



# Y-Point

*the webZINE of the IIT Bombay Alumni Association*

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In this issue ...

Letter from IIT Bombay  
by Prof. S.L.N Murthy

Editorial

From the desk of Ram Kelkar (B. Tech. 80) ... Setting an example

Interview

Ram Kelkar interviews Sudhakar Shenoy (B Tech 70), President of Information Management Consultants, Inc

A Tryst with Excellence

Dr. Sukhatme's 1999 Roadshow Presentation ... "the Institute as a nucleus for a new Route 128 or a new Silicon Valley" ... "I dream of an IIT which never forgets that it has a tryst with excellence"

Reports from the roadshow -

Boston - Dwarika Agarwal

Chicago - Prof. Vinayak Dravid

Dallas - Abhishek Bhutra

Houston - Pradeep Anand

New York and pictures from the event

Southern California

The Chicago Distinguished Alumni Forum

Mahesh Krishnamurthy reports on the IIT Bombay Heritage Fund's meeting in Chicago

The US comes calling for IITians

George Mason University comes to Mumbai to attract IITians

An Appeal for IITB - Class of 1974

The Class of 1974 plans its Silver Jubilee

Excellence in Teaching Awards 1999

IIT Bombay Heritage Fund sponsored the 1999 Excellence in Teaching Awards

School of Management is inaugurated

Mukesh Ambani inaugurates the School of Management

Class Notes

Who, what, where ... updates about the whereabouts and new achievements of your classmates.

News from IIT Bombay

Read in the October newsletter about Mukesh Ambani inaugurating the School of Management, and in the September newsletter about the 37th Convocation.

**Letter from IIT Bombay**

by Prof. S.L.N. Murthy, Office of the Dean (Resource Development)

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14th September 1999

Dear Friends,

It's the tail end of monsoon here and the campus looks very beautiful with the added green cover; of course a lot of renovation and painting has helped. The School of management building, interesting architecturally, has blended well into the LT- CC surroundings. You must visit the campus to see things for yourselves.



The admission process for the year 1999-2000 is over. In all 1210 students were admitted this year. The Kanwal Rekhi School of Information Technology admitted its first batch of students. The KReSIT building is coming up next to the Computer Centre. Temporarily the school is functioning from the Mathematics Department, ground floor.

The 37th Convocation was held on 6th August '99. This year, we crossed the 1 K mark, and 1012 students received their degrees. The Convocation has become quite colourful- with the graduates wearing traditional 'Uttariyas' , the Senate members sporting pastel gowns, and visuals accompanying the Director's report. Sri Azim Premji, Chairman WIPRO Ltd. (with the public image of being the richest Indian today) was the Chief guest. It was most appropriate that the CEO of a very successful software group should have addressed the last Convocation of the century, bridging the modest past with the exciting future in software.

The Vanamahotsav of IITB was held on 21st August. Saplings of flowering trees were planted in the lake side residential area. Over 40 Alumni who were on campus (including one from Dallas) for the "Monsoon Dhamaka" programme were enthusiastic participants at the tree planting. As IITB grows and spreads knowledge, we hope that these saplings planted by our Alumni will soon grow into big trees spreading their branches.

IITB celebrated Teacher's day on 6th of September. Eight of our faculty members were honored with 'Excellence in Teaching' awards. The award carried a citation, and a cash component of Rs.10,001 sponsored by IIT Bombay Heritage Fund.

The School of Management and the Industrial Research and Consultancy Centre (IRCC) have shifted to the new building adjacent to LT. Today, Shri. Mukesh Ambani, Vice Chairman and Managing Director of Reliance Industries is inaugurating the School of Management building, while Prof. M.G.K. Menon, Chairman, BOG is inaugurating the IRCC building.

The first beneficiaries of campus networking have been the girls of H-10. Since July, they have been able to access email and Internet from the comfort of their hostel. The proximity of H-10 was one catalytic factor - the other being Prof. Dipan Ghosh's (currently Head Computer centre) special concern for the hostel of which he was the warden some years ago!

This time I am writing a short letter, since Prof. Sukhatme and I expect to meet most of you personally during the forthcoming Road show.

Looking forward to meeting you all!

With best wishes,

Narayanamurthy.

(Prof. S.L. Narayana Murthy)

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Editorial

### **Setting an example**

by Ram V. Kelkar (B. Tech. (EE) 80 / H2)

The last few months have been exciting as Dr. Sukhatme's roadshow rolled across the US from coast to coast. I myself was especially pleased to have attended the [Chicago Distinguished Alumni Forum](#) which brought together an impressive panel of IITians who have achieved success in various fields including the computer industry, venture capital, banking and education.

One theme that Kanwal Rekhi emphasized and that Dr. Sukhatme touched upon as well was especially appealing to me ... *setting an example*. It is not enough to just achieve success yourself ... the real challenge is to help others around you to succeed as well.

IITians are rarely accused of being modest about their views that their college is the very best in India, and amongst the best in the world. The many success



stories of IITians have proved that this is no idle boast. As we enter the new millennium, it is important that we as IITians go one extra step and make it a goal to be beacons of excellence for others - whether in our own communities in the US, or in India.

Kanwal emphasized this idea in the Chicago Summit by saying that IIT must set an example for all of India ... who else could be in a better position to do this than the graduates of India's premier institutions ?

Dr. Sukhatme laid out his dream of IIT Bombay being the nucleus of India's Silicon Valley or Route 128, just as Stanford University and MIT were for those very regions in the US. IITians from the US may be able to transport some of the excitement that is being felt all across the USA, as the entrepreneurial urge is being felt not just in Silicon Valley but all across the country.

Sudhakar Shenoy, who is [interviewed](#) in this issue of Y-Point, pointed out that in the Washington DC area, a number of corporations were so eager to attract IITians that they were willing to put up hard cash to fund their Graduate education at George Mason University, if they agreed to stay in the DC area to work or to establish start-up businesses. The [GMU initiative](#) that Sudhakar has taken to help enhance IIT's reputation and to assist in bringing talent and future business-builders to the DC area is worth emulating.

It is easy to put down the environment in India and to conclude that change will take a long time. Yet IITians in India, such as Nandan Nilekani at Infosys, have proved that the "new economy" is growing in India as well. IITians across the world should do what they can to nurture and support these nascent developments in India, and once again, set an example for other expatriates to emulate.

Setting an example ... trying to make a difference ... helping others succeed ... these were the consistent themes from Chicago and I hope we all can think and act on these ideas in the days to come.

I will end by appealing as usual to all of you to stop and think about how you can help the institution that has given so much to you ... even \$100 from each of us per year could easily raise over \$200-250,000 if we also ensure that our employers match the contributions. Please take a moment to send in your tax deductible contributions to the IIT Bombay Heritage Fund. All it takes is a check and a first-class stamp ... the address is Treasurer, [IIT Bombay Heritage Fund](#), 10489 Rampart Avenue, Cupertino, CA 95014.

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Interview: **Sudhakar Shenoy (BTech EE70 / H3)**

by [Ram Kelkar](#) (BTech EE 80 / H2)

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Sudhakar Shenoy is the Founder and President of [Information Management Consultants, Inc.](#), of McLean, Virginia, a computer systems consulting firm. He graduated from IIT Bombay in 1970, with a B. Tech. degree in Electrical Engineering, and from the University of Connecticut with a MSEE in 1971, and an MBA in 1973. He started his company, IMC, in 1981 and it now employs over 350 people in Virginia, and another 35 in India. Prior to that, he taught at UConn for a short while and held various positions including that of CFO with Windsor Manufacturing, and was also with American Management Systems in the Washington DC area. Sudhakar was recently featured in an [article](#) in "[Business Solutions](#)". Sudhakar has helped set up an [interesting program](#) together with GMU to attract IITians to the Washington DC area.

**Q: What are the most vivid memories you have of your days at IIT Bombay ?**

A: The friendships that were formed are still strong, 25 years later, when I go and meet my friends in New Delhi or in the US. The campus life, the quietness ... visiting the temple just before the exams. MS Kamath ! Life was tough then, and compared to what we went through, school was a lot easier in the US. Crossing the pipeline behind Hostel 3 to go to the lake, which was rumored to have crocodiles ! Gulab jamuns from the Bhaiyya at Y-P ...



**Q: What do you value most from your IIT experience ?**

A: I don't use much of what I actually learned, but the thinking process, the camaraderie ... all the experiences form the nucleus of what I am today. Running a company is a high pressure business, and having been through IIT and handled the six-day 8:30 to 5:30 routine helps a lot.

**Q: Where did you earn your first paycheck and how did you celebrate ?**

A: In my 4th Year, I was lucky enough to get a Summer internship with the Battery Products division at Union Carbide for Rs. 200 a month. It seemed like I was really rich ...

**Q: What were some of the setbacks you had to overcome on the road to success?**

A: The struggle to settle in the US ... starting my business in 1981 with my last \$2000. My wife went to work for the first time in her life since I was just setting the business up, though fortunately, within 6 months, I was settled enough that she could quit ... I have been fortunate in many ways, and life has been good.

**Q: How do you relate to other IITians today ?**

A: The bonds formed with IIT and IITians are very close. Every Christmas, I make it a point to call over 100 friends all around the world, whether from my hostel, department, or batch. I recently met Hemant Kanakia (of Torrent Networking), and within minutes, we were talking like the old times as IITians. On a trip to India, I met a classmate after over 27-28 years, with whom I used to run a "roulette" game at IIT.

When I called him out of the blue, all I had to say was - "Yaar, aaj raat ko roulette ka game hai" and the recognition was instant.

**Q: What are the kinds of things that you are doing now or want to do more of ?**

A: I firmly believe that it is not enough just to make money ... one has to give back to society. It can be anything ... money, time, advice. I am on the Advisory Board for George Mason University, on the Board of the University of Connecticut Fund, on the Board of Trustees of Georgetown Prep, on the Governor's Technology Committee for the State of Virginia. I also help out with the Darrell Green Youth Foundation for inner city children.

**Q: What message would you send to the IIT Bombay administration ?**

A: It is imperative that IIT maintains its very high standards. The name has become a ticket to success, and has a universal stamp of approval. Maintaining the excellence is key ...

**Q: What do you think are the responsibilities of the alumni?**

A: Alumni need to take part in preserving and enhancing what we have. A hundred years from now, IIT should continue to have the same kind of reputation. Once again, they should give money, time, advice ... whatever ... for example, IITians should make it a habit to give 1 - 2 - 3 % of their income - whatever amount they wish, but on a regular basis.

**Q: Who were the most influential people in your life ?**

A: My father, K.V. Shenoy, who was the General Manager of UCOBank and Corporation Bank, my uncle, K.A. Shenoy, who was a pioneer in the education field ... and another uncle, K.G. Shenoy, who was the first in the family to come to the US. I got my business aptitude from my grandfather. From IIT, I remember Professors Bedford and Isaac.

**Q: What's new and interesting in your own family life outside work ?**

A: My daughters have graduated from college, one from Colorado and the other from George Mason, and are working locally. We live in a tremendously exciting time ... I am involved with 3 *e-commerce* startups, and I am completely absorbed in them.

**Teenies :**

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Favorite hangout       | Y-Point Bhaiyya for Gulab Jamun and Kheer                        |
| Studiosness rating     | 2 on a scale of 1 to 10  |
| Most dreaded Professor | Prof. M.S. Kamath  |
| Most dreaded course    | Machine Design   |
| Ragging experience     | "Going to Simla" for Saibal Ganguly, because I was from Calcutta |
| Favorite mess food     | Chicken curry  |
| Favorite book          | "Only the paranoid survive" by Andy Grove                        |
| Currently reading      | Assorted mystery books   |
| Favorite vacation spot | San Diego, Australia   |
| Golf handicap          | 20 ... a honest 20 !   |

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Article

## **A Tryst With Excellence**

by Dr. Suhas Sukhatme

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***A summary of the slide presentation given by Dr. Sukhatme's during the IIT Bombay Heritage Fund roadshow held in September-October 1999.***

### LOOKING BACK - LOOKING FORWARD

“The education we seek to provide, although eminently practical in its aims, has no affinity with that instruction in mere empirical routine which has sometimes been vaunted as the proper education for those who are to engage in industries. We believe, on the contrary, that the most truly practical education, even in an industrial point of view, is one founded on a thorough knowledge of scientific laws and principles, and one which unites with habits of close observation and exact reasoning, a large general cultivation”

William Barton Rogers = Founder of M.I.T.

### **Academic Programmes**

- Existing programmes - Our basic strength
- Review of common core courses in UG programme
- New programmes and Schools
  1. Five year dual degree
  2. M.Sc. in Applied Statistics & Informatics
  3. Master of Management
  4. M.Tech. in Information Technology
- Programme with German Universities for M.Tech. students
- Increase in enrolment
- Tuition fees
- Joint Entrance Examination (JEE)
- Our ranking

### Tuition Fees per Year for B Tech Degree

- 1958-1992 : Rs. 200
- 1992-1997 : Rs. 1,000
- 1997 : Rs.12,000
- 1998: Rs.17,000
- 1999: Rs.22,000
- 2000: Rs.27,000

Tuition fee today covers only about 20% of the cost of education. Many students get waivers and scholarships.

Sponsored Research

- Growth over the years
- Technology Development Missions
  - Food Process Engineering
  - Integrated Design and Competitive Manufacturing
  - Partnership with industry
- Establishment of new Centres for research and new facilities
  - Centre for Aerospace Systems Design and Engineering
  - Centre for Formal Design and Verification of Software
  - Partnership with national scientific agencies
- Industrial Research and Consultancy
  - Growth over the years
  - Number of projects every year - approximately 1000
  - A beginning made with international projects
  - Technology transfers
  - Patents

#### Institute Programmes

- Foundation Day
- Convocation
- Teacher's Day
- Alumni Day
- Institute Lectures

#### Our Students

##### Today's undergraduate student - a profile

- Strengths
  - Has the ability to look at problems from a fundamental view point
  - Strong in applying mathematical techniques
- Weaknesses
  - Lacking in creativity and in engineering design skills
  - Not many want to be entrepreneurs
- New extra-curricular activities
  - Techfest
  - Cross Roads
  - Yantriki

#### The Faculty

- Strength - more or less constant - around 360
- New additions
- Student-faculty ratio
- Attracting outstanding faculty
- Need to provide more incentives

#### Funding

- Earlier method of funding (till 1993) by the Ministry of Human Resource Development
- The new method of funding
  - Block grant
  - Force majeure
  - Creation of an endowment fund
  - Matching grants for savings

#### Resources Development

- Creation of the post of Dean (Resource Development)
- Setting up structures and processes for receiving and handling donations
- Alumni Office
- Budgetting

#### Our Alumni

- About 22,000 students have obtained their degrees from IIT/B so far
- About 6000 are abroad
- Made a name for themselves and for their alma mater
- Strengthening links with our alumni
  - Alumni Day
  - Distinguished Alumnus Award
  - Distinguished Service Award
- IIT-B Alumni Association - including The Mumbai Chapter
- IIT Bombay Heritage Fund - a magnificent alumni effort
- Alumni contributions
- What alumni can do further
- The need for a cooperative effort by the IITs

#### Looking Forward

- Growth in the areas of biosciences, bioengineering and biotechnology
- Centres/Schools in specialized areas or interdisciplinary areas (Examples: Energy Systems Engineering, Food Process Engineering, Mechatronics, Nano-Technology, Membrane Technology, Opto-electronics)
- Contributing to the economic development process
- The Institute as a nucleus for a new Route 128 or a new Silicon Valley
- An international character - more exchange programmes - more foreign students - Office of International Relations
- Distance education programmes
  - Reaching out to larger numbers
  - PG diploma seems most appropriate
- Increase in student enrolment
  - Around 5000 (residential)
  - UG : PG ratio 1 : 1
- Student mix
  - 20 to 30% women
  - 10% foreign students
- Faculty strength
  - Around 550

#### Concluding Remarks

I dream of an IIT which never forgets that it has a tryst with excellence

Article

## Boston

### A Report on the IIT Bombay Heritage Fund Event in Boston

by [Dwarika Agarwal](#)

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A group of IIT Bombay alumni and their friends held a very successful meeting at the Marriott in Burlington, MA on September 26, 1999. Kishore Deshpande was in charge of organizing this event and about 35 people attended it. Other members of the team included Anil Kharkar, Suhas Joglekar, Jawa Tembulkar, Amit Jain and D.P. Agarwal.

This was one of the four meetings in the last three months, which have been organized by the alumni/alumnae from different IITs to honor the Directors and the Professors from their respective Institutes. All four delegations had very similar messages. They gave the current status of their IITs and provided their vision for the future. They also emphasized the need to improve communications with the alumni around the world and felt that the IITSINE approach of an all IIT Alumni Association is appropriate for most of the alumni gatherings. IITSINE (<http://www.iitsine.org>) was organized in 1991-1992 time period and it stands for Indian Institutes of Technology - Society In New England. Canada has a similar organization and recently a similar group has been started in Houston. It is called IIT Forum. The IIT Bombay alumni present at the meeting also felt that it would be much easier to achieve a critical mass with a combined group and a much more orchestrated effort could be launched from different IITs.

The IIT Bombay delegation included Director Sukhatme and Prof. S.L. Narayanamurthy, Dean of Resource Development. Prof. Narayanamurthy joined us in Boston on September 26 and the same day Director Sukhatme was talking to the Alumni in the Chicago area. In addition to a presentation by Dean Narayanamurthy, we had a Keynote Address by Prof. Amar Bhide. Amar is an Associate Professor at Harvard Business School. The title of his talk was "The Origin and Evolution of New Businesses". He has just finished writing a book with the same title. Both of the presentations were very well received. The core group was also very interested in getting alumni feedback and therefore, the first segment of the meeting was devoted to a discussion on their expectations and frustrations about alumni 'Networking' meetings. A summary of these discussions is given below. It was prepared by Jawa Tembulkar. We also had a small segment on 'Down Memory Lane' and T-shirts with IIT Bombay logo were available for \$10.00 each.

What will excite/enthuse folks?

- Networking was the most popular. It included the following sorts of interaction:
  1. Professional networking to enable career development, including recruitment and jobs.
  2. Discuss experiences with new businesses, finding venture capital, etc. TIE was brought up by those who are also members of that group.
- Identify mutually beneficial ways (other than monetary donation) for alumni and the alma mater. Collaborative R&D and projects to IIT faculty.
- Be informed about What's New at IIT-B. New programs, future plans, goals for expansion, spending patterns, opportunities, etc.
- Foster social networking among alumni and their families.
- Host guest speakers who are eminent in their fields.
- Provide feedback to alumni on how the Heritage fund donations are being utilized. Basically demonstrate accountability.
- Have a Newsletter that keeps member alumni abreast of what happened in the last meeting, changes in membership, etc.

What will turn off folks?

- If the meetings are only focused on fund raising. Basically avoid aggressive fund raising.
- If there is no follow through on decisions that we collectively take.
- Ensure that donor information (e.g. email) is kept private. Donors don't wish to get bombarded by hostel, department, etc., for donations, once they make a donation to the Heritage Fund.
- Ensure that no "clique/group" emerges to run the alumni association. I read in this, that we should try and get as wide a representation as possible among the organizers - year of graduation, where one is from in India, department, profession, etc.
- Should not become merely a social club.

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Article

## Chicago

by Prof. Vinayak Dravid

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### IIT Alumni Association

Mid-West Chapter Event September 26, 1999

The third IITB AA mid-west chapter event for 1999 was held at the spacious banquet hall of the Viceroy Restaurant in Lombard, IL, on Sept. 26, 1999. The event's highlight was the presence of Prof. S.P. Sukhatme, Director of IITB and Dr. Hemant Kanakia, entrepreneur and alumnus of IITB (1975, H8).

The event started with mingling and chatting prior to the luncheon, highlighted by the presence of one of the earliest batch-mates (1966) to the newest (1999). The crowd (more than 70) was diverse with family and kids taking advantage of the rare sunny day in Chicago-land (arranged specially by the local organizers). Many of our alumni traveled long distance for this special event, some from the remote



parts of prairie land of Indiana and Iowa! Following lunch, our local master of ceremonies, Sukumar Thanawala (1984, H6), set the stage for the event with brief remarks about the IITB AA mid-west chapter and introduced yet another local organizer, Vinayak Dravid (1984, H4). Vinayak spoke about the IITB HF mission, the relevance of the mid-west chapter in that context and the local flavor of mid-west chapter objectives and plans. Vinayak ended his brief remarks by welcoming Prof. Sukhatme to Chi-town.

Prof. Sukhatme, with his characteristic - honest, no-nonsense, right from the heart- style articulated his mission and vision for IITB. Prof. Sukhatme's speech preceded by a pretty nifty video about IITB, made by our own IITB Education Department. It was clear from the looks of the audience that they were almost taken away to our beautiful campus and it was a pretty good dose of nostalgia for all. Following the video

(which is available as a CD-ROM), Prof. Sukhatme spoke, quite informally, about the latest scoop at IITB, ranging from changes in JEE entrance examination to plans for new initiatives in research and education. He emphasized that research is becoming an important part of IITB faculty and students. Prof. Sukhatme entertained questions from audience, which ranged from gender issues in faculty hiring to new academic programs in IT.

Following Prof. Sukhatme's talk, Dr. Hemant Kanakia spoke about his experience in starting Torrent Networking and outlined his personal thoughts in his talk, appropriately titled: From Y-Point to Torrent: A journey of Thousand Detours! As it is well known by now, Hemant's Torrent Networking Technologies was recently purchased by Ericsson for \$ 450 million. Hemant gave his personal impressions about the anxieties and excitement of starting your own company, emphasized the role of IITB alumni network and how he benefited from advice and assistance from other IITB alum. Hemant joked about the name of his company and how his friend who suggested the name for the company, chose to opt for dinner in Manhattan instead of stock options! Hemant answered all sorts of questions from the audience, ranging from when to think about starting on your own to challenges in formulating business plan from scientific ideas.

Following Hemant's speech, Ashish Kothari, another local organizer, spurred the audience with remarks about our vision for mid-west chapter and how we would like to see every member to participate in formulating the course of the chapter starting with our next event. A few free T-shirts were thrown to those with great suggestions!

The event ended with vote of thanks to all participants, our guests and sponsor for the event, Valuecom. It is a reminder to all that although the dreaded Chicago winter will be upon us soon, there is plenty of room for in-door event before the Buckingham fountain starts again in April!

Your humble mid-west organizers (ghodas!): Vinayak Dravid ([v-dravid@inwu.edu](mailto:v-dravid@inwu.edu)), Ashish Kothari ([akothari1@hotmail.com](mailto:akothari1@hotmail.com)), Gopi Sethumadhavan ([gopisethu@hotmail.com](mailto:gopisethu@hotmail.com)), Sukumar Thanawala ([sthanawala@qrm.com](mailto:sthanawala@qrm.com)), Nitin Vaish ([nva738@merle.acns.nwu.edu](mailto:nva738@merle.acns.nwu.edu)) with considerable help from Pradyumna Prabhumirashi.

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Article

## Dallas

by Abhishek Bhutra

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The North Texas Chapter of IIT Bombay Alumni Association (IITB-AANT) kicked off its activities by hosting its first professional event - luncheon reception for Dr. S.L. Narayana Murthy, Dean of Resources, IIT Bombay, on Sunday October 3, 1999, at Arthur Anderson Gallery, the Cox School of Business, Southern Methodist University, Dallas. The featured speaker for this event was Kanwal Rekhi, entrepreneur and 1967 alumnus of IIT Bombay. The event was attended by over 50 fellow alumnus from the Dallas-FortWorth metroplex and some even coming from Austin.

In his opening talk, Dr. S. L. Narayana Murthy (Dean, Resource Development, IIT Bombay) spoke about the current state of the institute, recent accomplishments, vision, and the role of the alumni in IIT Bombay's "tryst with excellence". The vision of the institute and the steps underway to enhance the "soft and hard infrastructure", are exemplary and will enable this IIT to be one of the best schools in the world. He notified us of the joint No. 1 rank in India and Top 6 in Asia, which was recently bestowed to the institute. Audience were informed of some the changes taking place at the institute like opening of new school of management, interdisciplinary programs in energy systems, biotechnology etc and widening of the scope of education by starting weekend programs for the professionals. However at the same time

the institute is facing several challenges to maintain its top of the line stature due to limited resources required for staying abreast with the latest technology and its crumbling infrastructure. As a result there is an immediate need for injection of funds one of the source of which is alumni contributions.

This was followed by a refreshing and inspiring talk by the keynote speaker, Mr. Kanwal Rekhi, who is an entrepreneur, venture capitalist and social worker from Silicon Valley. By mentoring, inspiring and grooming South Asian and other entrepreneurs in the Silicon Valley, Mr. Rekhi has been instrumental in fueling the new silicon economy. "I attempt to combine the business of investing with the ideal and mission of generating value for the society," said Mr. Rekhi. He recently donated two million dollars to IIT Bombay for the establishment of the Kanwal Rekhi School of Information Technology. He dwelled on the need for us to be responsible for the well being of our country in general and alma mater in particular by contributing financially towards their development. He also enlightened everyone about the need to be enterprising and undertaking business ventures of our own.

The event ended with an open discussion on the feedback received from the questionnaire conducted at the beginning of the event. Based on common response, it was decided to host a Happy hour and an outdoor picnic in the next couple of months. Please watch out for more details on these upcoming events. Also, if you are an IITB alumni from the DFW metro area and are not enrolled in the iitbaant egroups mailing list, please send a mail to [toabhutra@hotmail.com](mailto:toabhutra@hotmail.com) or [rmenon@iatt.net](mailto:rmenon@iatt.net).

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Article

## **The Purpose of the IIT Bombay Forum**

by Pradeep Anand \_\_\_\_\_

The IIT Bombay Forum's goal is to:

1. Assist in the IITian's professional growth
2. Provide a resource base to IIT Bombay
3. Provide an social environment for bonding between IITians' families

### **Professional growth**

The major dimensions to professional growth are:

1. Creating awareness and image (branding of the IITian) in the local community
2. Providing the alumnus access to career opportunities and resources
3. Assist the IITians personal growth by providing networking and mentoring environments

The IIT Bombay Forum should go a long way in promoting the IITian in the Houston environment. Regular meetings by prominent alumni, visiting professors and local luminaries will provide the forum to meet these objectives.

### **Resource to IIT Bombay**

By making available several resources at one's disposal to IIT Bombay, the alumnus can be of great assistance to the alma mater. These resources are money, time, and knowledge.

### **Money**

IIT Bombay faces a very serious challenge to its very existence. Government funding to the institute has plateaued and the decrepit condition of the campus is but a symptom of the decay that has set in. Educational institutions' reputations do not decline very quickly, like in the commercial world (Prof. Khargonekar). So, for some time, IIT Bombay's reputation will not decline in a precipitous manner. However, if the alumni do not respond to IIT B's call for resources, the very element that defined our personal psyche and professional careers will be meaningless. We will be condemned to repeat, like our ancestors, and talk of the great glorious past of our educational institutions without real, tangible remnants, besides edifices and buildings.

IIT Bombay needs to raise \$100 Million to sustain itself, and to continue on its path of excellence. The urgency and the immediacy of the issue cannot be understated because without the present there is no future. This issue will be a hurdle for a long time till we create an endowment that is self-sustaining.

Besides direct contribution of money, alumni can help in sponsoring research at IIT Bombay and help it to transform itself from an internally focused institute to one that becomes a critical technological hub on a national and global basis.

The first steps have been taken. The creation of the IIT Bombay Heritage Fund, leadership and donations from Kanwal Rekhi and Nandan Nilekani for the school of Information Technology, renovation of hostels and Chairs. The Information Technology revolution has created unprecedented wealth for IITians and most are plowing back in to their alma maters.

But, that is not adequate. The rank and file IITian, at various stages of their career, must be made aware of the "social contract" or an unwritten obligation that we all have for our alma mater. Yes, education at IIT was cheap, and we are basking in the phenomenal returns of miniscule investments made in India. At this time, we must accept reciprocity as a fundamental social value, and do our part for IIT Bombay.

### **Knowledge**

The purpose of a university is to conserve, transmit, and create knowledge (Prof. Khargonekar). The knowledge base of the IITian is an immense asset that needs to be harnessed to the benefit of IIT Bombay. Corporations talk about knowledge management, but it is equally applicable to Universities and IIT B is no different. Like money, knowledge is also a critical fuel for excellence at Universities.

The knowledge base of the IITian is so immense that it boggles the imagination. The challenge will be to capture the collective and individual, accumulated knowledge and wisdom to the benefit of IIT Bombay. Interestingly enough, this knowledge and wisdom goes beyond technology into finance, management, strategy, politics, and other realms of human existence. There are laudable, individual efforts to create exchanges between US universities and IIT Bombay that need to be duplicated around the country (a la Sudhakar Shenoy).

In addition, we should devise methods by which local alumni make it a point to share their knowledge with IIT Bombay. Powai should become a point of pilgrimage for all visiting IITians, to establish and re-establish relationships with faculty, with the aim of mutual knowledge sharing.

### **Time**

The Forbes ASAP issue of November 30, 1999 was dedicated to "Time". One of the many insightful articles was by Daniel Schorr who urged the reader to "stop bragging about how busy you are, and start thinking about giving time away." He continues, "If time scarcity confers a certain status, is there another way of gaining that status? Yes, it is what I call the Gift of Time- donating some of that scarce commodity to a worthy cause".

It is an honor and privilege to donate time to a worthy cause. Even the smallest unit can make a difference of a lifetime to each recipient. The alumnus can contribute their time as resources at the local, national and global levels.

### **Social Environment for Bonding between IITians' Families**

The IITians family is as much a part of the alumni organization as the alumnus. We should promote social interactions between the families so that the bonding takes place at multiple levels. We share a common heritage and background, and to a great degree, even common social and economic similarities. The alumni organization can create a basis for a strong support structure, from the moment a student comes into the system through all stages of professional and personal lives.

Yes, the alumnus has several alternatives to create their own support structures but this would create one more avenue of options before settling into ruts of familiar friends and environments.

Local events, targeted at families, are ideal for this purpose. Not all will participate but those who do will have a need satisfied.

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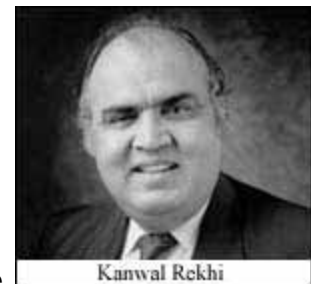
### **The Call of the Alma Mater**

#### *Special to Rediff*

Kanwal Rekhi gets a bit embarrassed when the talk about his \$ 2 million contribution to the Indian Institute of Technology in Bombay comes up.

"It is not such a big amount," Rekhi, a venture capitalist and president of The Indus Enterprise, says, adding that each IIT in India should be able to raise about \$ '100 million from alumni donations

"There are nearly 30,000 IIT alumni in the US alone," he continues. "If you take a handful of IIT alumni from Powai who are in America, their net worth would be \$ 5 billion."



Rekhi is "shamelessly" asking other IIT alumni to give back.

"Indians are ashamed to ask for money," he says. "But this is a shameless business -- and I believe those who of us who have lived in America for many years should try to help our alma mater in India, just the way alumni help Harvard, Princeton or Stanford universities raise money."

Last week when about 200 alumni of the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, who live in the United States, got together for their reunion, the talk of giving back could not be missed.

The meeting, on October 2 at the Seton Hall University, was addressed by Professor Suhas Sukhatme, director, IIT, Bombay. During his two week-long visit to the US, Sukhatme also met alumni in Bay Area, Los Angeles and Chicago before coming before the largest gathering of IIT students, in New Jersey.

"The idea is to provide an opportunity to the alumni to be in touch with what's happening at the Institute and cultivate a relationship which is mutually beneficial," he said. "While the government still largely funds us, funds are not easy to get and resources are constantly needed to maintain high standards.

"In the US for example, leading universities like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology raise 25 to 30 per cent of their expense through endowments."

Professor Sukhatme's visit and the efforts of the alumni could yield at least \$ 1.5 million by the end of the year, according to Sandeep Pandya, treasurer of the Heritage Fund in California. The fund, started in October 1996, has collected a little under \$ three million.

It has already assisted in the creation of the latest departments to IIT, Bombay -- the School of Management Studies and the School of Information Technology.

There are about 5,500 IIT graduates in America who studied at the Powai campus. Big names abound: Rakesh Mathur who sold his Internet site, Junglee.com, to Amazon.com for a reported \$ 180 million is an IIT Bombay alumni from the class of 1978. Narayana Murthy, co-founder and director of Infosys, and managing director Nandan Nilekani are both alumni and have been major benefactors to their respective IITs. Other benefactors include Vinod Gupta from American Business Information and Arjun Malhotra, co-founder HCL.

Other high-flying IIT graduates in America are Rono J Dutta, president of United Airlines, the world's largest airline; Victor Menezes, co-CEO of corporate and investment banking at Citigroup; Vinod Khosla, co-founder, Sun Microsystems; Rajat Gupta, managing partner at international consulting firm McKinsey & Co; Rakesh Gangwal, CEO and president, US Airways; Suhas Patil, founder of Cirrus Logic; and Shailesh Mehta, chairman of Providian Financial.

Professor Sukhatme on his current visit met with several high-fliers, including Victor Menezes and Shailesh Mehta, at a summit in Chicago.

Pandya said they have pledged "a phenomenal amount", which will be revealed in a media blitz at the end of the month.

*AsiaWeek*, the Hong Kong-based publication, in its annual survey ranked IIT- Bombay sixth among all top science and technology schools in Asia. IIT-Delhi and IIT-Madras ranked 4th and 5th respectively. In India, the IITs are the most prestigious institutions in science and technology.

IIT alumni across America are aware of the clout they have in mainstream business. They also want to use this clout to groom a generation of younger entrepreneurs.

"When we talk about giving back, we are not talking purely in terms of money," says Rekhi. "We often help some top entrepreneurs guest lecture at the IIT in Bombay."

One of those entrepreneurs is Hemant Kanakia, the founder of Torrent Networking that was sold to a Swedish multinational recently for \$ 450 million. Kanakia has not only guest-lectured in Bombay but has also spoken to a number off IIT gatherings across America.

The IIT evening in New Jersey began with a video presentation by Professor Sukhatme, who pointed out the key areas where the Institute needed a helping hand and the plans for the coming years.

While the current enrollment figure for IIT, Bombay is 3,900, he said efforts would be made to increase it to 5,000 students. The number of female students, which is currently 10 per cent, should be increased, he said.

The tuition fees that were "ridiculous" at Rs 200 per annum in 1991 were now Rs 22,000. They would be further hiked, he said.

"It's a fallacious argument that this deprives poor students," he continued. "While 20 per cent are unable to pay these fees, the majority can afford the top quality education. Besides we have provisions for loans and scholarships to meet the needs of the 20 per cent."

Professor Sukhatme presented the Alumnus Award to Professor Ravindra Kannan for his research in applied mathematics at Yale University where he teaches. The award is given annually to commemorate the institute's Foundation Day. An independent committee reviews the nominees' work and makes the selection.

Apart from contributing money towards their alma mater, the gathering pledged to keep in touch and network. "Alumni from the top institutes of the world do it and gain a lot from it. There is no reason our students, both past and present should not profit from this bank of resources," said Professor Sukhatme.

The organizers of the event, alumni Vikas Tipnis and Yashodhara Pawar, urged members to tune into the institution's web site, [www.IITBombay.org](http://www.IITBombay.org), to volunteer expertise as well as network.

"The idea is to create awareness and leverage the brand name of IIT," said Pawar. The Heritage Fund welcomes cash donations, stock options as well as volunteers for their various projects.

For details, write to **IIT Bombay Heritage Fund, 10489, Rampart Avenue, Cupertino, CA 95104.**

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**IIT Bombay Heritage Fund (IITB-HF)**

**IITBHF Southern California Chapter**

**Event Report, September 19, 1999**

by Gaurav Sukhatme and Kalyani Sukhatme

The Southern California chapter of the IITBHF held its second meeting of the year on September 19, 1999. The event was held on the Caltech campus in Pasadena. The event was primarily an opportunity for Southern California Alumni to meet with Professors S. P. Sukhatme and S. L. N. Murthy, the Director and Dean Resource Development, respectively, of IITB. The keynote address was given by Mr. Raj Mashruwala (BTech ME 75), currently VP of Sales and Marketing at TIBCO Inc. in Palo Alto, CA.

The event was attended by approximately 50 alumni from the Southern California region (roughly spanning the area between and including Santa Barbara and San Diego). Compared to the New York and San Francisco arms of the IITBHF, the Southern California Chapter is relatively new. It was thus a pleasant surprise to see the enthusiastic participation of so many alumni at the event.

The event began at 11:00 a.m. in the sunny courtyard of the Beckman Institute on the Caltech campus. Amir Khan (President of the Southern California Chapter, BTech EE 90) was the master of ceremonies and introduced the speakers to the audience. He gave a brief overview of the Southern California chapter and asked the rest of the audience to introduce themselves to each other. This done, Mahesh Krishnamurthy (BTech CSE 85) said a few words about the Heritage Fund itself; its genesis, plans and organization.

### **Amir kicks off the proceedings Prof. Sukhatme speaking to alumni**

Amir next introduced Prof. S. P. Sukhatme, the Director of IITB. Prof. Sukhatme's theme for the day was 'A Tryst with Excellence'. He spoke, extempore, for an hour, sharing with the audience his view of what IIT is about, and what it should aspire to be. He argued strongly for an IIT, which, in the future, would be internationally known for its overall strengths in research and teaching. IIT has more than fulfilled one of its missions, which is excellence in undergraduate technical education. The question now remains - 'What steps must IIT take as an institution to place it amongst the ranks of the truly world class universities of higher learning?' Prof. Sukhatme's vision for this includes raising adequate funds, continued recruiting of excellent faculty, and a strategic plan to nurture IIT's nascent research strengths to provide a path for rapid, focused, development. He updated the audience with current developments at IIT, including the new centers and buildings that have sprung up. He also cited the generous financial support of Kanwal Rekhi (BTech ME 67) and Nandan Nilekani (BTech EE 78) towards the School of Management and School of Information Technology.

### **Prof. Sukhatme presents Mahesh with a certificate of appreciation**

Towards the end of his talk, Prof. Sukhatme praised the founding members of the IITBHF for their dedication and hard work in making that organization an instrument of change in the fundraising profile of the Institute. Prof. Sukhatme and Prof. Murthy presented Mahesh with a shawl and a certificate as a mark of appreciation for his hard work in the IITBHF.

### **Dr. and Mrs. Tekal Nath chat with Prof. Sukhatme Junta... Grub**

Alumni interest in the various aspects of IIT's administration, fundraising and student activities was evident in the deluge of questions that followed. The session ended with the questions still continuing as the group moved outdoors for a buffet lunch. During lunch in the courtyard of the Beckman Institute, alumni and their families socialized with Prof. and Mrs. Sukhatme and Prof. Murthy. Pradeep Bhandari (BTech ME 78) met P.V. Hariharan (also BTech 78) - the two were at the same hostel at IITB and have lived in the Southern California region for several years, each not knowing the other was living nearby. Other alumni revived old contacts and made new ones.

After lunch, Amir introduced the speakers for the afternoon. The first speaker was Asha Rangnekar Knott (PhD Chemistry 67), a prominent Republican from Orange County. She spoke with pride about her years at IIT (pre-dating an actual hostel for women) and her involvement with political activism in the United States. She underscored the need for Indians living in the US to make their voices heard through political means.

### **Dr. Asha Rangnekar Knott and Dr. Tekal Nath reminisce about the early days of IITB**

The next speaker was Tekal Nath (BTech CE 62, MTech 64). Of all the alumni in the room he claimed seniority - and with good reason - he was a member of the first graduating BTech class of 1962. He started his career as an IITian with a small bunch of others at the Worli campus of IITB. During his second year, he remembers visiting the Powai location (the site selection for the new campus had just been completed). He was there at the laying of the foundation stone of the Institute on March 10th, 1959, when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India came to Powai for the ceremony. It was Pandit Nehru, of course, who spoke so eloquently on August 15th, 1947, about India's '... tryst with destiny'. Prof. Sukhatme's vision for the future of the Institute draws inspiration from those very words. Dr. Nath showed the audience pictures of an IITB they had never seen, the construction of the MB, the first hostels and first department buildings. These have since been digitized and are available on the IITBHF website.

### **Raj Mashruwala, happy to be lecturing to Prof. Sukhatme, rather than the other way around**

The final event of the day was the keynote address by Raj Mashruwala (Mashru to his batchmates). Mashru is one of the founders of TIBCO Inc., a very successful software company in Silicon Valley, with an unusual management model. He spoke about the management model invented at TIBCO, which relies on an almost deliberate absence of formal planning and encourages employees to react to business opportunities at extremely short notice. This sort of 'don't plan, react' method has been at the cornerstone of TIBCO's success in the past decade. Recent thinking in the corporate world has been that such a model (which encourages an organization to be nimble and opportunistic) is perhaps applicable to some aspects of other organizations (including Universities). After his talk several alumni wanted to chat with Mashru about his thoughts on various aspects of organizational structure and management.

The event concluded with Amir thanking all the speakers and the alumni who attended. An informal social session followed as some prepared to drive home and other lingered on, for the proverbial cack session.

The IITBHF Southern California Chapter event was organized by:

Amir Khan [AKhan0786@jao.com](mailto:AKhan0786@jao.com)  
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Kalyani Sukhatme [kalyani@caltech.edu](mailto:kalyani@caltech.edu)  
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For more information, or if you want to become involved with the activities of the Heritage fund, please contact any of the organizers by email

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Article

### **Tryst with Excellence**

by Mahesh Krishnamurthy

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## **The Chicago Distinguished Alumni Forum**

### **Summary Report**

**IIT Bombay Heritage Fund  
28 September 1999**

#### **SUMMARY**

- Prof. Sukhatme presented his vision for IIT Bombay to become a world-class institution, announced a campaign to raise \$100 million to provide the resources to achieve this goal and appealed to IIT alumni to assist him in making IIT one of the best universities in the world.
- The alumni group expressed its strong desire to assist the institute by pledging their contributions, but felt that the vision needed to be fully defined and communicated. They also felt that we should obtain professional help to ensure that the campaign is successful, the funds are managed appropriately, allocated appropriately and used appropriately.
- The Institute and the Heritage Fund should develop a plan to build on the momentum generated in Chicago to develop a long term vision and strategy for IIT, and to generate the funds required

to implement it.

## **Goals**

- Today - Best in India
- Tomorrow - One of the best in the world

## **IIT Bombay Today**

### Structure

- Departments 12
- Specialized Centers 9
- Interdisciplinary Groups 6
- Schools 2

### Academic Programs

- BTech, MSc, BTech - MTech, MMgmt, MPhil, MDes, PhD

### Faculty

- Current strength 370
- 100 new faculty members added in the last 5 yrs

### Students

- 400 UG, 600 PG degrees
- Enrollment 4000

### Infrastructure

- 11 hostels, several new buildings

### Funding

- Decreased support from government on a percent basis

## **Accomplishments in 40 years**

- Reputation

- #1 in India by India Today

- #6 in Asia by Asia Week

- Brand name

- Academic excellence in undergraduate programs

- Alumni

- Leadership in Industry, Academia and Society

### **IIT in its Golden Jubilee Year - 2008**

- Reputation
  - #1 in Asia
  - Recognized as an institution comparable to the 1st tier US schools
- Faculty
  - 10% international
  - 50% international experience
- Research
  - A third of faculty presenting in leading conferences
- A third of research budget coming from overseas

### **The Dream ...**

- IIT is recognized as one of the best institutes in the world and is seen as a trend setter
- IIT is a nucleus for a new Silicon Valley in Mumbai
- IIT never loses sites of its social commitments and never forgets its Tryst with Excellence

### **We will accomplish this by ...**

Leveraging all assets, including reputation, faculty excellence, alumni base to -

- Attract and retain world class faculty and students
- Build world class infrastructure
- Establish leadership in emerging fields (biotechnology, bioinformatics, etc.)
- Develop a broad base of international and domestic relationships with academia and industry

### **Endowments**

MIT : \$ 3 Billion

Stanford : \$5 Billion

Berkeley : \$4 Billion

IIT Bombay : \$7 Million

***IIT Bombay needs to raise \$100 million over the next 10 years, \$50 million for an endowment and the remaining for infrastructure improvements.***

### **Progress to Date**

- Established Alumni Network
- IIT Bombay Heritage Fund
- IIT Mumbai Alumni Association
- Raised \$4.5 Million
- Kanwal Rekhi, Nandan Nilekani, Parag Saxena
- 500 alumni have contributed
- Beginning of the \$100 Million campaign

### **Here's how you can help**

- Guidance on strategic vision
- Industry involvement
- Providing appropriate exposure and opportunities to faculty
- Assistance in obtaining needed resources, including faculty

### **Alumni Response**

- Alumni are very keen on helping IIT execute a well thought through plan to move forward to the next level and the \$100 million goal is reasonable.
- The vision needs to be fleshed out fully, communicated properly and buy-in obtained from faculty, students, alumni and the government. An action plan needs to be developed along with metrics to measure progress.
- What is the core mission of the institute?
- What does it really mean? What areas will we excel in? What areas won't we excel in? Do we have the resources to fulfil our vision?
- How does the institute implement the vision? How does it create a climate of excellence?
- The institute must be realistic in terms of the time it takes to achieve vision. Its vision is not achievable by 2008
- Need to tap into the professional expertise available
- Establish an integrated program to establish relationship with alumni
- Raising funds and setting up appropriate governance structures for managing, allocating and monitoring usage of funds
- Should develop a marketing program that can go beyond donors who have an emotional connection to IIT

- Learn from relevant best practices of US universities

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Feature

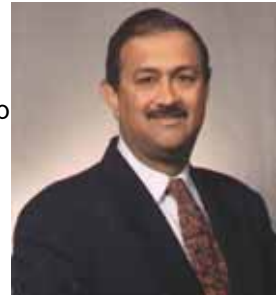
### The US comes calling for IITians

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**Editor's Note** : Sudhakar Shenoy is the Founder and President of [Information Management Consultants, Inc.](#), of McLean, Virginia, who graduated from IIT Bombay in 1970, with a B. Tech. degree in Electrical Engineering. **We wanted to highlight this example of how IIT alumni can strengthen IIT's brand image as a world-class university, help IITians get better opportunities, and also help their local community at the same time.**

George Mason University has set up an interesting program to draw talent from IIT Bombay to the Washington DC area. Sudhakar Shenoy, Founder and President of Information Management Consultants ("IMC"), Inc., of McLean, Virginia, who is [interviewed](#) in the Summer/Fall 1999 issue of Y-Point, set this unique program up earlier this year.

Sudhakar thought of the idea over Christmas 1998, and by February 6, 1999, he and Lloyd Griffiths, Dean of GMU's IT school were pitching the idea to more than 60 potential students at IIT Bombay.



Eventually, the School of Information Technology and Engineering at George Mason University and IMC entered into an agreement whereby IIT students are selected for a work/study program designed to encourage students to come to GMU, and to stay after graduation and help build a business. Each student receives a scholarship that will cover the cost of a two-year Master's degree program in Information Technology at GMU, a housing allowance and a paid internship at the sponsor's company.

Students are required to work 20 hours per week, during the academic year, and upto 40 hours during the summer. Each student is required to maintain a cumulative GPA of no less than 3.5, and is also required to maintain a satisfactory performance rating from the sponsoring company.

Sudhakar and GMU view this as an ongoing investment in the area. "If we are to be the second coming of Silicon Valley, we need talent like that in our area (Washington DC)". Several other companies in the area are also interested in the program and are working with GMU in this regard.

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Article

### Class of 1974

by Ashok Kalbag

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Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay  
Class of 74

## An Appeal for IITB

In this our Silver Jubilee Year, we are the special group of Alumni at the IITB. It is with much satisfaction that most of us look back and remember these past years of our professional life. It is now time to go back in time to the beginning of this period and think of the alma mater that made it all happen.

Presently, we have a dynamic director who had taught many of us, and all of us hold in high esteem. He has a vision to make the IITB an institution of world class order, and second to none in this region. We, the alumni should try and help him in every way possible. He has indicated the institute requires funds for additional accommodation for the students. Presently, the strength of the students has increased almost 150% but the hostel rooms have not increased proportionately. As a consequence, most of the first year students, and some second year students, have to share rooms! It is incredible to most of us to imagine sharing of rooms. It is in this context, that Prof. Sukhatme suggested to the alumni to raise funds for hostel accommodation. We, the alumni, have a special bond with the hostels. All of us occupied the hostels during those formative years and we are the ones who can contribute without looking for any mileage.

The institute has plans for a new hostel, besides additional rooms and facilities in the existing hostels. These are presently being provided at a trickle due to poor funds availability. Hence this appeal for a contribution to help restore the standard in basic facilities on the campus. It is estimated that each hostel for 400 students, will cost about Rs.25,000,000 complete with facilities.

Considering the potential income generated by our batch since leaving IIT, even if a small fraction is put into a kitty, it will swell to help build a hostel. To avoid going into statistics and laboured calculations, let us think in terms of how much we could raise with no second thoughts. One day's income for each year since graduation, seems a small enough contribution. To think that this small contribution since we started raking in the moolah would help build an entire hostel! 25 days or one month's income is all that it really needs to make a small beginning to help get our IITB into the premier position that we always thought it deserved. We therefore appeal for a minimum contribution of a month's income at the earliest. Also appeal to your establishment to contribute to IITB. Remember all contributions are tax exempt.

Attached are two formats for covering letters for you to attach with a contribution. The first is for the use of the Alumni based in India, and the second for those based in the Americas. Others have a choice of sending to either. Contributions to IIT, & IITB Heritage Fund are tax exempt.

Thanking you and confident that we shall not fail in our generosity to our alma mater,

With warm regards,  
Core Committee for Class of 74 Alumni Oct-99

Ashank Desai ([ashankd@mastek.com](mailto:ashankd@mastek.com)), Ashok Kalbag ([sskalbag@vsnl.com](mailto:sskalbag@vsnl.com)),  
Pradeep Mankame ([tanket@bom7.vsnl.net.in](mailto:tanket@bom7.vsnl.net.in)), Bondal, Ashwin([ashwin.bondal@sulzerpumps.co.in](mailto:ashwin.bondal@sulzerpumps.co.in)), Ajit  
Pimpalkhare ([ajeet@bol.net.in](mailto:ajeet@bol.net.in))

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News Report

**Excellence in Teaching Awards  
1999**

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The Excellence in Teaching Awards for 1999 were sponsored by the IIT Bombay Heritage Fund. The awards are presented on teachers day, but the function was held on 6th September.

The eight faculty members who received the awards this year are:

- Prof. G.R. Shevare - Aerospace Engg. Department
- Prof. V.M. Gadre - Electrical Engg. Department
- Prof. U.V. Shenoy - Chemical Engg. Department
- Prof. G.K. Trivedi - Chemistry Department
- Prof. B.V. Limaye - Mathematics Department
- Prof. Shiva Prasad - Physics Department
- Prof. A.A. Diwan - Computer Science & Engg. Department
- Prof. A.N. Chandorkar - Electrical Engg. Department

