

Heritage Centre, IIT Madras presents

Volume 4 - Issue 1

Glass Panels

Jan
2026



Heritage Centre
IIT Madras



Inside...



IIT Madras's 25th
Inter-IIT Victory



Farewell, Prof. Sriram!



Interview with
D. Prabhanjana

**CHASING A SINGLE
SHADE OF GREY**

INDIAN GREY HORNBILLS AT IIT MADRAS

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The Heritage Centre was formally inaugurated by Dr. Arcot Ramachandran, former Director of IIT Madras, on 3 March 2006. It is a repository of material of heritage value and historical significance to IIT Madras. "Heritage Centre - Reimagined" was inaugurated on 18 December 2022 by Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman, Honourable Finance Minister of India.

Located centrally on campus, the Heritage Centre has an exhibition space that enjoys an abundance of natural light. The Centre also has a small theatre and a particularly pleasant reading area that offers incomparable views of the green campus.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Heritage Centre or IIT Madras.

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Perched up high on the palm tree's crest,
The world looked bright from my snugly nest."*





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Letter from the EDITOR



This is the first issue of 2026. We have been busy with alumni reunions, a grand farewell, and many other events.

As I write this editorial, the Saarang festivities engulf the campus, and the air is alive with the voices of students and participants from across the country. The sound of music reverberates through the forest, and at night, a solemn stillness settles on the roads.

The temperature has dropped significantly in the last few months, and misty mornings are a common sight. The Heritage Centre is abuzz, as always, catering to thousands of visitors every month.

In this issue, I write about the Indian Grey Hornbill, a fairly large bird that has been spotted multiple times on campus over the last few years. Birders from IIT Madras have spotted as many as four together, which begs the question: Are they nesting on campus? We certainly hope so!

The previous issue was a big hit. Abhishek's wonderful story has caught the eye of many readers, and Jyoti's poem about the banyan tree continues to move us (she has written another poem for this issue).

Mr. Sashi Rao was quick to point out that a list containing the names of movies shown was missed in Mr. Ramanathan's article about movies in the November 2025 issue. I have included a QR code below for readers to scan to access the full list of movies compiled by Mr. Ramanathan.

- Bhuvanesh Santharam



IIT Madras OAT Movies List
Compilation (1964-1969)



Our readers write...

RESPONSES TO THE NOVEMBER 2025 ISSUE



What a fantastic and nostalgic issue of *Glass Panels*...having been born and brought up here, the article on the OAT and the movies screened brought back a flood of memories...The impressive stream of visitors to the Heritage Centre and the lasting impression it leaves on them is a truly fantastic experience. Well done, team HCI!!

- Dr. Mymoon Moghul
Former IIT Madras Campus Resident,
Alumna of Kendriya Vidyalaya IIT Chennai

I think one major feature was somehow missed in the article - the full list of movies shown in those 5 years provided by Ramanathan! This would have really added a lot of value to all readers who would have their own nostalgia for each of those screened films.

- K. Sashi Rao
Alumnus of the 1969 B.Tech. and
1971 M.Tech. batches

Reading *The Time Machine* felt like replaying my own time at IITM. Abhishek captured the small but meaningful things like late-night chai, odd campus debates, and the shared chaos that somehow makes IIT Madras feel like home. The story is simple, funny, and sincere, and it reminds us that one day these ordinary moments will become memories we look back on with a lot of affection. I really enjoyed it, and I think many students will relate to it just as much.

- Pranav Singhal
Fifth Year Engineering Design Student, ED21B047

I can't describe how it made me feel. I loved the sci-fi theme, and the hit of nostalgia, even if we didn't graduate yet, I'll miss them all. Thanks so much for your work; it was beautiful.

- Kavın Chakaravarthy
Fifth Year Biological Sciences Student, BS21B017

Send us your
feedback!



CHASING A SINGLE SHADE OF GREY

INDIAN GREY HORN BILLS AT IIT MADRAS



High pitched & long drawn cry
Heavily flapping across the sky
Sometimes gliding by

– Shree Dave (from Grey Hornbill)

Mymoon Moghul cicked this image of an Indian Grey Hornbill from her residence overlooking the area between the IITM tennis courts and hockey grounds, 12 September 2025.

A few months ago, Mymoon Moghul shared a wonderful image of an Indian Grey Hornbill (*Ocyrceros birostris*) with me, and I told her that I would publish it in the November 2025 issue of *Glass Panels*. However, I had no information to go with the image, and I kept it on hold. Later, I decided to do some research and write about this interesting bird. I dug up a few details, including news reports and checklists. I also went through older chats from the IIT Madras birders WhatsApp group and found 10 reported sightings of the bird on campus between 8 March 2025 and 7 November 2025. I joined the group around three years after its formation, so I may have missed out on messages and sightings from previous years.

The eBird sightings for the Indian Grey Hornbill in Chennai stand at 66, as of 5 January 2026. The first eBird record of this magnificent bird in the city was made by Lakshmi Arunachalam and her husband, Prabhu Mathiyalagan, on 23 January 2021 at the Adyar Estuary. January 2026 marks the fifth anniversary of the bird's presence in Chennai.

A blog post titled *The Excitement of the Hornbill that Showed up in South Madras*¹, published by Ambika Chandrasekhar, highlights the story behind the first documentation of the hornbill, both in Chennai and at IIT Madras. Ambika notes that birder Mahathi Narayanaswamy spotted the Indian Grey Hornbill

¹ <https://madraswanderer.blogspot.com/2021/03/the-excitement-of-hornbill-that-showed.html>

inside the IITM campus for the first time. In Mahathi's eBird checklist dated 27 February 2021, she adds a note along with her observation (see image 1).

Not too long after, on 27 February 2021, another eBird user, most likely Vivek Puliyeri², reported hearing a hornbill call from near the Manohar C. Watsa stadium. However, he was unable to record the call or take photographs at the time (see image 2).

1 **Indian Gray Hornbill** *Ocyeros birostris*

Flew into the banyan in front of stadium and disturbed 9 of the 14 koels on the tree. As a result it got startled and it flew out. I tried to look for it again, especially since a lot of banyan trees in the area are fruiting but looking at birds on the banyan tree for so long non stop caused my neck to get strained so will go home check the trees around my house take a break and come back once the sun subsides a little to look for the bird to get a record shot.

This individual has been seen in ts and thiruvannamiyur recently and we have been hearing it on campus around the stadium area for the past three days so it may be doing rounds there owing to the several fruiting banyans in the area. As for description- Size was koel+, flight was in a sense as though it soars before it landed, colour of feathers is uniform grey, tail and wing feathers have white markings which are viable in flight, for the few seconds that I got to see it the notch like thing on the hornbills beak was also visible(dont know what its called).

Image 1

1 **Indian Gray Hornbill** *Ocyeros birostris*

Heard the long kaeey..kaeey.. call for 3-4 times from my home on 26/02/2021 around 7:15 am. The call was coming from GNP. Did not submit the observation immediately as I was not 100% sure. On 27/02/2021 morning around 7:00 am, started hearing the same call near IITM stadium. It felt like the bird was on top of some tree on the Delhi Avenue. It was making the same long 'kaeey' call for almost half an hour, but I couldn't record it as I was running in the stadium (was trying for a PB, so didn't want to stop the run). On both days, I heard the call in between 7:00 and 7:30.

I'm familiar with this call as we have a resident pair near my relative's home at Malappuram, Kerala. I've recorded the call from there long back - <https://www.xeno-canto.org/296446>
Hopefully, I'll be able to record it from the campus soon.

Image 2



A photograph of the Indian Grey Hornbill taken by campus resident Chinmaya Manivannan on 11 September 2025. The image was captured on Delhi Avenue, in the vicinity of the Pandiya apartments.

² The link in the checklist directs to a call recording on Xeno-Canto, documented by Vivek Puliyeri. This recording suggests that the eBird checklist was also uploaded by him.



Ph.D. scholar Uddhav Surve caught a glimpse of an Indian Grey Hornbill on 8 November 2025 on the way to the stadium from the Hostel Zone.



Mymoon Moghul took pictures of a pair of Indian Grey Hornbills on 12 September 2025 near the tennis and hockey grounds.

In an article titled *The Indian Grey Hornbill may be Breeding in Chennai*, published in *The Hindu*³, on 16 July 2021, Prince Frederick writes about an Indian Grey Hornbill spotted by A. M. Aravind. The surprising part of the story? The bird had been spotted further down south from IIT Madras and the Theosophical Society at a place called Akkarai, along the East Coast Road. According to Aravind, “The crows were constantly mobbing the Indian grey hornbill, some of them even dive-bombing the bird. Unable to take it, the hornbill flew further south, beyond Akkarai.” This relocation attempt apparently proved unsuccessful, as the hornbill was chased back a few minutes later by house crows from another neighbourhood.

Birders from IIT Madras began spotting Indian Grey Hornbills, sometimes in groups of three or four. Most sightings were near the Peelihamman Temple, and the

Chera and Chola apartments. On 7 May 2025, Prof. Susy Varughese spotted three hornbills near 3rd Cross Road, next to Chera apartments. She notes, “Distinct calls of juvenile birds could be heard when the three birds were spotted. Since then, we have been sighting more than two birds on the campus.”

On 21 August 2025, Mymoon spotted a hornbill from her residence, located outside the campus. She said that the bird was perched on a tree between the tennis and hockey grounds inside the IIT campus. Several others from IIT Madras, including Sahanaa Arul, a tenth-grade student, Shivani Manivannan, Chinmaya Manivannan, and Dr. Padma Priya, have observed single hornbills several times in 2025. Uddhav Surve, a Ph.D. scholar, and Pallavi, his wife, spotted a solitary bird on 8 November 2025, on the road leading to the stadium in the hostel zone.

³ <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/the-indian-grey-hornbill-may-be-breeding-in-chennai/article35364513.ece>



A photograph of the Indian Grey Hornbill taken by campus resident Chinmaya Manivannan on 30 December 2023. Chinmaya clicked this picture on Delhi Avenue near the Pandiya apartments.

Some of the trees the Indian Grey Hornbill frequents are the Banyan Tree (*Ficus benghalensis*), the Strangler Fig Tree (*Ficus amplissima*), and the Peepal Tree (*Ficus religiosa*), mostly to feed.

E. Santoshkumar and P. Balasubramanian, in a paper⁴ published in the *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society*, observe that figs constitute around 25% of the Indian Grey Hornbill's fruit intake, both in breeding and non-breeding seasons. Santoshkumar and Balasubramanian observed the Indian Grey Hornbill in the Sathyamangalam Forest of the Eastern Ghats; their work offers us a window into the bird's dietary preferences.

Though primarily frugivorous (fruit-eating), Indian Grey Hornbills exhibit omnivorous tendencies, particularly during the breeding season. Among animal matter, they are known to consume mostly insects, while also dabbling in the occasional lizard, snake, and rat. In addition to figs, they are also known to feed on leaves



Sahanaa Arul, a tenth-grade student and campus resident, spotted the hornbill on 11 February 2025 at the Manohar C. Watsa stadium, on a small pathway leading to the lake.

and other fruits. On the IIT Madras campus, Banyan trees and other fig species serve as a prime source of forage for the Indian Grey Hornbill.

⁴ E. Santoshkumar and P. Balasubramanian, "Food Habits of Indian Grey Hornbill *Ocyrceros birostris* in Sathyamangalam Forest Division, Eastern Ghats, India," *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 111, no. 2 (May–August 2014): 90–97.

Preferred nesting trees⁵ include *Melia dubia*, *Syzygium cumini*, *Albizia odoratissima*, *Mangifera indica*, and *Syzygium cumini*. According to IIT Madras's Prakriti Wildlife Club website, trees such as *Mangifera indica*, *Syzygium cumini* and *Albizia lebbbeck* are native to the campus, which makes us wonder if the hornbill might consider nesting on campus trees.

We have yet to determine any nesting reports of the Indian Grey Hornbill in the city, which may open the possibility of further studying the bird's behaviour within an urban space. The bird usually nests in hollows in tall trees. Existing hollows are sometimes further deepened before the female seals herself in, using her excreta, tree bark, and mud pellets supplied by the male.

Once inside the hollow, the female leaves only a tiny vertical slit just enough to let the male pass food

through to her. Inside, the female incubates the eggs in a process that lasts around 21 days. The chicks fledge around 45 days after hatching, after which the sealed nest is broken open. Before settling into incubation, the female sheds her flight feathers, which gradually return during the 45 days as her chicks fledge.

The entry of the Indian Grey Hornbill into the city brings with it a great deal of excitement. I can't help but wonder how many more such wildlife escapades may have gone unnoticed in the bustling streets of Madras.



A photograph of an Indian Grey Hornbill taken by Tushar P. on 21 September 2024, near the Student Activities Centre (SAC).

⁵ E. Santhoshkumar and P. Balasubramanian, "Breeding Behaviour and Nest Tree Use by Indian Grey Hornbill *Ocyrceros birostris* in the Eastern Ghats, India," *Forktail* 26 (2010): 82–85.



Bhuvanesh Santharam

is a Senior Content Writer at the Heritage Centre, IIT Madras. A poet and cartoonist, he published his first collection, *Silence Binds Us*, in 2022 and is working on future volumes. When not writing, Bhuva enjoys boxing, basketball, and long runs that spark new ideas. This article was written with the help and input of **Dr. V. Santharam**, **Prof. Susy Varughese**, and the **IIT Madras birders** group.



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AN EVER-GROWING LIST

GENERAL CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY NUMBER 25 FOR IIT MADRAS



IIT Madras added yet another trophy to its ever-growing list of General Championship trophies last month, during the 58th Inter-IIT Sports Meet, 2025. The event was co-hosted by three IITs: IIT Madras, IIT Tirupati, and IIT Hyderabad. Currently, IIT Madras holds the most wins among all IITs, with 25th wins since the inception of the prestigious tournament.

The first Inter-IIT Sports Meet took place between IIT Kharagpur, IIT Bombay, and IIT Madras. An origin story has been reported in the editorial of a *Spectator* issue dated 9 November 1981. *Spectator*, a weekly magazine run by students of IIT Madras, covered the various sports activities of IIT Madras, one of which was the

Inter-IIT Sports Meet. According to the article, the concept for this sports tournament was conceived by a student from IIT Bombay. The idea evolved into a full-fledged competition, now known as the Inter-IIT Sports Meet.

The First Inter-IIT Sports Meet was held at IIT Bombay in 1961. IIT Kharagpur, the first IIT to be established, emerged as the inaugural championship winner. According to the *Annual Report* of IIT Madras, 1961, IIT Madras distinguished itself in several events, including hammer throw, long and triple jump, table tennis, as well as the 100 metres and 200 metres sprints. They also did well in the relay events. IIT Madras's cultural activities were judged the best that year.

¹A Wikipedia page (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inter_IIT_Sports_Meet) claims IIT Madras has won the Inter-IIT General Championship 21 times, while the official site (<https://interiitsports.in/>) records 25. The General Championship trophy engraving incorrectly credits IIT Kharagpur with the 1970 win, although *Campastimes* and the IIT Madras Annual Report confirm that it was IIT Madras's first. This error makes the engraving suggest only 24 wins instead of 25.

IIT Kharagpur dominated the first three years in the Inter-IIT Sports Meet. They won the meets in 1961, 1963, and 1964. The 1962 Meet was possibly cancelled due to the Sino-Indo War. The 1963 meet was held at IIT Kharagpur, and the 1964 meet was held at IIT Madras.

At the 1964 Inter-IIT Sports Meet, IIT Kharagpur successfully defended its title with a hat trick of victories. The event has been recorded in the first issue of the Alumni Association magazine *Pradeep* in an article by B. S. Sudhir Chandra, a student of IIT Madras. The *Annual Number* of IIT Madras, 1965, also contains a report and photographs from the event.

The 1964 Meet marked the inauguration of the stadium by the chief guest, Mansoor Ali Khan, the Nawab of Pataudi. Khan was the captain of the Indian Cricket Team at the time. The first Registrar of IIT Madras, Mr. R. Natarajan, states in an interview that he invited the Nawab to IIT Madras as the chief guest. It appears that Khan stayed three days in the Guest House at IIT Madras. Upon Khan's request, Mr. Natarajan and the captain even went to watch a Hollywood film in the city during the short period of time during which Khan was at IIT Madras. Mr. Natarajan adds that when he asked Khan to stay on campus for a few more days, the latter replied on a lighter note, saying that the Institute Guest House butler Gopal was capable of ruining Khan's cricket career by pampering him with his delicious food.



Mr. Simpson of IIT Kharagpur receives the General Championship Trophy at the Third Inter-IIT Sports Meet from Dr. A. L. Mudaliar in 1964.

One of the lesser-known facts about the Third Inter-IIT Sports Meet was that an IIT radio station was set up in the stadium. The Registrar, Mr. R. Natarajan, interviewed Mansoor Ali Khan. There was also a running commentary on the events on a daily basis. B. S. Sudhir Chandra includes this tidbit of information in his article in *Pradeep*.

The following year, the 1965 Inter-IIT Sports Meet was not held due to the Indo-Pakistan War.

IIT Madras was unable to clinch a championship for almost a decade. It was during the Eighth Inter-IIT Sports Meet, in 1970, that IIT Madras won its first championship. The meet was held at IIT Madras. A detailed report of the event was published in *Campastimes* (February 1971).

On 28th morning all the roads led to the newly constructed stadium. The stadium was jam packed with sport enthusiasts who were going to witness the proceedings of the 3rd inter I. I. T. Meet to be held for the first time in Madras. The Chief guest of the morning, none other than the young Indian Cricketeer, Nawab of Pataudi, of whom we have heard much in the recent days, was accorded a warm reception. The Rector, Prof. B. Sengupto gave a formal introduction of 'Pat' as one who had revived test cricket in India. Pataudi declared the meet open and the five contingents marched past the saluting base. The pledge was taken by Srikant of home team. Pataudi, in his short speech, stressed the role of games and physical training play in the University career. He was glad that such a meet was staged in a technical institution. He wished that many such gatherings be held in other institutions in our country.



Scan to read
full issue

An excerpt from B. S. Sudhir Chandra's article in *Pradeep*, 2 April 1965, describing the opening day of the Third Inter-IIT Sports Meet at IIT Madras.

The remaining three IITs (Bombay, Kharagpur, and Delhi) shared 24 points each. This victory marked the beginning of a golden decade for IIT Madras. They went on to win all the championships in that decade, establishing themselves as a top contender in the Inter-IIT Sports Meets for years to come.

In the same *Campastimes* issue (February 1971), an article titled 'A Letter from KGP' (see next page) provides an account of IIT Kharagpur student Nandini Nityananda's experience at the Inter-IIT Meet. She emphasized how the meet was dominated by IIT Kharagpur over the last few years and even went on to suggest that IIT Madras would not be champions for long, "Well done and cuddle those trophies as much as you want. We will be back for them next year." Her statement, bold and confident as it was, did not bear fruit for another 16 years². IIT Madras went on to win all the meets in the decade, and it was not until 1986 that IIT Kharagpur finally won another championship.

The 1971 Inter-IIT Sports Meet was cancelled due to the Indo-Pakistani war. The 10 IIT Madras victories were therefore won over 11 years.

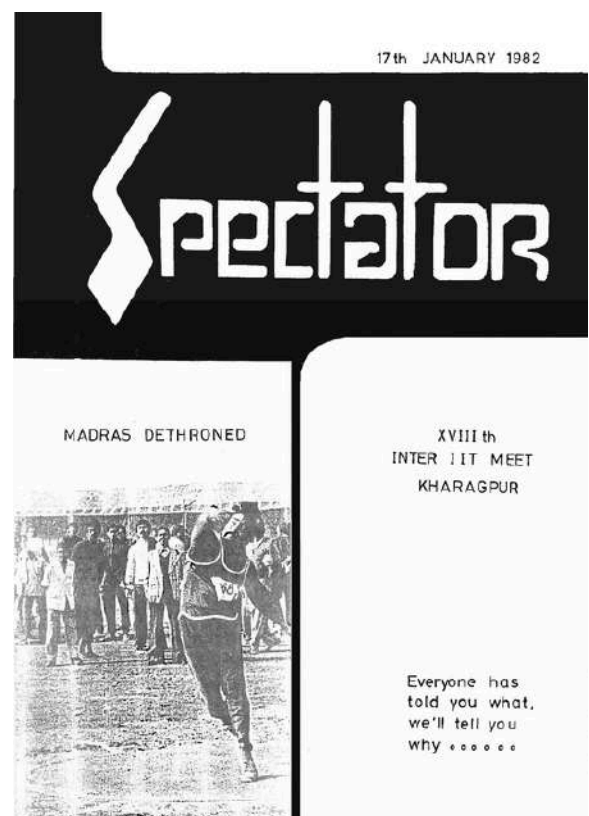
Interestingly, an issue of *Spectator* dated 9 November 1981 notes that there were talks of splitting the Inter-IIT into simultaneous meets where each IIT would host some games by rotation. This idea was apparently mooted because contingents with common players would be affected. The article claims that the idea for the split came out of the desire to put an end to IIT Madras' winning streak.

IIT Madras' run in the 1970s has not been matched by any other IIT thus far. The 17 January 1982 edition of *Spectator* documents the end of the historic decennial run. The *Spectator* issue was titled 'Madras Dethroned', a dramatic title to the dramatic Inter-IIT Sports Meet held in 1981 at Kharagpur. Can IIT Madras pull yet another flawless decade of victories in sports? Only time will tell.



Spectator - 9 November 1981

Scan to read



Spectator - 17 January 1982

Scan to read

²Both the official Inter-IIT Sports Meet page (<https://interiitsports.in/>) and a Wikipedia page (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inter_IIT_Sports_Meet) about the Inter-IIT Sports Meet agree that IIT Kharagpur won their next General Championship trophy in 1986.

A Letter from KGP

I was asked for my impressions of the 8th Inter-IIT Meet and have readily consented to comment on what I saw, heard and did in that hectic week. To begin with, but not at the beginning, for my opinion of life and competitive sports that drag you 1,000 miles and dump you, dishevelled and miserable, on an alien doorstep at two in the morning, was decidedly of the unimpressed category.

Resilience and ye olde hospitality of the edible form soon had us up and ready for the fight of our lives. Fight we did and the sordid details are common knowledge.

Of IIT-M

Campus comparisons, the first step in any line of strategy, leaves us quits. Just give us the deer and the forest and you can have the wide open spaces. No cramped-up apartment-dwellers are we, but one day's trudging and some were ready to run screaming home to the comfort of their disreputable bone-shakers—if they could get out of the campus, that is. For the girls, it was a hitch-hikers' paradise. Lifts were easy from professors in powerful foreign cars and Peter Fonda fans alike. (Maybe it was the KGP smile that did it.) Honestly those fearful distances must be making strangers of you all—separating metallurgist from meteorologist and chemist from carpenter. I hope it isn't only the eighth time you've all met!

Of the Meet:

Colourful, grand, spectacular or just plain preliminary to other matters on hand, the

opening ceremony is like a childhood disease—inescapable. Four tense days followed which were a culmination of hopes, speculations, and efforts. Winning or losing, each day held its own trials and tribulations. Till the last trophy was given away, there was a battle to be fought. Not till then was the Meet over and the championship lost, a tradition shed away and the bitter outcome to be faced. The days in between were pleasant and enhanced by our privileged status as guests. The food, though a fertile topic of conversation, was not of the kind to provoke violent reactions. Being typical of its location, it probably came as a nasty surprise to a few.

The campus had really set out to welcome us—or rather THEIR Meet. Che Guevara and his band of volunteers made the Boy Scouts look like a bunch of sulky brats.

In winding up, a little gas about the old times will be permitted, I think. The general feeling about Inter-IIT amongst many of the students is that it is the monopoly of KGP not only in points but also in participation and enthusiasm. Cynically, it has even been said that the Meet is held only to provide KGP with the satisfaction of winning. I have no doubt that ill-founded notions have been dispelled by the elaborate preparations and eager participation which welcomed the Meet in Madras. It was taken as a chance to prove their mettle by winning the events and by successful organization.

Well done and cuddle those trophies as much as you want. We will be back for them next year.

NANDINI NITYANANDA

IIT Kharagpur student Nandini Nityananda's article in the February 1971 issue of Campastimes.



Scan to read



Bhuvanesh Santharam

is a Senior Content Writer at the Heritage Centre, IIT Madras. A poet and cartoonist, he published his first collection, *Silence Binds Us*, in 2022 and is working on future volumes. When not writing, Bhuva enjoys boxing, basketball, and long runs that spark new ideas.



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RUNNING BEYOND THE TRACK

INTERVIEW WITH D. PRABHANJANA

D. Prabhanjana, Institute Sports Secretary, is a fourth-year integrated M.A. student in Humanities and Social Sciences. A Chennaiite through and through, she grew up as a springy, restless kid in the city, developing an early interest in sports and athletics. She tells me that when her mother tried to make her do her homework, Prabhanjana would eagerly wait for her mother to receive a phone call so that she could plot her escape and go downstairs to play. Her mother, engrossed in her phone, would be unable to stop her then.

The 'Sports Sec' also has a district medal in skating, a sport which she had to discontinue early on due to it being an injury-prone sport. Following this, she discovered her love for running. She tells me that she flunked a school interview on purpose because the

school did not have an athletics track. The school she did end up in had a 200 metre track, which became her frequent haunt. Coaches discovered her talent and persuaded her parents to take up running seriously, which she did. In her middle and high school, Prabhanjana specialised in the 3000 and 5000 metre runs. She has bagged a district medal in the 5000 metre run and has also participated at the state level.

Bhuva: What are your favourite trails on campus?

Prabhanjana: I don't particularly like running on the road, but when I do, I enjoy early morning runs in the residential zone (I hope my professors don't catch me there and give me extra assignments!). I like it particularly because it is secluded, foggy, and the sounds of birds chirping make it all the more exciting.

B: Is there a sportsperson you look up to or draw inspiration from?

P: I take inspiration from everyone. Eliud Kipchoge, in particular, but I would like to talk about a junior from the 2023-28 batch, who is a part of the volleyball team. He follows a strict work discipline and routine. When he joined the institute, he did not know anything about the sport, but picked it up quickly. He reaches the courts before everyone else does and goes straight back to the hostel after practice without wasting any time. I value that consistency and work ethic. In his second year, he made it to the team, and in the third year, he was an integral part of the main five. That is what discipline and consistency do to you.

"I strongly believe that people should start playing sports and exercising for health benefits, and not just for competitions alone."



B: What other sports do you play?

P: I was a single child, so I had to innovate and play sports by myself. As a kid, I would tie a cricket ball in a sock and hang it from the loft and practice. As a result, I still play sports like cricket and badminton.

B: IIT Madras has won the Inter-IIT General Championship Trophy for the 25th time now. How does it feel? Were you expecting to get the win?

P: We were expecting to get the win; we were very sure of it. What we didn't expect was utter dominance from IIT Madras!

B: What were the things you were particularly happy about?

P: Well, we won the cricket gold after 31 years! The finals were at IIT Hyderabad, and the match was between IIT Madras and IIT Hyderabad. Hyderabad had the home advantage, and they were chasing our total. They had a good batting lineup, and we were a little worried about that. Soon, as wickets began to fall, we were relieved. The IIT Hyderabad contingent filled the stands and cheered their team on, and tried to distract our team. When one of their wickets fell, the IITM fielder turned to the crowd and began blowing kisses towards them! We also won gold in volleyball (both men and women), but we could not send too many of our folks to go and cheer them on, as we were busy with the cricket final. This was also the case for table tennis, badminton, and squash. We were suffering from success, as we had multiple final events to take part in! The other IITs lost their semis and quarters in all games and had only one or two sports finals, so other teams had entire contingents cheering them on!

B: Is there anything that shocked you during the tournament?

P: Yes, when I checked the schedule sheets, I saw IITM all over, in semis and in finals!

“Sleep and diet are very important. Investing in health is a great investment, in my opinion. People skip breakfast, and that makes me very angry!”

B: What kind of challenges did you face during this tournament?

P: The main thing was the weather conditions. We hoped that Hyderabad would have the same climate as Chennai, it being in South India, but we were wrong. It was cold at night, and during the afternoon, the temperature would shoot up! Tirupati, which is not too far from here, had a weather pattern similar to that of Chennai, although it was a bit windy. At IIT Madras, we were worried it would rain, but thankfully, it only rained a little for a day or two.

B: Where do you think you could have done better?

P: I will tell you where I think I did better instead! Usually, before the Inter-IIT, athletes get a special protein-rich diet for around two weeks. This time, I extended it by 30 days. This meant 52 days of good food and more bonding time with the contingent during the semester (exams were going on). One of the reasons for this extra 30-day protein diet was Prof. Kamakoti, who agreed that our athletes should be eating well during the training season. As a result of this, we were getting 60-70 grams of protein in a day. All three meals would contain paneer and chicken. The Dean of Students, Prof. Sathyanarayana, was also very supportive. When we were leaving the campus at 4 am to catch a train, he would come and bid us goodbye. During the badminton tournament, he sat in the front row and cheered us on! It felt like he was the Dean of Sports, not the Dean of Students (DoST) alone!



B: What is your message to IIT Madras athletes and future sports secretaries?

P: My message to future sports secretaries is that teams are capable, coaches are there, and your role is to be empathetic. Be there for the team, and understand their needs. Yours is a representative position, rather than a power position.

I know people in college don't eat well, they don't sleep well, and they think that putting the energy and time into academics and research right now, while depriving themselves of sleep and food, will give them more returns, and they can catch up on health later. That is not the case. Sleep and diet are very important.

Investing in health is a great investment, in my opinion. People skip breakfast, and that makes me very angry! I understand that if you have a 9 CGPA, it is a big deal, but if you don't even have the health or energy to brag about it at the end of the day, then what is the point? Aren't you doing more harm than good?

I strongly believe that people should start playing sports and exercising for health benefits and not just for competitions alone. If the faculty members are also involved, it would provide a common ground for interaction between students and them. In sports, you lose, and you win. What is important is that you have to continue, no matter what.



Atharva Moghe, table tennis (TT) player, lights the torch to inaugurate the 58th Inter-IIT Sports Meet at Manohar C. Watsa Stadium. Atharva, a national-level TT player, won three consecutive TT gold medals in the 56th, 57th, and 58th Inter-IIT Sports Meets.



Bhuvanesh Santharam

is a Senior Content Writer at the Heritage Centre, IIT Madras. A poet and cartoonist, he published his first collection, *Silence Binds Us*, in 2022 and is working on future volumes. When not writing, Bhuva enjoys boxing, basketball, and long runs that spark new ideas.



bhuva23



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THE SQUABBLE

POETRY

Squirrel:

On Sunday morning, a lazy day,
I woke up late after daybreak,
Perched up high on the palm tree's crest,
The world looked bright from my snugly nest.
In golden beams, my drey so warm,
Palm fronds swayed in breeze's melodious charm,
I squeaked aloud with cheerful sound,
My furry tail gently swishing around.

Woodpecker:

From hollowed trunk, I greeted the dawn,
Spread my wings to bask in the sun,
Fluffy feathers shone in vibrant hue,
Pecking slow with morning dew.
Fragrant air, nature's beauty green,
I drummed and sang in morning serene.

Narrator:

Up on the palm, their playful threads entwined,
A duet of friendship, their hearts aligned,
In perfect harmony, their bond did chime,
Until that Sunday, their hearts lost their rhyme.

Narrator:

A coveted walnut in the squirrel's drey,
The woodpecker's eyes with envy did stray,
It pecked and chipped really too harsh,
A spark of fight over the Squirrel's stash.

Squirrel:

"You are eyeing my prize, claiming it yours,
I got it first, my hunger endures,
Go find the insects with all your might,
Leave it, shuck off, or we will fight".



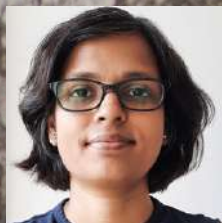


Woodpecker:

"I'll peck at you with my chiseled beak,
Off you will flee with a frightened shriek,
I will claim the walnut with my aggressive feat,
And chase you away, from this beloved palm tree's retreat."

Narrator:

"The squirrel squawks a defensive cry,
The woodpecker's drumbeat, a stubborn reply,
Their lively friendship began to fray,
As rivalry and pride came to stay.
Euphoric songs about seasons, sun, and rain,
Their autumn symphony began to wane."



Jyoti Sahu

is an accomplished professional with nearly two decades in IT and business innovation, contributing to Deloitte, DXC, HP, HCL, and STMicroelectronics. Skilled in product development, market strategy, and sales enablement, she has driven strategic growth across industries. With an MBA from the University of Missouri and a B.E. in Electronics & Telecom Engineering from Odisha, she also publishes Odia poetry and paints narratives that let colours bloom beyond data.

THE HERITAGE SQUARE

CLASSIFIED DIVERTISEMENTS

WARNING: TAKING THIS SERIOUSLY MAY RESULT IN RAISED EYEBROWS AND MILD CONFUSION.

ATTENTION ATHLETES!

IITM presents yet another event for the elated athletes of the 58th Inter-IIT Sports Meet. An Indian Star tortoise, bona fide resident of IITM and PANCHATANTRA level champ, is tortoisng around the stadium and scouting for one overconfident contender to relive the legendary "slow and steady" race. He is officially challenging you to a Nap-pocalypse Sequel 2.0!

Venue: Manohar C. Watsa Stadium, where 3800 students have already run themselves ragged.

Ideal Contender: A sprinter who believes mid-race snoozing is the sure-fire winning pill.

Award: Winner secures the IITM Innovation Fund to launch a world-class 'Sleep Centre of Excellence (CoE)' while loser earns a crunchy cabbage and a lifetime opportunity of being the mascot advertiser for this CoE.

Hurry! It's a win-win, never-before-seen offer. Meet the star challenger and the sports faculty advisor if you need to implant a micro alarm clock in your ears!

- *IndianStarTortoiseSpotter*



SUBMIT

your entries for the next issue!

EARN

₹500 per entry if you get selected!

COME CELEBRATE THE RHYTHM OF RAIN!

Did you miss the recent launch of IITM's Pluviophile Club - the world's only one right here on campus?

Feel envious if you missed experiencing their recent dopamine-boosting event - 'Misty Rain Dance Party Under the Banyan Canopy' with none other than the President of the club and hooves-tapping maestro, Mr. Blackbuck, tapping to the beats of the rain drops, hum of the winds and echoes of the thunderclaps. Prancing with splashy moves on a puddle-perfect dance floor, giving away autographed, hoof-print gumboots to members!

No FOMO. Be a member right away. The fee is just a raincoat. The forecast for 2026 is 100% shower of M&M's - mud, magic and memories sweet!

- *An Ecstatic IITM Pluviophile Club Member*



ROWING UNDER THE BRIDGE

I had a dream that I was rowing a canoe under the bridge near the stadium. I kept rowing until I reached an island located somewhere off the coast and I can't seem to experience other dreams apart from this ever since I landed on the island. If someone knows of any pill or medicine that can cure this strange ailment, please let me know.

- *Rabindranath Crusoe*

STOP CRIBBING, GUYS!

The same folks wishing Chennai was like Bengaluru, are now claiming that it gets too cold at night!

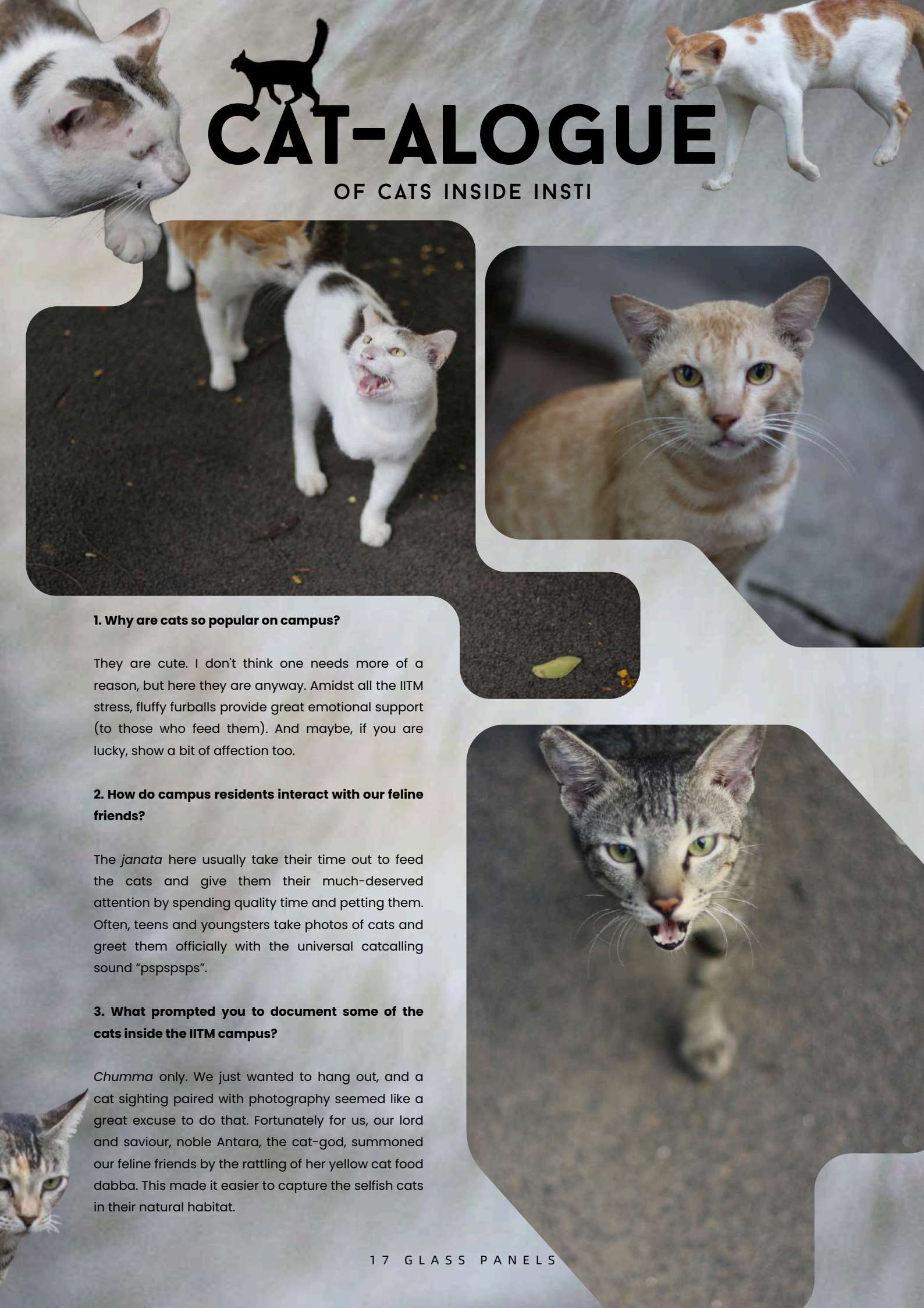
I, on the other hand, enjoy this weather to the max. I love zipping on the roads at night, feeling the wind in my hair, and the occasional fly in my mouth (I have a habit of keeping my mouth open while cycling).

- *Mr. Cold Don't Bother Me*

SWEATER WANTED!

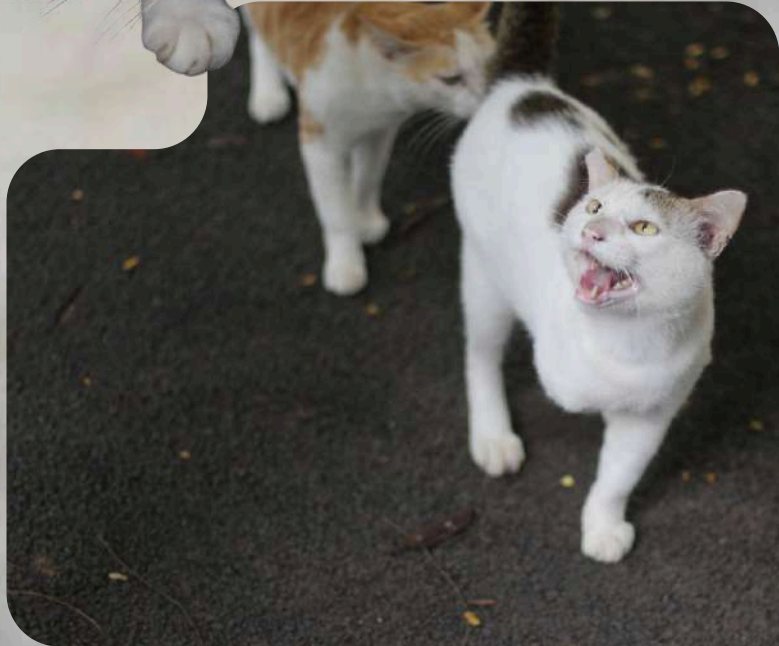
Some people think it is okay to leave the fan on full speed during the night. My roommate even sleeps without a blanket and t-shirt, spread out like the Gingerbread Man. I can't get him to turn it off. Someone please donate a sweater so that I can stay warm.

- *I Despise Winters*



CAT-ALOGUE

OF CATS INSIDE INSTI



1. Why are cats so popular on campus?

They are cute. I don't think one needs more of a reason, but here they are anyway. Amidst all the IITM stress, fluffy furballs provide great emotional support (to those who feed them). And maybe, if you are lucky, show a bit of affection too.

2. How do campus residents interact with our feline friends?

The *janata* here usually take their time out to feed the cats and give them their much-deserved attention by spending quality time and petting them. Often, teens and youngsters take photos of cats and greet them officially with the universal catcalling sound "pspspsps".

3. What prompted you to document some of the cats inside the IITM campus?

Chumma only. We just wanted to hang out, and a cat sighting paired with photography seemed like a great excuse to do that. Fortunately for us, our lord and saviour, noble Antara, the cat-god, summoned our feline friends by the rattling of her yellow cat food dabba. This made it easier to capture the selfish cats in their natural habitat.



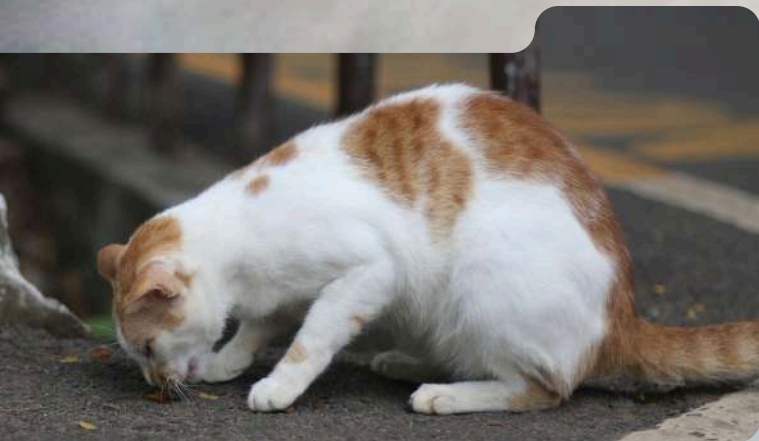


4. What is it that you like most about cats?

The thing with cats is that you have to earn their love and attention. This makes you feel like their affection is truly genuine. With cats, it feels like you learn to understand and respect boundaries. I think that teaches us an important lesson about acknowledging personal space even in human relationships.

5. What are some popular cat hangouts on campus?

Most of the cat population is distributed in and around the hostels, owing to the care students tend to give them. The Sarayu hostel hosts around 6-7 humongous



cats, so you know they are pretty spoilt. At the cycle shop near Usha Cafe, there lives a black female cat with a sweet meow. Living near the library, this one calico cat makes a very distinct “nomnomnom” every time it gorges on dry food. Residing in Sabarmati, an exotic Siamese steals the spotlight with its distinct icy blue eyes and its creamy beige fur coat. A skinny mafia cat, with his battle scars, dominates the Tunga-Bhadra hostel region. Under his reign lie a fat white cat missing a right leg, a truly handsome Tuxedo cat, and a greedy orange cat. The bus stop opposite Taramani Guest House is a permanent home to an orange, black, and calico cat trio. Probably deriving ‘inspo’ from the monkeys, an orange cat named Lawrence sleeps on a tree for recreation.



Antara, Amogh, and Anand

are campus residents who have spent their childhood inside the lush green forest of IIT Madras. Growing up, they developed an inclination towards nature and wildlife. Antara, Amogh, and Anand are all alumni of Kendriya Vidyalaya IIT Chennai.

ALUMNI REUNIONS

THE HERITAGE CENTRE HOSTS HUNDREDS OF ALUMNI IN DECEMBER

The Heritage Centre hosted several alumni batches between 19 and 27 December 2025. The 1975 and 1985 batches visited the Centre on 19 and 20 December, while alumni from the 2000 & 2001 (Dual Degree), 2005 & 2006 (Dual Degree), 2010 & 2011 (Dual Degree), and 2015 & 2016 (Dual Degree) batches visited on 22 and 23 December. This was followed by the visit of the 1990 and 1995 batches on 26 December.

Heritage Centre tours were arranged for the alumni by staff members. While the alumni shared many fond memories and moments, the new hostel room exhibit, in particular, piqued their interest.



Alumnae from the 1990 batch pose for a photograph outside the Heritage Centre.

The 1985 batch alumni having a cheerful time at the Heritage Centre.





An alumnus recalls the procedure of a fitting exercise at the Heritage Centre's Workshop Bench exhibit.



Ms. Krishna Priya, Project Associate, gives a guided tour of the Heritage Centre to alumni.



A group of alumni pose for a photograph outside the Heritage Centre.



The Heritage Centre remains a cherished space for alumni to reconnect and reminisce about their good old days.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

It is always a privilege and delight to welcome eminent personalities to the Heritage Centre. From ministers and entrepreneurs to authors and Nobel laureates, the Centre has never been short of inspiring stories of distinguished visitors. Here, the past, present, and future of the Institute are carefully documented and displayed, making the Centre an essential stop on any visitor's itinerary. Presented below are glimpses of some of our most notable guests in September and October.



Mr. Dirk Panter

MEMBER OF GERMAN FEDERAL COUNCIL

"Thank you so much for the interesting insight into the history of IIT Madras, may the Indo-German partnership grow farther!"

12 NOVEMBER 2025



Prof. Dr. Martina Padmanabhan

UNIVERSITY OF PASSAU, GERMANY (UNIVERSITÄT PASSAU)
(DAUGHTER OF PROF. S. PADMANABHAN, THE FIRST
TEACHING STAFF MEMBER OF IIT MADRAS)

"My father would be so happy to see the remembrance work done here!"

13 NOVEMBER 2025



Prof. Shigero Saito

TOYAMA UNIVERSITY, JAPAN

"Thank you for your hospitality. I am very happy to engage the MoU between IITM and University of Toyama, Japan!"

14 NOVEMBER 2025

14 NOVEMBER 2025

Prof. Antonio Maffei

KTH ROYAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY,
STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

"Thanks for the interesting tour.
Very fascinating history! Looking
forward to more co-operation
KTH/IITM".

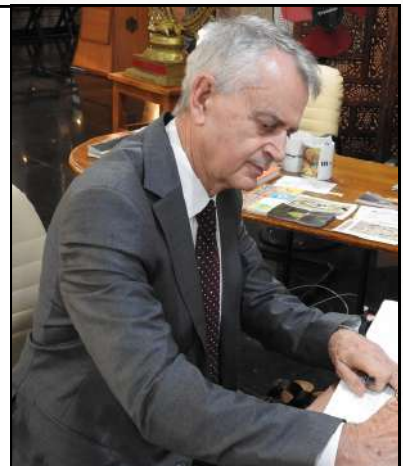


4 DECEMBER 2025

Mr. Chris Cooter

HIGH COMMISSIONER OF CANADA

"What an amazing institution,
honouring the natural environment
while building the future for India.
Hope the collaboration with
Canada will accelerate."



4 DECEMBER 2025

Prof. Satish Pandey

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF HERITAGE
HERITAGE SCIENTIST, RESEARCHER, EDUCATOR





(1) Brigadier Aman Anand

VISHISHT SEVA MEDAL, INDIAN ARMY

(2) Mr. Balaji

DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
ORGANISATION OFFICER

4 DECEMBER 2025



Mr. Ramesh Rajaram

ALUMNUS - 1980 BATCH

"It is fantastic to see the growth and development of my alma mater. The energy of the people here, their friendliness is amazing. Makes me proud to be an IITM alumnus. The Heritage Centre is the icing on the cake."

4 DECEMBER 2025



Prof. Salima Bouvier

SCIENTIFIC OFFICER,
UNIVERSITY OF COMPIÈGNE, FRANCE

"Thanks a lot for this interesting visit. I really appreciate knowing about IITM."

12 DECEMBER 2025

16 DECEMBER 2025

(1) Prof. Ashutosh Dhar Dwivedi

AALBORG UNIVERSITY, DENMARK

(2) Prof. Rajani Singh

COPENHAGEN UNIVERSITY, DENMARK



19 DECEMBER 2025

Ms. Vidhya Srinivasan

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS AWARDEE, VP AND GM,
GOOGLE SEARCH ADVERTISING AND EXPERIENCES, USA

"Amazing experience! Thank you
for capturing the journey and
spirit of IITM so well!"



23 DECEMBER 2025

Mr. Rajiv Dalal

CLASS OF 1977,
METALLURGICAL AND MATERIAL ENGINEERING

"Totally mindblowing
experience, I am young again."



M. Krishna Priya

is a Project Associate at the Heritage Centre, IIT Madras. A postgraduate in history and an aspiring singer, she finds joy in performing. She also inclines to pick up new facts, untold stories, and conversations that spark discovery. Apart from this, she loves dabbling in video editing and watching movies. She can often be found skipping around the Heritage Centre, looking for new subjects to make Instagram reels about.



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News BITES

Latest news from the Heritage Centre

January 2026

Heritage Centre Bids Farewell to Prof. P. Sriram



Prof. Arun Menon, Faculty-in-Charge (starting October 2025), presents a bouquet to his predecessor. (Right) Cover image of a festschrift titled Aerospace, Administration, and Academic Excellence: Festschrift for Prof. P. Sriram, prepared specially for the farewell function.

On 28 November 2025, the Heritage Centre hosted a heartfelt farewell function for outgoing Faculty-in-Charge, Prof. P. Sriram.

The event commemorated his invaluable contributions and tireless efforts in shaping the Heritage Centre into a vibrant repository of IIT Madras's history and legacy.

The Heritage Centre welcomed the attendees with tea, coffee, snacks, and some lively conversations.

Mr. Kumaran Sathasivam, Project Manager, initiated the farewell function with his address.

After the welcome address, the Faculty-in-Charge, Prof. Arun Menon, addressed the gathering by sharing his words of appreciation and reflection.

A short film, compiled and curated by the Heritage Centre team and edited by Mr. Ravichandran V. from NPTEL, was screened at the event.

The film was a tribute to Prof. P. Sriram's enduring journey and his contributions to IIT Madras.

It comprised messages from former Director Prof. Bhaskar Ramamurthi, Prof. R. Nagarajan, Prof. Shankar Narasimhan, Prof. Meher Prasad, and former Registrar Dr. V. G. Bhooma.

A book titled Aerospace, Administration, and Academic Excellence: Festschrift for Prof. P. Sriram, compiled and designed by Bhuvanesh Santharam, was presented to Prof. P. Sriram by Prof. R. Nagarajan.



Prof. P. Sriram's address.

Prof. P. Sriram's Address: In his address, Prof. Sriram conveyed his gratitude to his colleagues, well-wishers, and friends who shaped his journey at IIT Madras.

He was visibly moved by the Heritage Centre's heartfelt video and the Festschrift.

Felicitation by the Audience: Members of the audience, mostly consisting of Prof. Sriram's colleagues and students, shared their thoughts and memories of working with and studying under him.

This was followed by a vote of thanks by Ms. Mamata Dash, Senior Project Officer, Heritage Centre.

Presentation of Gifts: The Heritage Centre team presented customized gifts of appreciation to Prof. P. Sriram.

Inauguration of New Exhibit: The farewell function became all the more memorable with the inauguration of a new interactive exhibit: A 1960s student hostel room installed by our very own Engineering Unit.

Prof. P. Sriram inaugurated the exhibit in the presence of the attendees of the event.

The immersive exhibit is now open to all visitors.



Prof. Arun Menon delivers a speech during the event.



Team Heritage Centre presents gifts to Prof. P. Sriram.



Prof. P. Sriram inaugurates the hostel room exhibit.

The farewell concluded with a sumptuous lunch arranged by the Heritage Centre.

Friends of the Heritage Centre—including the Chief Security Officer, members of the Engineering Unit, and NPTEL—graced the luncheon.



Prof. R. Nagarajan presents the festschrift to Prof. P. Sriram during the farewell function.



Attendees at Prof. P. Sriram's farewell function.



A grand lunch!

230+ Visitors at the Heritage Centre!



On 26 November 2025, a group of over 230 tribal students from four different states: Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and Maharashtra, visited the Heritage Centre as part of an initiative organised by the Tribal Youth Exchange Programme (TYEP), which falls under the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.

Since the Centre could not accommodate all the students at the same time, they were split into batches of four.

The students watched the documentary film IIT Madras: Journey to Eminence at the '81 Theatre and explored the Heritage Centre. The students, clad in traditional attire, were buzzing with energy and enthusiasm as they looked at various exhibits inside the Centre. They were dressed in traditional attire because they were about to give a dance performance at the Central Lecture Theatre (CLT).

Most of the students were inquisitive about various aspects of IIT Madras and the Heritage Centre.



They kept the Heritage Centre staff on their toes, who readily obliged by answering all the questions that the students threw in their direction. The visit to the Heritage Centre was followed by a brief interaction, which culminated in a photoshoot. Portraits and group photographs were captured, as laughter and smiles filled the air outside the Heritage Centre.

Before visiting the Heritage Centre, the students had performed traditional dances at the Governor's residence.



GLASS PANELS



Scan the QR code to read all the issues of *Glass Panels* on your device!

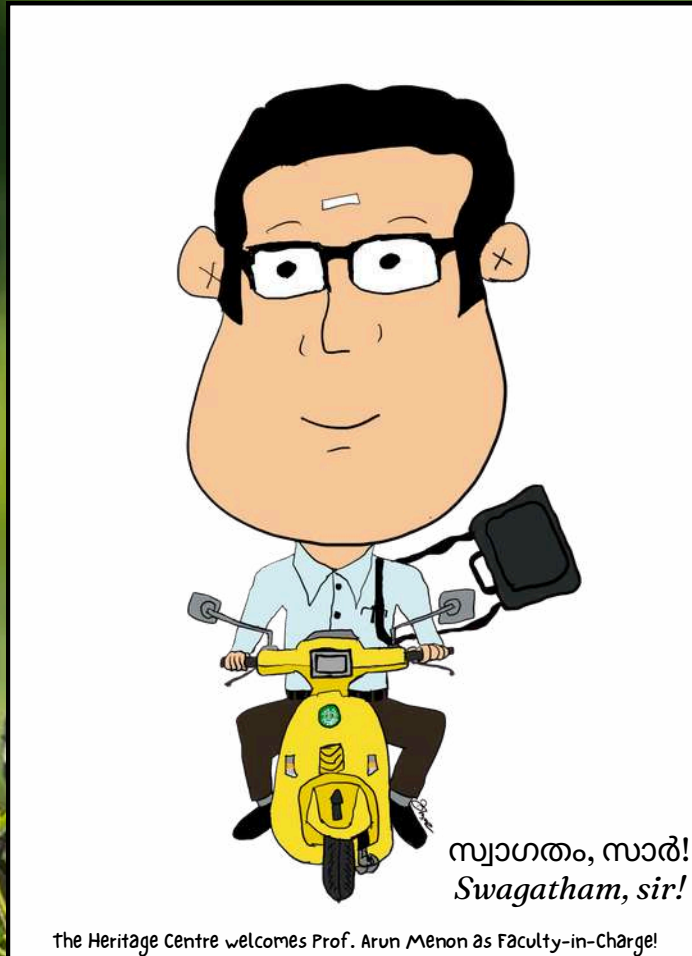


ABOUT US

Glass Panels is the Heritage Centre's bi-monthly magazine. Over the last few years, it has gained immense popularity among alumni, campus residents and students. The magazine contains articles, poems, cartoons and much, much more. If you haven't got the opportunity to read this publication, it is never too late! Scan the QR code shared on this page and flip away!

"Surround yourself with the dreamers, the doers, the believers, and thinkers; but most of all surround yourself with those who see greatness within you even when you don't see it yourself."

- Simone Biles, Olympic Gymnast



Art: @soulkachi studio / Bhuva

To know more about the work we do,
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Schedule visits by writing to the
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IIT Madras

