

common room with a TV on the 1st floor.

All hostel bogs have an associated solar heating panel on the roof and they have been renovated with bright ceramic tiles. In winter, first one hunted for a bucket, then an immersion road and then you had to ensure that no one else in the wing had a bucket of water getting heated (else the fuse would blow). This now comes from a tap - but only by afternoon in winter. The other alternatives were to have a cold-water bath (rare for most but enjoyed daily by yours truly) or wait till you got home in first sem or for summer in the 2nd sem. The number of cycles has gone up significantly. The Audi is now very effectively air-cooled. More importantly the blue metal chairs have completely disappeared and in its place is theatre seating. Even after so many years, I still think that no atmosphere has ever

matched that of watching a movie in a packed Audi. Did not get a chance to relive this experience, maybe another day... The ET also has changed (after the fire sometime back) and now has seating just like the Audi.

So what are BITSians like these days ... different but the same ... the energy levels are phenomenal especially very visible during APOGEE. I am sure the velas, the ghotus, and the rest are very much around but so is this indefinable energy ... I interacted with many BITSians from 1st yearites to psentii semites... from guys playing early AM cricket to those browsing for US univs or doing mail in the middle of the night, to the psenti semite from Mal who called 'Papppuuu' at Skylab for a missing shikangi in a tone that only one who has done so for many years can do.

Fests are still run by the students, while being facilitated by the faculty - with great organizational ability as usual - creating leaders at every stage ... While I did not get to any of the paper presentations I did see some of the exhibitions ... work of stellar quality. Magazine ratings notwithstanding, BITS is ready to break out into even greater things. One thing is clear that the energy of students, the outward looking faculty and the alumni, working together will take BITS to great new heights.

Junta, get involved with BITS if you can - PS2, recruitment, Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership or in any other way. If you cannot, make a visit, a vacation if you will. Take your spouse / kids and enjoy good old fashioned BITSian hospitality for a couple of days. Either way you will be reenergized. Highly recommended.



'94 Batch Second semites' 10TH Anniversary Praveen Rachakulla ('94 Engg Tech)

10 years ago, on this day I stepped into Pilani town, with lots of baggage and a heart filled with great joy, new aspirations, a new place, a great place. BITS, Pilani. It was a joyous moment after an arduous journey in a train with the occasional ragging by seniors. It was all fun.

New friends. New people from different states, a very different atmosphere where peacocks fly over you, camels pass by and students race on bicycles.

It was the start of a new beginning for me - far away from home but it felt like home; with great friends, instructors, professors, mess waale (devendra), raidi waale (nagarji) and of course the beautiful sky lawns, pappu bhai and great landscapes. What with wonderful people hanging around on the lawns engrossed either in studies or in dreams or just mutual admiration, crazy couples.. and the list is endless.

We were 21, a small group, a close group of second semites, as we are called. We stepped in this small town to make it our new home for the next 4 years. This was the beginning. This was the beginning 10 years ago. As we stepped into a small town called Pilani. My wishes to all my friends, second semites, 1994 batch. Happy 10th year anniversary. To those I remember but whose names I have forgotten, to those whose names I remember... Kumar Govindan, Vishal, Neeraj, Bharani, Subhashini, Rukmini, Renuka, et al.