Speed Internet enabled Computer Laboratory with at least 4 computers in every hostel administered by paid Student Laboratory Administrators. Computer access will be through a nominal monthly fee.
- Establish a school of languages that will have facilities to teach, in addition to Bengali and English, different Asian languages (such as Japanese and Chinese), as well as European languages (such as Spanish, French and German) that are considered very useful for development and exchange of knowledge in various fields of sciences, engineering, architecture and planning. Considering the rapid economic and technical developments in East Asian countries, and Sibpur's (Kolkata) gateway location in relation to these countries, special emphasis may be placed in teaching Chinese and Japanese to the students of BESUS (or the INI) at its campus.

Appendix

Section I

Name: DEBARGHA SENGUPTA (1)
Batch and Dept.: 1998 ARCHITECTURE
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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2003
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Newspapers; and of course the alumni website
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? NO. I believe that with an overhaul of the current structure at BEC and radical all-round improvement, we could be comparable to the IITs in a few years in an INI format.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

YES. IITs have a set way of operating and follow a standard structure. Transforming into an IIT would mean fitting into that standard and not pursuing an option to be different and yet as good, if not better. INIs, not having a set structure as such, provide some latitude. BESUS is the first step to expanding into a scientific endeavor from the strict confines of technology. This means, our future initiatives can spread out to both technological as well as scientific fields connected to technology including everything in between. That stature, while achievable, fits better within the INI norm rather than the IIT norm.

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

Tie-ups/Collaboration with other Universities: Associations with other leading universities abroad involving program development; exchange programs for students and faculties; faculty training; development of curriculum; collaborative research and professional ventures; curriculum and infrastructure development; and, resource sharing are some of the things to be considered. At the same time, work with local alumni on professional training for students and faculty, conducting frequent lectures and seminars with professionals/alumni, etc.

Curriculum modification: This requires nothing less than a paradigm shift, the first step being faculty training. Alumni who are teachers and professionals in other countries can be of immense help to bring in new viewpoints and ideas. Curriculum should not be too rigid: core courses should be there, along with optional courses within and outside the department; study-abroad options with associate university/universities could also be considered.

New programs: New programs should be researched and evaluated carefully before they are introduced. A board comprised of faculty, administrators and professionals currently affiliated with BESUS as well as interested alumni should systematically research and evaluate the new programs. The evaluation methodology should include current as well as future potential; suitability and possible synergy with current programs; and finally a cost-benefit analysis in terms of effectiveness from an academic standpoint. In a nutshell, targeting new programs should be done in a scientific way and should not be merely reflective of trends.

Faculty responsibilities: Faculty responsibilities should be clearly outlined, and faculty members should be trained accordingly to pursue them. Periodic evaluations should be conducted, including but not limited to student feedback (this is customary in most leading institutions in the west); and most importantly, evaluations should be acted upon instead of just following them as a practice. Faculty members should be given academic targets outside of class room teaching including but not limited to publishing of academic papers (at least one publication in a refereed journal per year) or professional projects (at least one every two years) with mandatory student involvement in the same. There should be a policy on continuing education for faculty members to keep them updated with the latest developments in their fields. Faculty members should also be encouraged to pursue research and project based grants.

Infrastructure development/improvement: The University should not be an 8:00-5:00 routine. All modern universities keep late hours, not just for the libraries, but for all resources. The departments should be accessible to students from 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM with general computing laboratories open until midnight. Students using research stations/studios etc. should have 24/7 access to those. The campus should have a life after dark, at least until 10:00 PM. Infrastructure should be supportive of that, making it safe and encouraging at the same time.

Finally: A number of alumni have attended leading universities in India and abroad as students as well as teachers. They know how those institutions work and what make them outstanding. I believe many of them are more than willing to transform BESUS in to a 21st Century educational institution. Involving them in the development process can and will go a long way.

Section I

Name: SOUGATA ROY (2)
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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? I've heard about the conversion of BESUS to IIT/INI in February' 2005.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? I've heard the news from my batch mates and then found the news in Ananadbazar Patrika.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

I strongly believe an engineering college is only as good as its recruiters' ranking of the institutions. And recruiters' ranking is directly correlated to the alumni network, quality of the graduating students and curriculum. Being a 150-year-old institute, there is no dearth of alumni. Quality of students over the years also has remained about the same if not better. But the industries' response tells us there is something missing in the curriculum and students seriously lack communication and presentation skills. I don't support drastically changing the course curriculum. What I suggest is major change in the evaluation patterns. Instead of putting too high proportion to midterms and end terms, the evaluation patterns can be changed to something that many IIMs follow. The concerned professor should have flexibility to decide the exact

evaluation pattern but he must allocate the marks over 4 or more heads [which can include mid-term, end-term, individual/ group topic presentations, individual/group project reports and project presentations, class participation (max 10%) etc.]. For each course there should be an “end of course project”. Students should choose the topic for presentations and projects related to the course and apply the knowledge learned from the course. If you think my suggestion is worth and can be implemented in BE College scenario, I can provide further details of the evaluation patterns of IIMs.

Section I

Name: NIRJHAR CHAKRABORTY (3)
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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Six months back.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Through e-mail/BEC alumni website.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? NO
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? NO

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

BEC should be converted into a full-fledged stand-alone university. The entrance examination should be continued under JEE. The college may increase the quota for students from other states. Opening up the college to all India students will erode the basic spirit as well as deprive many deserving students from the home state.

Section I

Name: MANAS K. RAYCHAUDHURI (4)
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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Six months back.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? From friends
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? NO

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

For larger worldwide recognition & Central Govt. help, conversion to an IIT is a must. Alumni/BESUS collaboration would definitely bring about positive changes in training/placement of fresh graduates and in the curriculum through the experiences of the Alumni. More & more efforts should be made to have tie-ups with the Industry for effective Research & Development work in order to bring about innovations/new products.

Section I

Name: SATYA SARKAR (5)
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Section II

No comments

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

Over and above what you mentioned, the primary need is to instill discipline among the students, teachers and staff to have any improvement in the college. We are pained at the negative news about the college published in the media. Lack of coordination among the Alumni all over the world is another aspect to look into. Sorry for the comments which are not so positive.

Section I

Name: PRADIP SARKAR (6)
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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? When it first appeared in <http://www.becollege.org> web page.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? From <http://www.becollege.org>
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI(Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

Curriculum Modification/ faculty responsibility: There is an urgent need to look into the syllabi; especially for the graduate programs. There should be a minimum number of classes in a semester. I can recollect we had 8-10 classes (10 minutes every time) for 'Experimental stress analyses'. There were no lectures. Prof. A. Ghosh used to handover notes that he prepared 10 years back. Interestingly all of us got 70 to 90 percent marks in that subject. Nobody learned anything. Similar things happened in some other courses as well. Most of the professors delivered their lectures in Bengali even though there were Non-Bengali students present in the class.

On Faculty Recruitment Process: To apply for a faculty position, an interested candidate has to get the application form from the BE College campus only (in person/ through post). Is it possible to keep the application form posted at the university website? That would make it less painful for the prospective candidates.

Others: Hostel mess should have some arrangement for breakfast. As of now, students take unhygienic food from outside. Most of the time, people skip their breakfast.

Section I

Name: PARTHA SARATHI GHOSH (7)
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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 1 year back.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Alumni webpage.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES, conversion to IIT or INI will bring in the much needed revenue/fund to improve curriculum and Facilities in college.

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

1. Conversion to INI or IIT will bring the much-needed funds for further improvement. When you have enough funding you can afford to bring in new programs, which will benefit the student community.
2. Curriculum to be modified. Changes should be made by offering to the students the following:
 - i. Dual degree programs.
 - ii. Interdisciplinary studies.
 - iii. Integrated Masters.
 - iv. Augmented facilities to the students and requiring each student to have a computer of his/her own.
 - v. "Current" students' opinions on the above-mentioned topics should be taken into consideration while carrying out the changes. This is because they are the ones who keep in touch with the changes taking place in different institutes.
 - vi. Outlook of the professors needs to be changed. I would strongly harp on it because in my college days I have seen some professors who would do nothing for the students other than reading out pre-historic notes

from papers that have become yellow and crisp. They would strongly rebuke, demoralise my fellow students for their inability to speak in "English". I hardly remember them doing anything constructive for us. Not only that, the same professors also analyzed their performance from students' feedback. Yes, this raises eyebrows. How many times have the college administration asked for feedback from students on the performances of the professors? The idea is not to make their life difficult but to keep an eye on their performances. The professors also need to be trained to keep up with advances in technology. There are a lot of industry-funded projects that go on in the college but hardly any student benefits financially or academically from such projects. Have the college authorities ever thought of allowing undergraduate students to participate in those projects?

3. From our part we should also ensure or rather constantly poke the college authorities about implementing our suggestions. If our suggestions are not taken up for implementation, I believe we still have the "right to ask" as to what are the possible reasons for declining them.

Section I

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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? From this e-mail.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? From this e-mail.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? NO
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section I

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Location: WB, India

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2003
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Emails
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? Yes
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? Yes

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

This in response to the opinion sought for the upgradation of BESUS to IIT/ INI. Being associated with BESUS for sometime and also having been associated with some other Universities/Institutions for a short period, I would like to suggest some points that should be considered before sudden upgradation of the status of BESUS is undertaken.

1. Though BEC is a premier and one of the oldest engineering colleges in the country; it has lost it's glory and importance today if one considers its acceptability to the other Indian states. Reasons, in my opinion, are: a) Lack of a proper academic environment; b) Lack of quality faculty; c) Lack of good governance; and d) Local political compulsions affecting the Teaching Staff, Non-Teaching Staff and Students. Simply flow of sufficient funds and upgradation of the status will not improve the quality of the institution. I think when it was simply a college its position was much higher than when it became a Deemed University or an independent University. So, attracting meritorious students and teachers from different states are required. Also, assurance from top political leadership of the state is required regarding non-interference with the activities of the institution.

2. To improve the quality of teaching, BESUS authority must adopt modern system of learning including collaborating with different foreign universities with the help of alumni; arranging for lectures through video conferencing; preparing syllabi according to international standards; inviting professors from different universities to offer classes; etc.

3. Encouraging/Forcing students to take up extra-curricular activities after classes; improving the condition of the hostels; and improve quality of food served in the hostels.

Section I

Name: Dr. SWAPAN SAHA (10)
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Location: California, USA

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Since 2003.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? <http://www.becollege.org> and e-mails.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? NO. Not for now till it improves its environment and culture.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

Top Priority of BESUS: Research, Research and Research – An academic institution irrespective of its location makes advancement in surroundings where there is an environment that fosters innovation, creativity and excellence. Academic excellence is achieved through quality research and innovation.

Engage BESUS in Research and How? The eco-system of BESUS including administrators, faculty, students and of course alumni need to be encouraged to collaborate in research and development. Only focusing on undergraduate education and awarding bachelor degrees even in new disciplines will probably not help to achieve excellence. To reach research excellence, it needs a complete overhaul of the system. Faculty needs

to be evaluated on the basis of research funds they bring and their publications. Students need to be involved with research projects in the 3rd and 4th years of their program. Students need to be encouraged to take course work beyond their own study areas. Alumni have started several initiatives including VLSI Laboratory, Alumni Seminar Series and proposed External Guide project. All these initiatives need to be given proper attention. Students need to have access to Library and Laboratories beyond 4 pm.

Involve alumni and how? One of the biggest assets of 150-year old engineering institution is its alumni community. Graduates of BESUS in its golden period (till late 60s) are at the pinnacle of their careers both in India and abroad. Engaging them positively with BESUS will not only help our alma mater but also give the alumni personal satisfaction for being part of their alma mater. Alumni of BESUS are involved with many initiatives from LAN, VLSI Laboratory, Seminar Room Upgrade to Scholarships and many other great causes. Unfortunately, almost all of them are being run on individual passion and drive. However it does neither scale up nor does it last long. The challenge is to institutionalize the alumni activities through proper process so that it reaches from individual or small group to an enterprise level. BESUS needs to set up an Alumni office (such as Office of the Director of Alumni Activities with his/her staff) to reach alumni using the latest technologies. It is not a new concept in India as all IITs have Dean of Alumni who runs alumni operation. It will not only improve the process but also bring more funds to the institution. Many of our distinguished alumni are close to retirement. We can invite our alumni from the IITs and other reputed institutions to spend 2/3 years and mentor present faculty to build state-of-the-art research facilities with grants. This will help us in two ways: a) to involve alumni in rebuilding our alma mater and give them opportunities to pay back their debts they owed; and b) to train the present faculty by internationally recognized experts and change the overall process and mind sets in the process.

Section I

Name: Dr. MANOJ K. BHATTACHARYYA (11)
Batch and Dept.: 1978 EE
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Location: California, USA

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2003
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? www.becollege.org
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? Yes
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? Yes (IIT is my first, INI is my second preference).

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

I strongly believe that BESUS' academic courses are out of sync with those required to produce high quality scientists or engineers. May be it was good at an earlier slower pace of the technical world. If BESUS has to be deemed as one of the premier institutes of India (and thus, automatically, the world), more liberalization, rethinking and redesigning of the academic courses have to be done. First and foremost is that students need to be forced to work much harder, in a manner that the students will enjoy. An undergraduate degree should not be super specialized but must provide students with a wide variety of knowledge, including literature. Following points are some early suggestions:

(1) Even though students come in with their field of specialization already designated, first three semesters (if not first four semesters) must be spent on general education. Students must be required to complete

certain number of units in Sciences, Mathematics, and Language/Literature. Students must realize that all of the areas, including Language/Literature, are equally important and are counted towards their GPA. In Sciences, Physics, Chemistry and some Life Sciences (because of the up and coming Bio-Technology field) are to be taken. Whether a student ends up in Civil engineering or in Computer Science, general education requirements have to be the same. BESUS needs full-fledged faculties in each one of the science areas, not just one or two professors. Mathematics, is of course, extremely important in all branches of engineering; and basic as well as applied mathematics (like finite element, finite difference) should be taught. I do understand that recruiting of qualified instructors is easier said than done. I suggest that one qualified professor can give the main lecture in an auditorium and then doctoral students can facilitate smaller discussion groups. This way, all students can get the benefit of listening to the lectures but then get more clarification in smaller groups. Also, more electives must be offered in all branches of science. For example, an electrical/electronics student may be interested in solid state physics, a chemical engineering major may be interested in electrochemistry, while a material science major may be interested in both.

(2) After meeting the entire general education requirement, students will be allowed to choose and pursue their specializations. In this area, my biggest concern is that the way things are structured now, it is not possible for a mechanical engineering student to take a course from electronics engineering department (there may be special watered down versions of such courses). I think this method is totally outdated and all courses should be available to all the students of all the years. Also there is no need to keep electronics and electrical separate. These two departments can be combined into one, with a choice of emphases from power and communications. Not teaching solid-state circuits to electrical students is absurd and not teaching circuits/networks to ECE is also unjustified.

(3) At BESUS, students do minimal hands on laboratory activities. An engineer should tinker with technology and just knowing theory is not of much help. Students should be encouraged to spend time in the laboratories whenever they have extra time. All they have to do is set up an appointment with the person in charge of that laboratory.

(4) In the computer usage area, not all students get to spend time on computers. I know that many students can afford their own personal computer. The university should encourage a culture of owning their computers and share with friends whenever possible. All courses should require work done in computers and use internet's immense search capability.

(5) The library must be open, at least, until 11 pm and must have a well-lit and comfortable reading room. If the university encourages students to use the facility, there will be a culture of studying in the library soon. The reserve section of the library should keep copies of the textbooks for each of the courses that the university offers.

Section I

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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2003
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Email and alumni web site
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? Yes
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? Yes

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

Any 'Master Plan' or 'Road Map' must be guided by a vision. Each proposed action, which is a part of the Plan, must be tested to see whether it does or does not help achieve the vision. It should be rejected if it does not. The Vision should be ambitious. We must strive for the best even if at the first sight it appears to be 'unachievable'. There is no set limit for 'Excellence'. It is like the concept of 'Infinity'. One will never reach it, but in striving to reach it one will surpass others who have deliberately lowered the bar to make it look 'achievable'.

The Vision Statement of BESUS should not be to be one of the ten best institutions in India, as I have read somewhere in the media report. It should be:

'BENGAL ENGINEERING & SCIENCE UNIVERSITY, SHIBPUR WILL BECOME THE BEST INSTITUTION FOR THE STUDY AND RESEARCH OF ENGINEERING AND APPLIED SCIENCE IN INDIA.'

The required environment and action plan to achieve the vision

The items /action plans/environment mentioned below are not in any order of priority. If any of them is not achieved, the journey towards achieving the 'Vision' could be delayed and in the worst scenario, derailed.

- a) BESUS must shed its 'Provincial' status and recruit the best faculty and bring in the best students on an 'All India' basis through Joint Entrance Examinations. BESUS must constantly compete with other All India Institutions to attract best faculty and students. We do not need any other assessment to gauge how far we are behind our objective. If all reputed faculty and best students have BESUS as their first choice we know we are close to our visionary goal. English must be the medium of instruction, not simply on paper but in actuality. Those who are deficient in writing or speaking correct English should be given intensive courses in the first year to overcome it. The faculty must be trained and encouraged to deliver lectures in English only. Of course, there cannot be any other alternative if we become an All-India Institution. Let us keep in mind that in today's world no engineer can succeed in his future profession without a thorough command of English.
- b) BESUS must revert back to being a fully residential institution. Students must be able to devote their entire time to the study of engineering and not be distracted by commuting and the timing of the last bus!
- c) Strict discipline must be inculcated amongst faculty and students in dress, deportment and adherence of schedules in studies. BESUS is training students to be successful professionals. Discipline is a key ingredient in their future success. Faculty should encourage and inculcate by setting proper examples that the students can emulate.
- d) BESUS should study the syllabi offered by leading engineering institutions in India and abroad and adopt them. Faculty should take crash courses to be able to follow and teach according to the latest syllabi. Syllabi are not static. BESUS should constantly examine and upgrade the syllabi to match with advance of technology.
- e) BESUS should study the manner in which the best institutions assess and grade the progress of learning of individual students. Our method of assessing the students should be equal or better.
- f) BESUS must lobby the top industrial houses in India to conduct researches in their area of interest at BESUS.
- g) Faculty and students must be encouraged and rewarded for the volume of significant research projects conducted by them.
- h) BESUS should initiate faculty exchange programmes with top engineering institutions around the world. This cross-pollination is essential for improving our institution.
- i) BESUS must build infrastructures to achieve all the above in terms of land, hostels, buildings, modern library, computers and LAN, laboratories, workshops, latest equipment etc. Massive infusion of funds is required. Equally important is a mechanism to be able to spend it properly and expeditiously within the planned budget, schedule and quality. BESUS should approach our local alumni who are in the business of

managing such massive projects for advice and help. BESUS should hire a professional project management organization to monitor and supervise the project for timely completion within prescribed budget and desired quality. This is what most organizations do to get value for the money spent.

j) The 'Master Plan' being prepared by BESUS should clearly demonstrate how its components help to achieve its vision, show what resources are required to execute the various parts of the plan, where such resources will come from and have clear time lines for execution. In short, it must be totally transparent and could be monitored on a regular basis to correct any deviation.

k) We understand that the Govt. of West Bengal considers BESUS to be an independent body and encourages it to become a seat of excellence in engineering education and research. If this is true, I interpret this to mean that there will not be any political interference in allowing BESUS to recruit the best faculty and admit the brightest students from anywhere in India. WBG has the responsibility to provide engineering education to the 'sons of the soil' who do not have the merit to get admitted in the best institutions through Joint Entrance Examinations. WBG should establish or expand other engineering colleges to accommodate them and not drag down the standard of BESUS by compelling it to admit them. Merit and nothing else should be the admission criteria into BESUS.

l) Whether we become an 'IIT' or 'INI' is irrelevant so long as we have a vision and the initial massive injection of funds to build our infrastructure and then sufficient annual recurring funds to continuously upgrade and maintain the institution. I believe that this can only be guaranteed by the Central Government. Hence it has to be treated as an 'IIT' or an 'INI' and with it the control and monitoring must be under the auspices of GOI. I do not believe that any government will be willing to part with its funds without having any say in how such funds are managed and spent.

Section I

Name: RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI (13)
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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2004
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Reunion 2004
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? IITs have a generation gap with BESUS. It would always be preferable to continue with unique identity and avoid gaining “second generation IIT status”. Hence, NO conversion to IIT if avoidable.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES, strongly support conversion to INI. That would help maintain identity and provide flexibility to follow an independent course to pursue advancement of the Institution.

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

Undergraduate Programmes: Currently BECSUS thrives on the strength of Undergraduate programmes. Quality/standard of these programmes need drastic rationalization as indicated in the drop in on-campus recruitment. Unless performance of undergraduate students improve, it is unlikely that the institution would attract Post-Graduate Students/ Research Scholars. The present curriculum needs to be supplemented with job oriented, practical and additional professional courses e.g. Quantity Surveying, QA/QC aspects (exposure to ISO 9000), Industrial Safety/ Security, Health/Safety/Environmental aspects, etc.

Placement/Human Resource Development Cell: There is urgent necessity to create a strong placement/human development cell in the Institution in order to augment not too bright performance level of the current set-up.

Interaction with the Industry: Appears to be missing. Management & Faculty appear to follow the dictum “Why should we approach the industry; they should.” Leaders from industry should be invited to share their problems to be researched. Periodically industrial leaders need to be invited to interact with the students by delivering guest lectures etc., and to apprise the faculties as well as the students of the latest trends in the industry. Suggested action is likely to enhance employment opportunities of the fresh graduates too.

Appointment, Evaluation and Training of Faculties: Appointment of faculties needs to be on non-tenured/contract basis to ward off the tendency of picking up a “Secure Job” without accountability. Institution of periodic evaluations / performance appraisals including student feedback; Training facilities to upgrade theoretical/practical technological aspects through exchange programmes with leading domestic/foreign universities and practical interaction with leaders in the industries; Institution of awards/rewards on publication of papers in refereed journals; and Making efforts to involve practicing professionals in the Industry to join as faculties on part-time basis, should all be incorporated.

Tie-ups/Collaboration with Leading Foreign Universities: Tie-ups involving program development; student and faculty exchange programs for training, research and professional ventures/resource sharing and curriculum as well as infrastructure development should be undertaken.

Infrastructure Development/Improvement: The University should not function on the basis of “Trade Union Timing”. Departments, laboratories, libraries and all resources need to be accessible to the students till late hours. Infrastructure should be supportive of making it safe and encouraging for the proposed change. It would be essential to severe current infrastructure maintenance responsibility with the State PWD and create an autonomous cell in lines with similar stature of the Institutional Organization.

Managing the Management: Needs brainstorming on how to manage the management to be both responsive and responsible to the students and alumni in managing the Institution.

Updating of Curriculum: A quantum jump is necessary to update the existing curriculum of all disciplines to encompass both current systems/ developments in the industry and latest technological trends in consultation with sister institutions in the country as well as abroad. Assistance of alumni, who hold key appointments in the Industry and Educational Institutions, are to be sought in this regard.

Section I

Name: SUDIPTO CHAKRABORTY (14)
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Location: Jharkand, India

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

At the very beginning let me confirm and reconfirm my great appreciation of your correct attitude and appreciation for B. E. College. We sincerely share your feelings and also support the cause.

Coming to concrete matters and issues, if you allow me to be frank and straight, I have certain things to say. These are my very personal thoughts arising from my very own understanding of the situation and may as well be totally wrong; but as I try to keep in touch, maybe you would find a point or two worth considering.

1. Please remember B E College is too old and showing signs of natural fatigue. So it takes a very strong, sympathetic, systematic and well-planned all-out approach to rejuvenate it; piecemeal attempts are sure to fall flat by grafting unacceptable modernizations to its frail base.

2. If we try to implement a thorough revamp, a master plan has to be chalked out. It has to have many aspects- infrastructure, disciplines and curriculum, pedagogy and recruitment, housekeeping and public relations, consultancy and research fronts, recognition and accreditation areas, et al. While it should be highly possible and happily implemented through the co-operation of all concerned, actually it would generate a controversy and chaos because of the myopic stance at various levels. This is unfortunate but true. If it were not true, the expected development and upgradation of B E College would have already come. But the reality is, if we do not handle these core issues and redress them, a turnaround is impossible. To sum up, while we earnestly wish it should be perfectly possible to rejuvenate the institute, I am afraid practically it is not to be. It has become a proverbial Aegean stable, which needs a Hercules almost impossible to find today.

3. Still if we wish to do something, let us draw a concrete phase wise plan of action and talk with the concerned decision makers. Somebody has to draft the scheme first and circulate for vetting among the alumni. There are many major and subtle points- we may follow the case of Haldia petrochemicals for a lesson. Incidentally, it was not very encouraging to find that many sub-sites of our main site are shown as "under construction".

4. B E College badly needs these basic things:

A. An immediate campus remodeling and total environmental upliftment - Good and free landscaping, demolition of condemned buildings, conservation of heritage buildings, shifting of the library to, say, Madhusudan Bhaban (or better, I personally believe that the library should be at the ground floor of the institute building and the entry should be through the library, to expose more people to it and to make more people use it). Breaking the silence is not at all a problem. Madhusudan Bhaban should be a museum of technology and technical education, opening up a permanent hall of fame/technical museum in any of the preserved old buildings, a few high-rise buildings at proper places to free the ground and to see the river, creating more space in the new building, building a real good canteen and an auditorium, boosting up the hostels in all respect, providing good in-house facility for documentation, replenishing the gymnasium, etc. All these are extremely relevant because the contemporary attitude demands a healthy, cozy, fresh, open and adequate physical infrastructure conducive to good education. All the new institutes, even in India, are very particular about providing it. As a designer I am ready to offer my free concepts for such campus developments, as I am not very rich and cannot contribute much money personally. But the free consultancy offered by me can save a great deal of money. Of course the final plans may be drawn after much discussion and even international alumni vetting through flotation of the draft plan in the Internet.

B. Curriculum and disciplines restructuring - Modern teaching aids, a proactive placement division, large-scale electronic media use in teaching, grooming and counseling sessions, academy-industry interactions etc.

C. An exclusive steamer/bus service for the campus inmates, connecting to Calcutta.

D. True and effective telephone and Internet connection for students and teachers.

E. Removal of unproductive politics.

F. A thorough change in the mindset.

G. Encouragement for global publications in all sorts of journals-proudly attaching our B E College background.

H. Arrangement of regular visiting lectures by alumni.

I. Pulling the best students with acumen for teaching and research towards the institute.

J. Revamping the library in all senses - It is absolutely necessary to bring it in the ground floor so that everybody has to pass through it. It is very much required that all see it and increasingly use it. Even if there is chaos and noise (there won't be), it is still proper to locate the library at the ground floor front wing.

There is so much more to do. The whole thing is a great task, changing the mindset is the first and most difficult of them all. We have opened too many websites; it should be possible to consolidate all of them into a single central site; we may organise a massive global attendance at one reunion to discuss and implement matters. It is quite possible. But as there are too much to do, we may even have to employ full-time people. I repeat that individual islands of excellence cannot restore the glory of B E College. We have to go all out on all the fronts. Surely, we have to kick up a lot of dust. Thinking aloud, the proposal is to have a picturesque fresh institute altogether; if necessary as an extension centre of the mother institute, but separately managed, so that its achievements can pull up the lost glory of the original one. I sometimes think of a post-graduate B E College or an extension centre, maybe on the Kolkata side, connected with the mother institute by launch service apart from the second Hooghly Bridge. This facility will have research, postgraduate and undergraduate programs for current and pioneering branches like biotechnology, food technology, astrotech, micromechanics and the like. It can be staffed by fresh and true enthusiasts and technical experts from among us and can be started in a humble way and then bloom into fame.

Section I

Name: DIPANKAR KOLEY (15)
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Location: Bangalore, India

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 1.5/2 months back.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? From a newspaper.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

It is only the education/training standard that matters. If, by any means, these standards improve and students get more industry-wide acceptance in terms of employment, I will have the full support. But at the same time, the living conditions of the students need much improvement. Last time when I attended the Reunion, I got shocked seeing the condition of the hostels. Another thing I must mention is that colleges should be beyond the reach of any external political parties (whatever may be the colour). The responsible posts in the college also must be above any political bias. If by converting the college to IIT/INI, external political interference reduces, we must welcome it.

Section I

Name: ANINDYA CHATTERJEE (16)

Batch and Dept.: 1992 CE
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Location: Dubai, UAE

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Your e-mail.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Your e-mail.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES, since upgrade to IIT need complete overhauling of infrastructural facilities and high budget provisions from WB and Union Governments.

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

1. Improve website get-up and layout with picture of campus in the background.
2. Keep alumni posted about facility upgrades, curriculum modifications, campus life snippets, senior-fresher relationships, through periodical newsletters. Pure statistical updating of alumni roster does not improve bondage with our dear Alma Mater.
3. For guidelines, always take advice from Dr. Pradip Kumar Ray, Professor, CEC Department, whom we hold dear to our heart.

Section I

Name: Dr. SUBRATA SAHA (17)
Batch and Dept.: 1963 CE
E-mail:
Phone Number:
Location: NY, USA

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

One step that might be helpful in attracting the best students is a promise from the alumni group that the top three students in any department will get assistantship in an US of UK university for graduate study. It may not be difficult for those of us in the university faculty to award a research assistantship to a good applicant from our university. The alumni office can maintain a list of faculty who may be willing to consider this for each field. I shall be glad to be a part of that for the field of Biomedical Engineering. [Subrata Saha, professor of Biomaterials, Alfred University.]

Section I

Name: S.K.BAKSI
Batch and Dept.: 1962
E-mail:
Phone Number:
Location:

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

1. Each hostel should have a library, which will remain open in the afternoon and evening. Besides engineering books there should be useful journals and periodicals. General knowledge books and books on various competitive examinations like IAS, IRSE, and IIM should be retained.
 2. In the second phase, computer with Internet connection should be made available throughout the campus and the students could be charged for this facility.
-

Section I

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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2003
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Alumni Web Site
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

It is fascinating to know that 51,000 innovations have been registered so far at NIF(<http://www.nifindia.org/>). The National Innovation Foundation (NIF) was set up in March 2000, by Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India (GOI), as an autonomous society, under the chairpersonship of Dr R A Mashelkar, Director General, Council for Scientific & Industrial Research and Secretary, Dept. of Scientific and Industrial Research, Government of India. Their focus is on the contemporary unaided technological innovations as well as outstanding examples of traditional knowledge from individuals and communities.

I like to put this up in our website for discussion with the intention to see if our Alma Mater, BESU, could find it interesting to get associated with NIF. BESUS with its large resource of Undergraduate and Post-Graduate students can work on converting the promising innovations into a commercially viable venture. This can lead to creation of a number of enterprises in the rural sector leading to large-scale employment opportunity and wealth generation in the rural areas where about 70% of our population resides.

Section I

Name:	BASAB ROY (19)
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Location:	Canada

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

It was a great news when I saw the news in Times of India that BE College had been short listed for conversion to an INI and very encouraged to see the ambitious plan proposed by Dr NR Banerjea for the future shape of the college.

To become one of the great colleges I need to emphasize the following:

- 1) Curriculum modification (To include all practical aspects, latest and greatest).
- 2) Addition of new programs - Chemical Engineering and Instrumentation and Control (There is a great demand for process engineer and I&C engineer in Oil & Gas sector). Geophysics and reservoir engineering are also in great demand abroad.
- 3) Alumni-BESUS collaboration - I am a rotating equipment specialist working in Bechtel and can advise on rotating equipment.
- 4) Collaboration with the Industry.

5) More focus on our achievement and history as done by foreign universities.

6) First try to become the number one engineering college in West Bengal and then compete at all India level.

7) Stop infighting and criticising others (Major problem in Bengal) and think ahead and see what others are doing. If others can make it, so can we.

8) I recommend contacting Jyoti Sengupta of Canada who is a real thinker for the well being of our college.

Section I

Name: SUBHASHISH ACHARYA (20)
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Location: WB, India

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

1. Create Branding. I don't think IIT Professors teach better than BEC.
2. Admit students with better intelligence. I have seen the quality deteriorating every year.
3. Just conversion to an IIT would not mean good until or unless we produce quality. One can not sustain the same.
4. Include professors who maintain relationships with the outside world rather than just selecting them for their Ph.D. degrees.
5. Alumni should be invited to come and give lectures on career counseling.
6. Job postings by Alumni at the website, etc.

I personally feel that there has to be complete overhaul. Just getting a status is only the start. Working together will bring success.

Section I

Name: GUNJAN MANDAL (21)
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Phone Number:
Location: Karnataka, India

Section II

- When you have heard first about BECDU to IIT/INI initiative? 2004
- How have you heard about BECDU to IIT/INI initiative? From Alumni web page at www.becollege.org and from BESU page www.becs.ac.in
- Do you support conversion of BECDU to an IIT? Yes
- Do you support conversion of BECDU to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS- Delhi)?
Yes

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

I think in today's scenario, a web site is the easiest way to get to know about any university. It gives a good publicity as well. From my own experience, good universities have very good (look, information, user friendliness, etc) website and people/prospective students rely on it.

I would recommend the followings for BESU Site:

- 1) Professional look
- 2) Updated and correct information
- 3) All e-mail ids should be official (i.e. should have @becs.ac.in extension).
- 4) FAQ-"Frequently Asked Question" should be added.

Section I

Name:	Dr. ANIRUDDHA BANERJEE (22)
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Location:	California, USA

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2003-4
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Alumni website
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS- Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

It is great to see that goals are being set for the institute that will benefit greatly our once-revered institution. Being located ideally, the institute should try to attract the best faculty and students from all over the world and not just limit recruitment to Bengal/ India. One of the reasons Harvard or Berkeley are readily recognized throughout the world is due to their constant international engagement/appeal. Sibpur's first two department chairs in Architecture were from Canada and Argentina. Now we only have Bengalis leading the department! I would rather see our institution become uniquely placed than being labeled a B-grade 'IIT'. We should attract faculty and students from SAARC countries (quarter of the world's population) for a start and expand to China, SE Asia and the Middle East. Competition has made the IITs what they are today. Faculty

should be rewarded heavily for publishing & getting grants. Good teachers should also be rewarded. One of the strengths of the college has always been teaching the basics. Even the best US universities cannot compete with that. Their fame lies with the faculty and graduate students (MS and PhD). We should not change our focus on undergraduate education. But we need to improve our PG and faculty research vastly. Being a consultant for the think tank: Institute for the Future (<http://iftf.org>) located in Palo Alto, California, I am constantly amazed at the changing predictions made by industry leaders about the future. Fortune companies are hunting for the best talents throughout the world and are not restricted to the core economies (see 'The world is flat' by Thomas Friedman, 2005). It is a great opportunity to educate these potential talents in a campus like Sibpur.

Points to consider: great location; great talent pool (all of south Asia); excellent undergraduate curriculum (stressing the basics that US universities are increasingly lacking).

But poor faculty research compared to mediocre US universities (not the present faculty's fault); lack of liberal arts/bioscience programs to complement engineering goals and innovations; lack of patent, innovation culture; and lack of a well-equipped library (which can be replaced by high speed internet, campus wide wireless access and compulsory computer use for all faculty and students). I happened to be close to perhaps the best academic libraries in the world (Berkeley and Stanford) but I hardly go there -- all my needs are fulfilled through Google searches.

Finally, I lost out to someone from Cambridge University for a tenure-tract faculty position at Berkeley due to the lack of pedigree in my resume (I went to the Univ of Iowa for my PhD). If I can compete with the best for a faculty position at Berkeley then why not get admitted there in the first place?

We should tell our students that they could beat any competition, pursue the best jobs and contribute more than anyone in the world. Also, the Rs ~1000 crore expansion program for the campus is the best idea I've heard coming from Bengal in a long long time.

Section I

Name: PRATIK DUTTA (23)
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Location: WB, India

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Since inception of the initiative.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? I am a faculty
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? NO
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

1. The first and foremost is that BESUS should have a national identity. Students should be admitted via a truly national-level admission test (not a pseudo-national like the WB-JEE). The same applies to the recruitment of faculty members. The positions should be advertised in truly national dailies and employment news.
2. It should be a central university outside the clutches of the state government. The state government cannot simply provide the huge amount of initial and recurring fund required for the university with INI

status. Moreover, to attract brighter faculty members, the pay scale and other benefits should be at par with other MHRD-run INIs.

3. The INI tag comes with the creation of sound infrastructure for research. We should consolidate the existing departments with much more research facilities. The focus should be on PG education and consolidation of the existing UG courses.

4. The physical infrastructure should be expanded. We need good quality separate UG and PG hostel accommodation for students, family accommodation for PG students and better apartments for faculty members. Additionally, there should be proper accommodation for participants in the short-term training programs.

5. The library facility should be greatly enhanced. Book grants should be at least triple of the existing per department. The journal grants should be five times of the existing with access to all the online journals of Elsevier, Springer, and Taylor Francis etc.

Section I

Name: Dr. ABHIJIT MUKHERJEE (24)
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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

Let BESU have its vision clear what it wants to be in 10 yrs from now. The educational institutions are getting into a range of activities right from UG teaching to cutting edge research, patenting and production. What is our focus? There should be a document not less than 2 pages not more than 10 pages and all activities should center on it. IIT Bombay went through this exercise about five years back, rather late, but better than never. I believe the document has helped us a great deal to set our priorities.

I do not think that it can be done overnight. There is a scope for brain storming; may be workshops. Once frozen, the entire organization must work towards it. That would be a formula for success.

Section I

Name: ANONYMOUS (25)
Batch and Dept.: A recent CE graduate
E-mail:
Phone Number:
Location: Chennai , India

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES, it should be an IIT.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

I have passed out from Civil Engineering department and am currently located in Chennai. Since I have graduated not long before, I may suggest some things about curriculum modifications and would appreciate your attention:

1) As a student, I felt that there are lots of things we study in the 1st year which have no relation with our specialization. Just for example, in Physics, we are taught ‘Light’ in sufficient detail, which I do not find enough application in my practical working life. Rather, keeping with the intent of professional education, I strongly suggest concentrating more on our specific domain of knowledge and designing the science subjects to match our practical need.

2) We were taught English language in our 1st semester in a way that ultimately became boring and I found that none of us (particularly students like me, who studied in Bengali medium schools) was able to improve our standard of English. Therefore, I suggest, English language as a subject be offered in more than one semester and that the course be designed to meet the needs of standard international tests (GRE/TOEFL). I didn’t find it useful to learn prose and poetry just like a typical English class.

3) Now regarding main stream subjects, we get sufficient assignments from our professors, but how many of us do them by personal effort? Another surprising fact (for most of our departments) is that, whatever we are taught in class, we get exactly same or similar problems in the examinations. So, how much one can regurgitate what one memorizes in the exams determines toppers in our programs.

Indeed it is a fact, that from a whole batch, hardly two or three good engineers are produced who can think; and in most of the cases they neither get proper attention from the teacher nor proper opportunity to express themselves. So, my proposal is that the exams be designed in such a fashion that general students may get pass marks easily, but there should be a separate section with two or three problems that are more challenging than the others. The evaluation should be such that if a student attempted those more challenging problems and were able to prove their problem solving capability, he/she should get better grades even if he/she doesn’t touch the other general problems.

4) Another important aspect is to make the students present short seminars during the end of a semester on a selected topic. This should be done from 2nd year onwards. As a student, I found that presenting a seminar improves not only the clarity of subject, but also overall personality. Proper credits should be given to the participating students.

4) Our student fest (REBECA) has become only an event for enjoyment. Throughout my four years of stay, I found few creative things and even those were too stereotypical in nature. Like other IITs, our departments should arrange individual technical competitions and other inspiring events which must be coordinated by the students only. I hope, now we may get necessary funds for arranging all these. This may be discussed in the alumni meetings in detail.

5) Regarding our projects, I can frankly say that since the same projects are getting repeated each and every year, there fewer options for us to think of something new. Mere changes to basic design data do not ensure

that we are not copying from our seniors. Our professors are getting many consulting projects in which students might be able to participate. We get many companies to provide us vocational training; can't they provide us student projects? No matter whether it is a classroom project or a real life one, the idea should be something beyond regular.

6) To improve the status, the most important thing is to improve the research capability of our departments. It must be started from the UG level (through innovative project work). Students should be guided to publish papers or present seminars. My experience tells me that at PG level, our college students spend more time to get through a job exam than their research work. I think this atmosphere must be changed.

7) The most important thing is to have flexibility in our curriculum. Current trends show that some of us become software engineers, some join IIMs and some take exams like GATE or GRE or GMAT; I expect our curriculum to be flexible enough so that students looking into these options get enough latitude besides the burden of departmental subjects. There must be open-minded and free discussions between teachers and students.

8) Some serious discussion is required among the alumni to consider the possibility of opening some coaching centre for competitive exams (at least for GATE and IES). This may sound odd, but it is a burning need for many of us.

9) My last suggestion is that, please involve current and recently graduated students to understand the status of the existing system. Since, they are the ones experiencing the reality (for others, it is past). I guess their views and thoughts can only reveal the aspects to be improved.

I shall be extremely happy if my college gets an improved international status, which is of course within the limit of our collective effort and open heart.

Section I

Name: Dr. ANINDYA GHOSHAL (26)
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Phone Number:
Location: Connecticut, USA

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2003
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Web Site
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

My own personal opinion is that BEC's improvement cannot be sustained unless it is converted into a Central Govt. institution. In order to attract higher level of public and private funding, BEC stands to gain much more if it is converted to a federal institution like IITs or IISc. BEC also needs to broaden its horizon in order to attract higher quality of students and faculty from all over India and abroad. This is not possible if it chooses to remain as just another State University. International collaborative research funding are available

from NSF and other sources and being a central institution like IITs and IISc increases its chances of landing successful proposals. Political interference from State Govt. and political parties had proved to be detrimental to the quality of education and research in BEC.

Section I

Name: TARUN K. BASU (27)
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Location: Texas, USA

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? From the posting at <http://www.becollege.org> in 2003.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Involved in the initiative.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? Either IIT or INI would be acceptable.

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

The following issues need to be addressed by the BESUS authority:

1) Infrastructure: More hostels for increased student body. Bigger library with more facilities, (subscribing to more foreign journals and collaboration with Jadavpur University for mutual access to the library, buying more books and keeping library open till 12:00AM). Also, keep the laboratories open till 10:00PM and provide security for students using the facilities late night. Wire the entire campus so that everybody has easy access to the Internet and information related to college can be conveyed quickly. Plan for the future to build an arena for 5/6000 people for multipurpose use (indoor stadium/convocation center/ assembly hall).

2) Curriculum: Complete overhaul of the curriculum (may use curriculum from M.I.T. / Columbia / Berkley / Carnegie Mellon); Flexibility to accommodate interdisciplinary courses; New programs (like five-year BE / ME or five-year BE / MBA or Major in CE and minor in CS etc.) should be developed. Modify examination system so that students do not have to memorize formulae. Introduce courses where students can prepare research papers under faculty guidance and give seminars on that. “Take home examination” may even be tried with a wrinkle like one-to-one interview with the professor to ensure that the students prepared the answers themselves.

3) Faculty: Complete overhaul of hiring procedure. Faculty must be recruited through nationwide search. No alumnus from BEC will be hired unless he has graduate degrees from other IITs/INI/foreign universities. Promotions for the faculties should be based on their productivity in research (publication in refereed journals, guiding graduate research) and capability to bring research funding and not by virtue of seniority. Faculties must publicize their availability to the students by announcing office hours. Faculties must be evaluated by the students at the end of semesters. Faculties should present seminars on their research works at least once a year.

4) Collaboration: Although collaboration (joint research, faculty exchange, student exchange, joint degree program, cross-registration etc.) with reputed foreign universities may be difficult at this stage, it should be explored through the alumni network. However, BEC should initiate discussion for collaborations with other WB institutions such as IIT-Kharagpur, Jadavpur University, Calcutta University, IIM-Calcutta etc. Once, it is established, it can then be extended to other IITs/INI, National laboratories and Industry. In addition, BEC should develop a system where its alumni who are in academia or R&D can provide technical help to the BEC faculty (through collaborative research or spending sabbatical at BEC or co-guide for graduate students).

5) Career Center: Training dept. must be proactive. They should arrange for seminars for students to let them know of the different career options available (employment, graduate studies in engineering in India / outside India, MBA, all-India competitive examinations, etc.). BEC should encourage the students to take tests (such as TOEFL, GRE, GMAT, CAT, IAS, IRSE) so that the students have a no. of post-baccalaureate career options and can arrange for coaching by the faculty or outside groups to prepare the students for those tests. These students in their second semester of third year should start this program.

6) Alumni Interface: BESUS must take advantage of its alumni body, spread all over the world. BEC may appoint a director of alumni affairs who may be under professor-in-charge of career center. The director will collect alumni details (batch, dept., present mailing address, e-mail address and office address if possible) and keep them informed about the school. He/she will also solicit donations from the alumni. This office should ultimately take over the functions, now performed by web team of <http://www.becollege.org> and should work with GAA when it is registered. This effort will keep the alumni interested about their alma mater and they, in turn, will help to make it a better institution. Alumni should be allowed to be the members of the BESU's Executive Committee. Two/three representatives chosen by alumni should be in the committee.

Section I

Name: TAPAS DAS (28)
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Location: Poland

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

I am a very young alumnus to provide such kind of suggestions. But understanding the importance of topic, I want to add the following:

I believe that BEC has the infrastructure to be an institution of international standard. But to get an international acknowledgement, BEC need more connection with the universities abroad - like student/staff exchange, research collaboration etc. So I propose setting up a committee of professors to organize those

properly. The university can get a no. of advantages from that. The main advantage may be funding from other countries or earning foreign exchange by admitting foreign students. In various universities of Europe, there are numerous students from the Middle East and East Asia who pay about \$15000 to \$20000 per year for study. Now-a-days, India is also becoming popular destination for students from these countries. I think BEC must avail of this opportunity to earn the foreign exchange that may be used to improve the infrastructure/research facilities.

Section I

Name: AMIYA GOPAL MANDAL (29)
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Location: WB, India

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

1. The faculty members should invite selected alumni members in high position and connectivity in Industrial and Govt. sector for delivering professional lectures and expose students to current big projects in the vicinity and the employment scenario in their fields of activities and the approach the outgoing students should follow. (Note: I have very painfully observed that not a single student has ever visited any of the mega highway projects currently in progress within West Bengal. That could give them a direct application of theoretical knowledge, which can be practiced as well.)
 2. BESUS should take research projects connected with industrial requirement by having close liaison with counterparts. It should be a requirement for every faculty member, Assistant Professor onwards, to be linked with such activities. They must bring out technical papers in standard technical journals at least once a year.
 3. BESUS must interact with Ministries of technical departments of the Home State and neighboring states as well as the Central Govt.
 4. MoRTH spends lot of money in the Transportation Sector through IITs and other institutions. BESUS should grab such opportunities.
 5. Students must, I repeat, must be given adequate training and facility to improve vocabulary and communication skills and learn how to behave and talk in competitive industrial fields.
 6. Basics of Management should be included in the curriculum. Improvement of GK is essential through frequent group discussions on pre assigned topics so that students get habituated with acquiring GK as a matter of rule.
 7. There should be some job opportunities for the students to earn money through involvement in project works. The Institution should arrange loan facilities for the prosecution of studies.
 8. Health check up is essential. Students should be compulsorily engaged in Gym and Yoga activities in the first year so that interests grow automatically.
-

Section I

Name: PARTHA SARATHI BAG (30)
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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

It is all about infrastructure. We need to create world-class infrastructure and I guess the process should begin right from creating decent canteen facilities for our students. It is a pity that we do not even have a proper book store cum stationery shop at BESUS! What could be the solution to student politics? Do IIT students pursue political careers? I am NOT really aware of that. We need to change our rustic look, our age-old thought process and give it a complete facelift. We need to think global and perhaps in a much more matured and comprehensive manner.

We have to look for our Vinod Dhams, Kanwal Rekhis, Vinod Guptas, Narayana Murty and listen to them besides pampering them to bring in more funds for the overall betterment of our beloved BE College. And in my opinion, we need to be slightly more open and lenient and must allow enough liberty to all those who are bringing in funds so that they can utilise their money the way they feel the best. It should be a predominant requirement. Executive committees can at best suggest but let them not enjoy any overriding authority for any such big personal investments. Our whole objective should be to create a free and fair global environment where BE College can truly usher into a Technical Institute of International Excellence.

Section I

Name: ARINDAM MUKHOPADHYAY (31)
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Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT?
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)?

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

I don't know what level of details people are offering in their suggestions, but let me propose few at a macro level and if needed, I can elaborate them further.

1. Build a more national character: Let me qualify further on this - we can not successfully pitch for an IIT or INI status, if we truly are not a school of national character i.e. we do not open our gates to anyone and everyone from the country. We do have few seats earmarked for other states which are mostly reciprocity arrangement between the states, but not a true reflection of a cosmopolitan student base. We MUST shed the 'local' image and stereotype and don a prominent national color. Only way that can be achieved is to make our entrance examination truly national - we should try to emulate the BITS which I am sure are making bids to become IIT/ INI as well and in all fairness, already has a national image and admission system that caters to a larger audience. We must start the process of taking our admission out of Bengal now and that will be a great selling point when we will be competing against a bunch of equally strong, if not stronger institutions for the coveted INI spots. I am guessing here - but being established as a full fledged university must have given us some latitude to implement this suggestion quickly, may be from 2006 admission year itself.

2. Diversity of faculty: Again we have the same dichotomy here. Our core student base is from West Bengal, our professor base is 99% Bengali (probably 80% ex BE College), our teaching medium in many instances are in Bengali and we aspire to be an institution of 'national importance'! Unless we attract strong faculty from all over, we have no hope to be an IIT/ INI. Even if we get close, we can't sustain that unless we have a faculty dedicated to research and projects. This is a known fact that we haven't done a great job in churning out strong MEs and PhDs in last few decades. Hence, a moratorium on hiring faculty who have obtained all the professional qualifications only from BEC may not be a bad idea (difficult to implement though, but possible). What I am driving at is we need strong, diverse faculty and strong, diverse student base. An institute is only as good as its students and faculty - an auditorium here, a lab there are not going to make a significant difference if we don't focus on these two key constituents

3. Effective placement: This is another strong area for a professional school and has long been neglected. The dept. is an appendage to 'humanities' faculty with no professional support and attitude. In my last visit, I clearly observed a positive change with our new Placement Officer being in place, but we need more. What is still lacking is student participation in the placement process. They need to be more engaged in deciding how this should be run, because it impacts them the most.

4. Alumni engagement: This is one area where we have seen most traction in the last few years and that's very heartening. Although it's a little sad to see that the college does not draft the alumni in key decision-making process as much as it should, but the process has at least started.

Section I

Name: JAYANTA LAHIRI (32)
Batch and Dept.: 1986 EE
E-mail: jayantalahiri@yahoo.com
Phone Number:
Location: Karnatak, India

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? From 2003
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Web site and e-mails
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

1. A small percentage of students should be taken from outside the state; may be through AIEEE. This will give a cosmopolitan environment to the institute.
 2. The teacher selection should be impartial and should also be based on advertisement in newspapers in all major Indian cities. Candidates having BE/ME/PHD all three of them from BEC should be discouraged to join the institute. We want as teaching faculty people who have a wider experience in different institutes.
 3. Teachers should be encouraged to mix with the students and provide good tips on how to enhance their career. Most of the IITs have the concept of faculty advisor, which can be adopted by BESUS.
 4. Bright students passing out from BESUS should be tracked, and once they complete their higher studies (ME/PhD, etc.) should be offered a position in the faculty.
 5. Number of research scholars in every dept. should be increased substantially to make the institute a centre of excellence.
 6. Faculty promotions should be based on number of papers, number of PhD scholars guided, etc. Just taking into account number of years of service should not be sufficient.
 7. The central library requires to be augmented in a big way. Also it should be opened till midnight to enable students to do their research.
 8. The laboratories require to be kept open till late in the evening. This will encourage students to carry out their experiments
 9. Lot of emphasis on post-graduate studies should be given.
-

Section I

Name: ANONYMOUS (33)
Batch and Dept.: 2002 ETC
E-mail:
Phone Number:
Location: West Bengal, India.

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Since 2004.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Newspapers and alumni website.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

The system of accreditation must be a new thing in India. BESUS has the potential to upgrade its curriculum, infrastructure, faculty etc. along with a paradigm shift as Roorkee Engineering College did earlier. It can be achieved by imitating all good qualities from its predecessor. Looks like this accreditation business will be pretty critical in decisions regarding fund allocation, status evaluation, etc. in the future at least as far as BESUS is concerned.

- 1) Curriculum Modification: While the college scored well with the quality of its faculty and performance of students, it lost heavily on placements. The fact that the syllabus is archaic and had not been revised in a long time has been repeatedly pointed out. It is not that the curriculum should have to be so rigid. But one thing: it has to be structured so that a student graduating from the institution would not face any elementary problem in industry; that is, the curriculum should need more industry-oriented renovation.

2) Addition of New Programs: Academic Council should reconsider the process of evaluation pattern, which is prevailing at BESUS at present. The old tradition of giving persistence on mid-term is nothing but wasting of time as per my opinion. Required number of class tests can be a contemporary process.

3) Alumni-BESUS Collaboration: Any institution cannot prosper without the involvement and generous support from its eminent alumni. Thank god, BESUS authority is at last convinced about this eternal truth and is involving its alumni, who are in senior positions in pre-eminent research organizations and institutes worldwide, as external guides to ME/PhD students. Also the alumni and faculty of BESUS have already successfully initiated the Alumni seminar effort. Hopefully this wholehearted effort by alumni for the BESUS students will be extended in all directions in near future.

4) Faculty Responsibility: Academic freedom is special; it is necessary to the mission of professors in a college or university. Professional responsibility is its logical correlative. As individuals, professors have the responsibility to conduct themselves in ways that will promote the achievement of the purposes for which academic freedom exists. The responsibilities of a faculty member fall into five main areas: (1) to their subject, (2) to their students, (3) to the institution of which she/he is a part, (4) to their profession, and (5) to the community at large. I'm trying to throw some light particularly on the first two points:

1. In fulfilling their responsibility to their subject, the faculty members should, to the best of their ability: (a) seek and state the truth in that subject or discipline as they see it, (b) safeguard from attacks both within and outside the profession, the freedom of their colleagues and students to inquire, (c) keep themselves abreast of developments in their field, (d) comment on the professional work of their colleagues only in the appropriate place and manner, (e) base their professional judgments of their colleagues upon their contributions, actual or potential, to the subject, the institution, and the profession and (f) avoid conflicts of interest which restrict or prejudice their freedom of inquiry and teaching.

2. In fulfilling their responsibilities to their students, the faculty members should, to the best of their ability: (a) encourage and protect the students' freedom of inquiry and expression in their pursuit of knowledge, (b) guard the classroom against external pressures, (c) teach their subject to the student in accordance with the best standards of scholarship in the discipline, (d) respect the confidential nature of the relationship between professor and student, (e) refrain from using their relationship with their students to exploit them for personal advantage, (f) entertain and deal reasonably with questions relevant to their subject which are raised in the classroom, (g) acknowledge properly any significant assistance which is received from their students and (h) meet their obligations to, and comment on the work of each student only in appropriate place and manner, with justice and consideration for each student.

5) Last of All: The University needs a well-furnished canteen. It lost heavily on placements and other key parameters like library and Internet facilities, condition of hostels and laboratories. All the departments should be accessible to students from 7:00 in the morning until 10:00 at night with general computing labs open until midnight. Students using research stations/studios etc. should have 24/7 access to PCs and Internet. Not all the departments maintain an acceptable student to computer ratio. It should be maintained at 2:1 ratio if not 1:1 ratio. The placement cell should have a place which university like BESUS deserves so that recruiters become respectful to the concerned department as well as to the university. The authority should pay more attention to the reconstruction of the Placement cell. The university central library should not be confined to a one-floor accommodation. A separate building is very much essential in this regard. The library should be enriched with sufficient copies of the same book so that when the students from different departments are looking for the same book, they should be able to find one copy for him/herself. The journal section along with library should be easily accessible and contain recent publications and latest copies of journals for the benefit of the students.

In a nutshell, we are hoping to see our beloved University at the top and as an IIT/INI.

Section I

Name: Dr. KAJAL GUPTA (34)
Batch and Dept.: 1956 CE

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Phone Number:
Location: California, USA

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Following since its inception.
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Part of the initiative
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

(The following letter written to WB Minister as a part of the initiative is attached by the web team and it is published with the consent of Dr. K Gupta)

Prof. S. S. Chakraborty
Minister -in -Charge, Dept. of Higher Education
West Bengal Govt., Kolkata, India.

Dear Prof. Chakraborty,

I am writing this in support of my alma mater, the Bengal Engineering College's possible elevation to an IIT. This is motivated by my exposure to a recent announcement by the Indian PM to set up five new IIT's by upgrading promising academic institutions. Surely, the good old BE college with its history of 150 years academic excellence deserves to be upgraded. I contacted the Indian Embassy in DC and learnt of the upgrading process and hence this communication with you. As a distinguished Professor yourself, I am sure that you will agree with me that continued technological innovation is the key to progress and an upgrading of the BEC will ensure successful development of cutting edge technologies, beneficial to the state in particular and India in general.

From my experience with academic institutions such as CALTECH in Pasadena and now at NASA for the past 25 years or so I can assure you, as you already know, that R&D is vital to a nations economic health and an upgrading of the BEC to a research oriented higher institute of learning will go a long way in ensuring such a goal. The college has produced many exceptional professionals and it is time that its research faculty is strengthened to continue this trend of excellence.

During the late eighties, I served in the then Indian PM's committee on Aeronautics and Space and five of us were invited to visit the various relevant Indian institutions. We were hosted by Prof Narasimhan of IISc and others such as Dr. Kalam and Dr. Narayanam and visited their then respective R&D centers. Dr. Kalam is a Hypersonic flight vehicle enthusiastic and we were so impressed with his vision of future aerospace flight. With a person like him at the helm of affairs things will improve in India and an upgrading of institutions such as BEC will be the right catalyst for that to happen. I have been deeply involved with our Hypersonic (X-43) project and a number of distinguished scientific and technical institutions are associated with us in this incredible effort and these institutions of higher learning play a leading role in the project. Therefore an upgrading of the BEC will prove to be good for Bengal and India, as well.

I am confident that you will approve my request as above and send it out to MHRD for further consideration. Let us all pull together all our resources to make this a reality and as an ex-student of the BEC we will be eternally grateful for your help in this matter. In this connection I may also add that a similar institution such as Roorkee has taken the courageous step to rise above other narrow considerations to become an IIT and it is such distinguished academicians such as yourself who can make this a reality for our institution. I am indeed apologetic for taking your time in this matter and look forward to receiving a positive reply from you in this matter, after which I plan to communicate with the relevant offices of the central government in an effort to make this a reality.

Please be invited to visit us here at Edwards, perhaps coinciding with a future Shuttle landing.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

Kajal K. Gupta
D.Sc (Eng) (Lond), Ph.D (Lond), B.E. (Cal), FCGI, FIMA, FIStructE, FAIAA
Chief Technologist, NASA/DFRC, Edwards, California

Section I

Name:	RAMEN DUTTA (35)
Batch and Dept.:	2002 ETC
E-mail:	ramen_dutta@yahoo.co.in
Phone Number:	91-80-56604889, 91-9448866062
Location:	Bangalore, India

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Feb 2005
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Alumni website
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

1) Curriculum Modification & Laboratories:

The syllabi of almost all the departments should be revised and modified thoroughly according to modern technology and industry requirements. The same applies for laboratories, which need to be improved to approach the IIT/INI status. According to my opinion we are lagging far behind the IIT/INI in the above two areas which we need to look at immediately.

2) BESUS-Alumni Collaboration:

- Relationship with industries and other good universities (India and abroad) should be established so that students can go to different industries for training/final year projects/tech fests, etc. Most effective way to implement these is to develop more interaction between BESUS (i.e. faculties, students) and the alumni community.
- Established alumni who are in different industries and good universities (who are interested) should be invited for seminars/talks/presentations as frequently as possible.

To make BESUS an IIT/INI, there are many more things we all (students, faculties, alumni, authority and government) need to do and we have to come forward and contribute as much as we can. For converting BESUS to an IIT/INI, we need to enhance the infrastructure in every aspect. Finally I would like to see our beloved alma mater as one of the top educational institution in India either as an IIT or an INI.

Section I

Name: GOKUL PANDA (36)
Batch and Dept.: 1997 MinE
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Phone Number: 304 366 3870
Location: WV, USA

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2003
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Alumni website
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? NO
- Do you support conversion of BECUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

- Assist recent graduates without a job: recent graduates should be allowed to appear in campus interviews and a kind of batch clearance system should be implemented.
 - All computer laboratories should be kept open 24 hours for students and should have high-speed Internet connection.
 - Promote sports and extra-curricular activities among students; special achievers should be helped for greater achievements like playing at national and international level.
 - Special coaching should be provided for the improvement of communication skills to the students who lack them.
 - Reduce corruption in the administrative and academic system of the university.
 - Training of teaching stuffs for modern teaching technology and methodology followed in famous institutes.
-

Section I

Name: ANINDYA CHAKRABARTY (37)
Batch and Dept.: 2002 MBA
E-mail: anindya_79@yahoo.com
Phone Number: 033-2451-0045/ 98-3033-5539
Location: Kolkata, India

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative?
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? From e-mail

- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BECUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

More focus and initiative needs to be taken to add value to the Management (MBA) program. The course material should be reviewed regularly and industry feedback should be incorporated. Placement support needs to be stronger. The library, student's auditorium and electronic facilities need to be improved in order to attain international standards. The alumni-BESUS relationship needs to be strengthened further by making alumni database widely and easily available, so that anybody can be contacted in the shortest possible time.

Section I

Name: RAJDEEP DUTTA (38)
Batch and Dept.: 1988 EE
E-mail: rajdeep_dutta2003@yahoo.com
Phone Number: 968-9960-0765
Location: Muscat, OMAN

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2003
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Alumni website
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BECUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

(1) BESUS in co-ordination with Calcutta University should publish an official alumni list. This should be taken from the records of BESUS and Calcutta University. This list should mention to the minimum: Year, Department & Name (of the student). If BESUS need to deploy additional resources for services of any professional firm, it can be funded by the alumni community.

(2) BESUS in consultation with GAA should issue approved procedures for alumni community needs. For example:

- Student sponsorship procedure
 - Fund donation procedure
 - Alumni engineering graduation confirmation procedure
 - Duplicate engineering graduation certificate issue procedure
 - Duplicate mark sheet issue procedure
 - Alumni visiting lecture procedure
-

Section I

Name: Dr. SANTANU K. KARMAKAR (39)
Batch and Dept.: 1983 ME
E-mail: skk@mech.becs.ac.in
Phone Number: 98-3114-5516 (M); 91-33-2668-4918 (R)
Location: WB, India

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Initiator
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Initiator
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BECUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

- Bengal Engineering College, established 150 years back, remains one of the premier centres of technical education in the country.
- Despite rapid expansion of engineering education and establishment of a large number of new engineering colleges all over India to cater to the enhanced demands for engineering graduates, B.E. College has retained its position of eminence. In recognition to this, it was elevated to the status of a Deemed University in 1992. Since then it has been making rapid inroads in the area of postgraduate education and research.
- B.E. College, with its rich human resource and a commendable record of service to the nation, has been successful in securing several grants and research funding from central government organizations as well as international organizations. The Institution is now poised to play a major role in the growth of India by developing new technologies and achieving global status with state of the art knowledge base. Its ability to prepare the students for meeting global challenges in the academic arena has remained above par.
- Although, Bengal Engineering College has just been elevated to the status of a full-fledged University, the State Government is still not in a position to provide an annual grant of more than Rs.20 crore to the institute. In contrast, Government of India provides an annual grant of Rs.100 crore to Institutes of National Importance like IITs. Thus, it is obvious that State Government grant to BEC is too meager to meet the financial requirement of the Institute to maintain its premier status.
- This situation can largely be mitigated if this heritage institution into an Institute of National Importance; thus becoming eligible to get a larger grant of 100 crore. The conversion to an INI is long overdue to our Alma Mater.

BESUS lays a strong claim for achieving this status immediately for the following reasons for the claim, inter-alia, include the following:

- Having a rich history and tradition of providing excellent technical personnel to the nation and also to many developed countries.
- It has an unparalleled locational advantage because of its proximity to the developed infrastructure and engineering environment of Kolkata and Howrah and yet having a large developed campus with residential facilities for students, faculty members and staff.
- It has always drawn the best of available faculty members and has the, potential of drawing even International level faculty members in future because of the advantages the closely located Cosmopolis offers.
- Well-established access to national and international research grants.
- Access to a large alumni base settled abroad who are ready to extend both financial and academic help.

- Having an acceptance as a premier education institution with all established Professional Institutions and academic bodies of the world.

This move, when successful, will:

- Immediately enhance the job opportunities and future growth potential of passing out students.
- Funnel in larger funds from the central government and quasi government bodies in the form of research grants, development assistance etc.
- Enhance quality and quantity of postgraduate studies and academic research work.
- Act as a triggering mechanism for larger active interest of alumni, who will feel an enhanced status in the eyes of their peers. This can bring in greater financial and sustained technological and academic support for the institution to grow and develop in the desired direction.
- Attract the best quality faculty.
- Add prestige and wealth to the educational system of the STATE.
- Reduce the financial liability of the Govt. of West Bengal as the Institution will be able to achieve financial independence rapidly.
- The State can use the fund saved due to this transformation and can use the same to develop a few other high quality modern technical institutions in the State.

Section I

Name: SIDDHARTHA BANERJEE (40)
Batch and Dept.: 2003 ME
E-mail: email@sbanerjee.fr.fm
Phone Number: 519-252-9844
Location: Ontario, Canada

Section II

- . When did you first hear first about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? In my B.E. final year (2003).
- . How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? From Dr. S.Karmakar
- . Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- . Do you support conversion of BECUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

1. BEC/BESUS/BESUS should start admitting students on all India basis examinations (like IIT-JEE or AIEEE).
2. Alumni should help BEC/BESUS/BESUS administration to help improve infrastructures. This is to include 24x7 library, laboratory and computer.
3. We should build an intranet network and main server should be UNIX based system. We should provide leading engineering software (alumni can help purchasing license) and each student should be given a login ID and password to directly login to UNIX system and then he/she can browse electronic journals, papers, books, do assignments online etc.

Section I

Name: ARINDAM SINGHA (41)

Batch and Dept.: 2002 ME
E-mail: Arindam.singha@gmail.com
Phone Number: 519 252 9844
Location: Ontario, Canada

Section II

- When did you first hear first about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? When I was at IISc (2003)
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? From <http://www.rediff.com> site.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BECUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

- The laboratory infrastructure should be changed. Till 2002, every single instrument in the laboratory was in FPS system. We had to convert everything into SI for the report. Also, there are lots of junk machines that do not work at all. These are shown to the students and are told that some professor had used this machine in a particular year to produce a “so called” famous paper.
- The interaction with industry at B E College is nil. I have done ME in IISc and seen that IISc works simultaneously with the industry. This brings a lot of funds and each professor has to contribute 40% of the money to the department. This money is used for the students. The main advantage of this is that there is a lot of money available in the department for students’ use in addition to the government grant. This makes every department self sufficient in the economic front.
- The syllabi should be changed and updated immediately. Although I did fairly well in GATE, based on my experience, I can state that the existing syllabus is one of the main reasons, why B E College students are not performing well in GATE or other competitive national examinations.

Section I

Name: PRANESH BISWAS (42)
Batch and Dept.: 1990 CE
E-mail: pranesh9000@yahoo.com
Phone Number: 403-269-3147
Location: Alberta, Canada

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2003
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? Alumni website
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? NO
- Do you support conversion of BECUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR, Mumbai, and AIIMS-Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments - Maximum 500 words

- Make an Audio-Visual Communication Laboratory to increase the proficiency in reading, writing and presentation skills among the students. Make a High Speed Internet enabled Computer Laboratory with at least 4 computers in every hostel administered by paid Student Laboratory Administrator. Computer access will be through a nominal monthly fee. Free things do not live long! Foster a culture among students of giving back to Alma Mater through prominent display of name of alumni donors for donating money or kinds to the university. Arrange an interactive session with successful alumni donors to the present students. Create in-campus jobs for needy students, which will increase the student participations in campus activities.
- Arrange teachers' training/exchange program with foreign universities to let the teachers bring new ideas into the campus and to know what is happening worldwide.
- Make an in-campus FULL TIME alumni office equipped with High Speed Internet connection, computer, Internet-FAX, VoIP phone for calling alumni worldwide. It should be run by a full time, preferably a woman who has excellent English and Bengali reading, writing and speaking skills. She has to communicate with alumni worldwide, listen to their needs as well as ask for their donation for the alumni funded projects at the university. She should be a real liaison officer between the university and the alumni worldwide.
- University should tap the potentiality of the organized Alumni worldwide (Thanks to Internet!) that are willing to do something for the alma mater and work/donate for the good cause or projects for the institute.
- University Web site should be more attractive and informative with individual department's own web pages. Lots of examples of such beautifully and nicely made university web sites are available on the internet. Follow one of such university web site, check their contents. Does it really need money to build such web sites? It could be a real life academic project for the present senior IT and computer science students who can build such web sites easily! Needs to tap the potentiality of the present IT and Computer Science students and some 'willing to do' real web experts of BEC Alumni around the world.

Section I

Name: JYOTI PRAKASH GHOSH (43)
Batch and Dept.: 2000 CE
E-mail: ghosh5@uwindsor.ca
Phone Number: 519-252-9844
Location: Ontario, Canada

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? In my B.E. final year (2003).
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? From Newspaper.
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BECUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS - Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

1. BEC/BESUS/BESU should start admitting students from all over India through tests like IIT-JEE or AIEEE. Also effort should be given to admit students from abroad to improve the vision of students and cultures as well.

2. Alumni should play some role in terms of donating money and providing suggestions as well to the administrations for infrastructural improvement of BEC/BESUS. This includes 24x7 library (subscription of journals, commodious reading section, and availability of more computers for studying materials online.), laboratories, hostels, bookstore and computers.

3. We should build an intranet network and main server should be UNIX based system. There we should provide leading engineering software (alumni can help purchasing license) and each student should be given a login ID and password to directly login to the UNIX system and then he can browse electronic journals, papers, books, do assignments online etc.

4. Students should get acclimatized with the industry, i.e. industrial application of knowledge is required. To achieve that I believe certain things can be taken up, vocational training after 6th semester, should be a part of curriculum (carry some marks) and the students need to prepare a brief report on their training which will contain a critique part (what equipment/software we are lacking in university to fulfill their knowledge).

The professors of the concerned department should try to make up for the area that the university is lacking. If possible (economy permits) they should buy the equipment/software. Alumni association also should help in this regard.

Section I

Name: ASIM K. ROY (44)
Batch and Dept.: 1956 Arch
E-mail: asimroy@mts.net
Phone Number: 204-453-0850
Location: Winnipeg, Canada

Section II

- When did you first hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? 2003
- How did you hear about BESUS to IIT/INI initiative? www.becollege.org and President of BECAA Canada
- Do you support conversion of BESUS to an IIT? YES
- Do you support conversion of BECUS to an INI (Like IISc - Bangalore, TIFR – Mumbai, AIIMS - Delhi)? YES

Section III

Your comments – Maximum 500 words

I understand that the members of the web team are collecting various ideas from the alumni for improvements to different aspects of BESUS. These ideas are to be presented to the Vice Chancellor by the end of May, 2005. In this context, I submit the following proposal, which may be given consideration, if and when BESUS attains the status of an IIT/INI:

Establish a school of languages that will have facilities to teach, in addition to Bengali and English, different Asian languages (such as Japanese and Chinese), as well as European languages (such as Spanish, French and German) that are considered very useful for development and exchange of knowledge in various fields of sciences, engineering, architecture and planning. Considering the rapid economic and technical developments in East Asian countries, and Sibpur's (Kolkata) gateway location in relation to these countries, special emphasis may be placed in teaching Chinese and Japanese to the students of BESUS (or the INI) at

its campus). Language laboratories may be set up for all the languages taught at the BESUS, giving it an edge over other IITs/INIs, as far as language capabilities are concerned.

In spite of high academic performance of (formerly) B. E. College students, their communication skills may have room for improvement. Hence, my suggestion is to establish a school that should teach languages and communication skills including public speaking (such as Toastmasters Program) in English and various other languages.
