

Connections

IIT Gandhinagar



Connections is the quarterly newsletter for friends of IIT Gandhinagar

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Institute News

International Conference on Disaster Mitigation Through Fire Safety & Earthquake Engineering

An international conference "Disaster Mitigation through Fire Safety and Earthquake Engineering" was held on March 29, 2010 at Ahmedabad. The conference was collaboratively organized by the Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA), IIT Gandhinagar and Underwriters Laboratory, USA. Honourable Chief Minister of Gujarat, Sri Narendra Modi, in his inaugural address, emphasized the very high priority that Gujarat has been placing on disaster mitigation since the 2001 earthquake.



International Collaborative Research Opportunity For Undergraduate Students

A joint research initiative by Underwriters Laboratory (UL), Northbrook, USA and IITGN attracted 80 IITGN students to take up the challenge to come up with innovative ideas to reduce hazards for fire fighters in urban India, and to create a database for fire related disasters in the country. Students visited Fire Services at Delhi, Mumbai and Ahmedabad, including a 10 days stay in Delhi during December 2009 and interacted with Fire Department officials during these visits. The students were mentored in their research efforts by UL experts from US and India and the Fire Chiefs of Delhi, Maharashtra and Ahmedabad. Students, working in teams of 2 each, presented their ideas during 30-31 January 2010. The jury panel lauded the research work of the young participants, and selected the following four teams as winners for the Conceptualization Phase of the project:

- Team 1:** Anchit Gaurav and Adnan Ahmad Ansari
- Team 2:** Vivek Yadav and Abhishek Umrao
- Team 3:** Saurya Prakash Sinha and Divyank Singh
- Team 4:** Shruti Jain and Ekta Prashnani



All participating students received certificates for their efforts. The four winning teams are now working on developing the technology/database. To facilitate their work, all eight students have been granted three weeks internships at UL, Northbrook, USA during summer 2010. The winning teams were also invited to present their ideas at a dinner on March 28, 2010 during the International Conference on Disaster Mitigation through Fire Safety and Earthquake Engineering. The teams will submit their Phase-II reports by October 2010. Phase-III of the project will involve implementation. This collaborative research initiative will continue next year with new challenges.



Activities at IITGN

Distinguished Visitors

Mr Ashok Thakur, Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt of India was in Gandhinagar to chair a meeting of the committee to select a suitable site for IITGN on March 9, 2010. He also visited IITGN, addressed the students, staff and faculty, and expressed satisfaction at the progress of creation of facilities.



Prof Ashok Misra, Former Director of IIT Bombay, visited IITGN on March 26, 2010. Prof Misra was also the mentor Director of IITGN in its early days. During his visit, Prof Misra interacted with the faculty members and students and joined them for lunch.



Dr R A Mashelkar, Chairman, Board of Governors, IITGN visited the site at Palej, Gandhinagar on March 24, 2010, where the IITGN Campus is likely to come up.



Prof S P Sukhatme, Distinguished Honorary Professor, IIT Gandhinagar, motivated faculty and students in their quest for excellence in teaching and research during his visit to the Institute on March 22-23, 2010. He also made two presentations on topics of great current relevance: "The Energy Scenario" and "Energy Alternatives – The Solar and Nuclear Options".



Short Courses/ Symposia/ Workshops

- ✦ A **National Symposium in Mathematics** at IIT Gandhinagar during February 26-28, 2010 provided a platform to outstanding young Mathematicians of the country to present their research work as an initiation to build a strong research group in Mathematics at IITGN. The symposium was sponsored by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the National Board for Higher Mathematics of DAE. Prof D V Pai of IITGN was the symposium Convener, and Prof J K Verma of IIT Bombay, Co-Convener.
- ✦ A workshop on **Teaching and Grading** was conducted for IITGN faculty on March 13-14, 2010 by Prof Vijay Gupta, Vice-Chancellor, Lovely University, Jalandhar. He is well known for innovations in teaching and evaluation methods and for his publications and teaching aids. He is a former professor of IIT Kanpur, where he held many important positions, including that of Dean of Academic Affairs.
- ✦ The Institute has launched **IIT Gandhinagar Communication Skills Initiative** to help IITGN community improve communication skills. A brainstorming session was held on 20-21 February, 2010 to define scope and specific contours of the facility. It was coordinated by Dr Sharmita Lahiri of IIT Gandhinagar with the participation of a number of renowned national experts in the field.
- ✦ A short course on **Strengthening of Democracy at the Grassroots in India** was conducted by Dr Sandeep Pandey, Magsaysay Award Winner and Social Activist, during January 2-3, 2010. Forty-eight students of the Institute credited the course which was highly rated by the students.
- ✦ A continuing education programme on **Nuclear Reactor Thermal Hydraulics and Safety** coordinated by Dr Manmohan Pandey was held during February 18-20, 2010 for industry.
- ✦ A workshop on **Basic Computer Skills** was conducted for students of IITGN by Prof Deven Shah and Mr Mayank Agrawal of Sardar Patel Institute of Technology, Mumbai on January 2, 2010.
- ✦ A two-week **Creative Writing Workshop** was conducted for IITGN students by Prof Suchitra Mathur of IIT Kanpur during February 2 - 14, 2010. Prof Mathur is spending a part of her sabbatical at the Institute.



Lectures At IITGN

- ✦ **Software Aging and Rejuvenation** by Prof Kishor S Trivedi, Chair Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Duke University, Durham, NC, USA. January 1, 2010.
- ✦ **Pursuit of Knowledge: A Personal Pilgrimage of an Engineering Scientist** by Dr Kiran R Magiawala, Retired research faculty, California Institute of Technology and Jet Propulsion Laboratory. January 12, 2010.
- ✦ **Energy and the Environment - A Global Challenge Area for Collaborative Research and Education: How Engineers and Scientists Can Help?** by Dr Pratim Biswas, the Stifel and Quinette Jens Professor and Chair of the Department of Energy, Environmental and Chemical Engineering, Washington University, St. Louis. January 17, 2010.

- ✦ **Imperatives of Technology & Design Interface** by Shri Shashank Mehta of the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad. Feb 2, 2010.
- ✦ **Energy Security in India through Nuclear Power** by Dr Om Pal Singh, Secretary, Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), and Director, ISTD, AERB. Feb 8, 2010.
- ✦ **The Polymer Industry in India: Opportunities and Challenges for Engineers** by Prof D D Kale, Senior consultant and former Head, Polymer Technology Engineering Division, Institute of Chemical Technology Mumbai. Feb 10, 2010.
- ✦ **Astroparticle Physics** by Dr Raghavan Rangarajan of the Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad. Feb 15, 2010.
- ✦ **My Electronics** by Prof S C Sahasrabudhe, Director, Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information & Communication Technology, Gandhinagar. Feb 16, 2010.
- ✦ **A Vision of the Future of Television** by Dr Nikhil Balram, Former Vice President and General Manager, SONICblue, Digital Entertainment Business Unit, California, USA. March 8, 2010.
- ✦ **Building a World Class IIT at Gandhinagar** by Shri Abhay Bhushan, President of IIT Kanpur Alumni Association, President of IIT Kanpur Foundation, Board Member of IIT Gandhinagar Foundation and past president of Pan-IIT- USA. March 9, 2010. Shri Bhushan is the very first student to have enrolled in IIT Kanpur.
- ✦ **Scaling issues in VLSI** by Dr D K Sharma, Head of EE Dept., IIT Bombay. March 12, 2010
- ✦ **The Energy Scenario and Energy Alternatives -The Solar and Nuclear Options** by Prof S P Sukhatme. March 22-23, 2010. Prof Sukhatme is a distinguished Honorary Professor, IIT Gandhinagar and Professor Emeritus, Dept of Mechanical Eng., IIT Bombay.

Further details are available at the Institute website

<http://www.iitgn.ac.in/poplectures.htm>

<http://www.iitgn.ac.in/institlectures.htm>

Faculty News

New Faculty

The following persons joined IITGN faculty during this quarter:

Name	Designation	Discipline	Ph.D.	Date of joining
Surendra Ranganath	Professor	Electrical Engg	University of California, 1982	01.01.10
B D Agarwal	Visiting Professor	Mechanical Engg	Illinois Inst. of Tech. Chicago, 1972	01.01.10
Suchitra Mathur	Visiting Associate Professor	English	Wayne State University, 1989	07.12.09

Awards and Recognition

- ✦ **Prof Sudhir K Jain** has been elected a Fellow of the **Gujarat Science Academy**.
- ✦ **Dr Deepthi Shanker** was awarded **Prof M N Srinivas Memorial Prize in Sociology** for her outstanding PhD thesis by ISEC, Bangalore. She received the award from His Excellency the Governor of Karnataka, Dr Hans Raj Bhardwaj on January 20, 2010 during the Founder's Day Celebrations.
- ✦ **Dr Nitin Padhiyar** has been awarded **Indo-US Research Fellowship** by the Indo-US Science & Technology Forum (IUSSTF). Under this fellowship he will, starting July 2010, spend one year at Carnegie Mellon University, USA conducting research.

Reaching Out

Prof Sudhir K Jain attended a meeting of the Board of Directors, World Seismic Safety Initiative (WSSI) at Singapore during February 20-21, 2010. He also visited the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Nanyang Technological University (NTU), addressed Indian graduate students, post doctoral fellows and the faculty to brief them on the vision of IITGN and to encourage them to consider a faculty career with the Institute. Prof Ashwin M Khambadkone and Prof Mohan Kankanhalli of NUS, and Prof T-C Pan, Mr. Sonny Lim and Ms. Salmah Subani of NTU are gratefully acknowledged for facilitating these meetings.



Other Events

Republic Day Celebrations

During the 60th Republic Day celebration on January 26, 2010, Prof Sudhir K Jain, Director of IITGN, unfurled the National Flag in front of an assembly of the students, staff and faculty of IITGN. This was followed by the National Anthem. High-tea was served to all present. Thereafter, a trip to Sabarmati Ashram was organized for IITGN students, faculty and staff, which was coordinated by Prof Jaison A Manjaly.



Student Activities

Student Body Election

Office bearers for the Academic Year 2010-11 were elected by the students on March 21, 2010. The following students were declared elected:



Vineeth Dasaraju
General Secretary



Ajinkya M. Kulkarni
Cultural Secretary



Bhargav Kumar Thadem
Sports Secretary



Nishant S. Joshi
Academic Secretary



Shashank Pandey
Public Relations Secretary



Harikrishnan C.B
Technical Secretary

Blood donation drive

A blood donation drive was conducted by IITGN students in association with Indian Red Cross Society, Ahmedabad during January 9-18, 2010. Sixty four people donated blood at the three collection centers. Students Pratyul Kapoor, K Pranav Kumar and Aditi Jaywant Dighe did commendable work in motivating people to donate blood.



RAAGA – 2010

Kanchan Patel and Gourav Dubey bagged the 2nd position, whereas the 3rd position was secured by Swati Verma and Chetas Joshi at RAAGA – 2010, a musical event held at Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information and Communication Technology, (DAIICT), Gandhinagar on January 22, 2010.

Blithchron '10

'BLITHCHRON' IIT Gandhinagar's Annual Cultural Festival was held on January 23-24, 2010. The major attraction at Blithchron 10 was the Pro Show by the band Parikrama, India's most popular rock band. The two-day festival was witnessed by a total of 6000 people from more than 40 colleges across Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar. With the sponsors having been promised a footfall of 4000+ the festival was much larger than expected, with growth from last year's 1000 footfall. The title sponsor for the festival was SBI. Ceat and ONGC were the co-sponsors with other major contributors being Suzlon, Tata Steel, ITC, Inox and Coco Cola. The band wars-"String Theory" featuring 6 of the best bands from across India competed for the prize money, with the participants and audience both agreeing that Blithchron has the best rock band competition in Gujarat. A spectacular drama "She" was performed by the theatre group Entertainment Engineers consisting of alumni of IIT Bombay. The other Flagship events "The Butler Did It" and "Jobless" were appreciated by the numerous participants and media personnel. Technical events were also introduced in this version of Blithchron 10.

