



TIMES



CAMPASTIMES

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Our heartfelt thanks to Mr. P.S. Sridharan, Dean, Students' Office for the excellent typing of this issue. - Eds.

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FROM THE EDS. (IS ANYBODY LISTENING?)

'Eds may come and Eds may go
but I will go on for ever'.

- old CAMPASTIMES saying
(with due apologies to Tennyson)

So CAMPASTIMES walks on to yet another year. Trudges would be a better way to describe its gait. It is a perpetual conflict between supply and demand. An economist might be intrigued with this case, for the supply just never meets the demand ! And so year after year each editor in a futile attempt to bridge this yawning shortfall of articles, goads the otherwise lazy IITian to 'rediscover his hidden talents' and come out with something creative.

We used to wonder what drove these tireless editors on this seemingly endless hunt. Now of course its no more a mystery for every dream these days (and classroom climate as such is very conducive for it), has as its primary ingredient one smiling, enthu, IITian saying, he has an article to give for CAMPASTIMES. So pick your pens, write on anything you like, or don't like and pass it on to us.

There is much talk of 'improving' the standard of CAMPASTIMES' articles, and boring articles abounding, et al. But instead of generally relegating the whole gamut of articles as 'arbit' or 'painful', why don't you give us some constructive criticism ! We will be glad to implement your suggestions. We want to start a 'Letters to the editor' column, to help us in this respect. So write in your views. We are waiting

A common malady with a 'literary mag' such as ours is that it ends up remaining an exclusive preserve of a limited few. The vast majority merely takes a perfunctory voyage, hopping from one page to another. Perhaps, the article evincing maximum interest is a crossword!!

This simply means that the general reader assumes it to be a magazine filled with either mundane or esoteric articles, neither of which interest him. The tendency of the editors to stick to a small clique serves to further distance them from other students. So help us bridge this gap.

Here's looking forward to an enjoyable year with you.
Happy reading.

- Eds.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE (IN CLASS I)

The rumours had been floating around all day & the management was bent on imposing its will on the students. Conversation in the classrooms, canteens and libraries hovered around the same topic. Then the news came; it was brought by someone who had obtained it from one of the peons working at the administration building where the Senate meeting was going on. The rule had been passed.

Student leaders now swung smoothly into action. Classes were emptied of the students and protest demonstrations were held in front of the Director's house. Very soon a full blooded strike was in progress.

The scenario pictured above might take place in any college except IIT Madras. The reason is not mainly the much maligned student apathy - though it certainly would be a contributing factor. The real reason would be in the fact that even now most of the students attend about 80 to 90% of classes and hence would not be affected by the rule. The small minority that is going to be affected will not be able to produce a demonstration of sufficient force all on its own. This is a most unfortunate state of affairs. The vast majority not respecting and unwilling to protect the rights of the minority.

It may be argued that this rule is beneficial to the student and as such there should be no question of his protesting against it. Let me point out that what we lose through this rule is far greater than the measly gain of a slightly improved academic standard.

What is now lost is the trust that had been reposed in the student - the belief that the student was a mature and responsible individual. With this will also be lost the self esteem that stems from the fact that his elders regard him as an adult capable of making self determining decisions. Further the student and the management will now be perceived as being on opposite sides of the fence.

From this will develop a mentality of competition, of cold war, where the aim will be to get as much as possible from the other while yielding as little as possible. In fact, I have a feeling that the overall percentage of classes attended may actually come down as people attempt to exactly fulfill the minimum requirement.

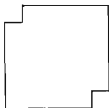
All in all, this rule will not bring about great changes in the physical life of the campus - here it will be business as usual.

But a subtle change in the IITian psyche is almost inevitable. Unless the damage is repaired quickly we will fail in our endeavour to produce mature well rounded citizens of the Indian democracy.

- K. Vasanth

§ § §
MIND BENDERS

1) There are 100 squares arranged as a 2-D array of 10 x 10. The squares corresponding to (1,1) and (10,10) are removed as shown.



You have to make pairs of adjacent squares till all the squares are exhausted ('Adjacent squares' are those which share a common side). The question is to prove that whatever be the manner in which the pairing is done, two squares will always remain unpaired.

2) If you move 10 km South, 10 km East and 10 km North you are back at the starting point. Where on earth are you? Relax, don't jump to the North Pole immediately; you are not at the north pole i.e.) another point on the earth satisfies this definition. Which other point?

(Solutions on page 8)

§ § §

Its not enough if you succeed, your friends should fail as well.

- La Rochefocauld.

I am a conscientious man. When I throw rocks at seabirds I leave no tern unstoned.

- Ogden Nash.

THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE - REWRITTEN

Thomas Hardy's original novel was a gloomy and emotional version of the Mayor's story. He, like most novelists of the period was hell bent on proving that Mayors, like all other human beings only came on earth to go about being a) terrifying b) morbid and c) nuts.

The story begins with the hero Michael Henchard and his wife Susan eating porridge at a fair. Their baby Elizabeth (we'll call her Liz for short, though 'Liz for short' is as long as 'Elizabeth') also wants some, but as the porridge contains rum (and Daddy is very firm about his daughter's morals, whatever his own may be) she goes hungry, while drunk Henchard gets the bright idea of selling his wife to make some money. His theory is - there are wives and wives but who'll part with good money? As it happens a sailor thinks otherwise and buys the wife. A very good bargain too as the daughter was thrown in free to clinch the deal.

Michael Henchard, filled with remorse and a hangover swears to go straight and this road takes him to the town of Casterbridge where he becomes Mayor. Don't ask how! Meanwhile he also has an affair with a beautiful girl named Lucetta who belongs to another town. (And no, inter town and inter caste wars do not figure in this story.) He then engages a new manager named Donald Farfrae. Enter Henchard's wife and grown up daughter, who decide to sponge on the Mayor as the sailor is missing.

With the predictability of a Hindi movie Farfrae falls in love with Liz but (and here's the twist) marries Henchard's girlfriend Lucetta (the morals of those degenerate days!). To twist the tale further Susan dies and Farfrae divorces Henchard (oops resigns from Henchard's factory) and Liz becomes Lucetta's friend and lives in her house, with Farfrae as her ex lover getting more embarrassed by the minute.

And then it turns out that Liz is not Henchard's daughter but the sailor's and then Henchard goes broke and the sailor comes back (now that the daughter is rich enough to support him) and Henchard sends him away and Farfrae brings him back and Lucetta conveniently dies and it's all very confusing indeed. Rather like the guns in a Perry Mason book.

Anyway Liz and Henchard quarrel and the upshot of it is that

Henchard goes to a quiet spot to die. (Shed a tear you heartless brutes!) Farfrae having married Liz is now far from free and has to arrange for the ex-Mayor's funeral: Having killed everyone he safely can, Hardy striking another sombre note (in extremely good voice by the way) decides that the reader has had enough (actually the average reader went to sleep on page 12) and

ENDS.

Jaideep. L.

§ § §

HELLO

It's a burning burning flame
That's driving me crazy and act silly
the person to blame
is one heluva charming filly.
She's lovely with features feline
In her, beauty is in its prime
Want to know her better and make mine
What all I ask is gimme some time.
Her hand I wish to claim
And to the world I hereby proclaim
It's a sham that's what is society
In it what you need is a Godfather strong
With you if you have someone mighty
Then you can get away with any wrong.
That's why I crave not for pseudo fame
Nor care for shame
I'll be happy so long as I have my dame
but only if I could know her name.

Samad. M.A.

§ § §

A bachelor is a souvenir of some woman who
found a better one at the last minute.

- Anonymous.

§ § §

THE RING

It is a typically crowded day at the annual carnival in the main city square. The hawkers' calls are drowned in the hustle and bustle of the people thronging the place with their little ones. Sam's eyes follow a man ambling along with a kid in his arms. His gait attire and demeanour characterise him as a well to do fellow with a pampered kid occupying most of his attention and all of his arm. In short he is a very vulnerable victim.

Sam almost nonchalantly joins the queue behind his quarry. By the time he has bought the ticket for the entrance to a stall, he is a good \$100 richer. No one dare suspect that the wallet in his pocket did not belong to him just a short while ago.

That was more than five years ago. Sam then took up a respectable job of a receptionist at a local hotel. The days of constant hide and seek were well behind him. Though he had been at the receiving end of a judge's sentence a couple of times in his chequered past, he considered it all as past history, almost as if it never existed.

Sam's life as a receptionist was pretty much routine and would have remained so had it not been for a new guest who checked in the other day. More orthodox persons would have stopped at calling her pretty, but for our Sam, she was Helen of Troy personified. It must go to Sam's credit that he wangled a date with her by the end of the week!

She was an outgoing lady with an independent mind. Perhaps it was Sam's simplistic view of life that attracted her, but it was a fact that soon she was head over heels in love with him. Sam told her ever~~w~~ bit of his past and she believed him when he told her that all his escapades were behind him. They sure were an ideal couple.

They were one among the numerous love birds flocking the beach that evening. It was their favourite meeting spot. They ensconced themselves on a bench and after talking for over an hour on this and that Paula suddenly said "It is my birthday tomorrow."

"Why didn't you tell me before?" exclaimed Sam.

"Just wanted to give you a surprise," she said in defence.

"Never mind, just tell me what you would like for a present".

"Something to adorn my ring finger!" she replied and with a mischievous grin, turned and scurried off towards her house.

Sam could hardly control his joy as the import of her words sank into him. He would surely get her the best engagement ring that money would buy.

His euphoria died down the moment he looked into his balances. His job as such did not leave him much scope for savings and his evenings out with Paula were hardly helping his finances. So what was to be done? He couldn't surely slip a cheap ring over Paula's finger.

As his gaze fell on a pair of soft rubber soled boots and mittens gathering dust in a corner, an idea began to take shape in his mind

"Would he be able to pull off this last one?", was a thought continually nagging Sam, as he stalked his quarry, a 'well fed' plump woman sporting a huge ruby studded gold ring. He imagined a breathtaking Paula with the ring glowing prominently. With a shake he brought himself back to reality and waited for the woman to turn the corner. Speed was of essence. He had to mingle with the crowd before she raised an alarm.

Just as she turned the corner, Sam moved. His movements were gentle and such as not to cause any attention. She just felt a gentle shove and a light tug, no more. Disregarding it as another of those collisions which are an integral part of a busy day, she moved on. As Sam neared the main highway, he heard a shriek and saw a crowd gather round the woman. With a shrug of his shoulders, he moved on and hailed a cab to his apartment.

The calm ocean at a distance with a few small waves breaking gently on the beach, seemed to reflect the emotions of two of the inhabitants nestling in each others arms. Sam had carefully placed the ring in an ornate jewel box which seemed to suit the magnificent ring inside.

"My mother wanted to meet you. Why don't you come over for dinner tonight?" asked Paula. "She is a very charming person, always smiling. But unusually, she was quite upset today."

"Why?" asked Sam.

"She lost her big ruby ring. It was a family heirloom. But don't worry, she'll get over it fast."

Sam stood petrified. As if from a distance he heard Paula

ask, "Let me have a look at the present dear." Almost in a stupor he extended his hand.

Her hand was poised over the box and she proceeded to open it.

The ball was but a red blur as it hit her hand. The box flew from her hand onto the wet sand. Before she could react, a wave gently engulfed the box in its reaches and retreated with it into the fathomless depths of the ocean.

"I'm sorry missus." The little boy was looking meekly at her.

She just turned and buried her face in Sam's shoulders, tears flowing in a torrent.

They are now happily married and have two kids, but she sometimes wonders if it was a smile that she saw on Sam's face as the box went into the water. Her vision had blurred with tears, she could never be sure.

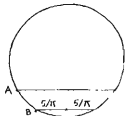
- Shripati Acharya.

§§§

SOLUTIONS TO MIND BENDERS

1. Assume the array to be a 10 x 10 chess board. An adjacent pair will now consist of one black and one white square. If you make the first square white, then the 100th square will also be white (check with your 8 x 8 chess board). Removing those two squares leaves us with two black squares which cannot be paired.

2. You can be at any spot on a circle which is 10 km away from a point on earth where the circumference is 10 km i.e., if you start from this point (say A) and reach B (10 km south) and move 10 km east from B, it would take you round the earth back to B; and 10 km north will lead you to A.



You can also start from a spot so near the south pole that it would take you round the earth twice. Of course this generalizes to eastern trips that go n times round the pole; so the problem is solved by an infinity of spots on an infinity of circles.

(When almost about everything in the campus seems to be made for the U.G. (and modified to suit the P.G.) including Registration cards and Guides to Campus Living, here is a preview of an exclusive guide for the PGs)

Ref: IIT Madras Publications 1987, "PG's Guide to Campus Living"

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... When you arrive at Madras

Just look for the self appointed volunteers - I mean the auto drivers of Madras Central. Even if you cannot spot them there is no need to worry. It means that you have alighted from your train/bus at Egmore Station or Thiruvallur Bus Stand. Their counterparts at the respective auto stands will be present to welcome you.

This friendly man will show you the entire city under the pretext of taking you to the IIT. Beneath this hospitality and warmth is the autometer which ticks an astronomical bill by the time you reach your destination. Usually cribs of any sort will not be entertained by him regarding the money due to him. Desperate measures like showing him the recommended fare (Rs.30/-) in this guide will either induce uninterrupted laughter (which is the time you can escape to freedom) or make him look disdainfully at the guide and ask you if it is a pre-independence or a post independence publication.

If you however wish to avoid such adventures and reach the campus by bus please remember two important rules:

1. You may not sit next to an old lady/woman/girl of more than 2 years of age even though the seat next to her may be empty (This is not Bombay/Delhi).
2. Buy a ticket to your destination whatever may have been your earlier habits (This is not Bombay/Delhi).

... Ragging

(Undergraduates, please skip this page)

The word is forbidden now .. (but not the activity)
Ragging in IIT parlance has always meant a "not necessarily friendly" chat with the staff members, senior PGs and UGs. It would help you to prepare proper rejoinders to questions such as:

Why this of all the branches?!

What is your Gate Score?!

With that score you are lucky to get in the IIT?!
You didn't get a job after graduation?!
You got pained with your job?!
Perhaps you think you will get a better job after M.Tech?!
What?! You actually joined the M.Tech. program because
you like the subject and you want to work on some projects !!?!
Well! You may not believe that such intellectual/thought
provoking questions will be asked.
WE'LL PROVE YOU WRONG.

... What kind of wardrobe should you maintain

(PG and UG girls may skip this page)

For the mess/the common room/OAT: Pyjama/Lungis with or
without shirts, T-shirts, banians.

For the campus (other than those mentioned above): Hat/cap
(straw hats or caps of faded colours preferred).

T/shirt/kurta/shirt

Faded jeans

Hawaii chappals (straps preferably of different colours).

§§§ WARNING Some compilers/departments may not accept T-shirts during
lecture hours. The user may refer to the departmental manual
for such parameters/variables.

For special occasions such as Mardi Gras/Hostel Day/Convocation,
only the above mentioned attire may be put on. Special permission is
required from the concerned Warden/General Secretary of the hostel for
wearing ties, black shoes, tucked in shirts, belt etc. Permission in
all these cases will be given only after considering the merits of
each case. In cases such as interviews etc. the student concerned is
required to wear the ties and other such items only for the period
of the interview in the Placement Office and he is expected to revert
to his original attire immediately after.

... Glossary of terms used in the campus.

Enthu' guy -	A stupid guy who (unlike 80% of the Janata) believes in working for things other than grades and GRE scores.
Hi funda -	What you are not
Low funda -	What you think your class topper is in spite of his CGPA
Machan -	Any guy whose name you do not know

- Da - A general comment statement to explain your ideas to the janata.
- Goodal - That's what you think happens with your mess bill.
- Ditch - What you would say half way through a painful article like this.
- Close show - End of this article! You asked for it.

- Emm Tee

§ § §

QUEAZY TIME

- 1) Who designed the 'bouncing bomb' used by the 'Dam Busters' to destroy the Ruhr dams in World War II ?
- 2) The yield of an oil well is measured in barrels. How many gallons are there to a barrel?
- 3) Why do Tibetans search for a boy after the death of the Dalai Lama?
- 4) Which modern novel ends with the words 'She walked rapidly in June sunlight towards the worst horror of all'?
- 5) Which was the first flag to reach the Moon?
- 6) What is the Cassini division?
- 7) Which planet has the least density?
- 8) What unique find was made by a Bedouin shepherd boy in a cave in the Wadi Qumran (Qumran valley)?
- 9) Who is the only British Prime Minister to be assassinated?
- 10) How many Presidents of the United States have been assassinated?
- 11) The Lord Chamberlain's men were a theatrical company. Who was their most famous member?
- 12) Venice was the first city to be bombed from the air. How was it done?
- 13) What was the name by which Drake's famous ship was known before his circumnavigation?
- 14) Which vitamin may be found in sewage and sludge?
- 15) In which sport are these terms used: 'bull-pen' and 'strike-out'?

CLASSROOM COMMUNIQUÉ

The biggest misery of my life
Is trying to keep awake
It leaves me in such mental strife
It's more than I can take

The only thing I want to do
Is put my head down on my hands
Wouldn't you want to do that too
If your brain made such demands?

What can I do to make time pass
Till I can go back and sleep?
There's still 50 minutes to the end of class
And myself I must occupied keep

I could sing songs, write limericks
Stand on my head, or levitate
Juggle plates, do conjuring tricks
Or simply sit and ruminate

It'll be 49 minutes before I get to bed
Heavens! How time drags
I know what I'll do instead
I'll write things for college mags.

Umm..... write you said? That's easy. Just pick up a pen - I don't even have to do that. It's already picked up - and put it to paper. Then proceed to write about what you see about you. Or so the wise men urge. Be a commentator on life's cricket matches. So what do I see about me

Before me stands the Teacher, lofty and tall, the embodiment of wisdom and learning. So what wisdom is he embodying now? Beg your pardon, Sir? High velocity mechanical presses? So what inspiration can that give me. Huge, heavy, noisy things that go thump all the time. High velocity mechanical presses.... high velocity mechanical presses high vel.....

High velocity mechanical presses
Pressures and strains and internal stresses
Intensive loading and fatigue excesses
Make of our mental condition such messes.

No inspiration there. Perhaps I should get more intense about it. High strung, fraught with emotion....

I protest
My voice fades away
Caught in the whirlpool of authority
A thin and quavering leaf
Swept away to unknown depths of impotence
I fight
My hands are exhausted
Beating against walls of paper files
Bound together by red tape
Believe me, they're stronger
Than your constructions of steel and concrete
They have behind them a lazy human mind.

I dislike classes on the whole
I have support for this, I am tol'
This attack on the cranium
Like the bombardment of uranium
Is hazardous to both body and soul.

Mathematics is lengthy and numerous
Chemistry is equally slumberous
Physics is crazy
It just makes me lazy
Oh why must they so encumber us?

Aw mush. Let's go back to the field. The chap next to me is protesting too. He emits an occasional snore. Very gentle, almost a moan of suppressed anguish. His hand is poised on his notebook, all ready to record The Wisdom. There's this fly doing a tango on his nose. Adventurous fly that. It tangoed all the way down his nose and finally reached the rim of his mouth. Took a look in, shuddered visibly and flew off.

The voice of the teacher droned on
Then the sun rose and soon it was morn
I picked up my bag
And my piece for the mag
And stretched and walked out with a yawn.

Elizabeth Alexander.

§ § §

THE COLOUR OF LOVE

Inspector Albert Van Dyke stared through the immaculately clean windows of his office, over the barbed fence and the simmering metal of the serpentine road that stretched to the worst kind of habitat ever used by man. A part slum part city that was Soweto. The fresh riots had taken a heavy toll of the police forces of the Republic of South Africa but the brunt was borne by his men at Soweto.

The inspector had been witness to a kind of carnage whose horrendous magnitude would not be comprehensible to any but those who had been a part of it. Van Dyke had the reputation of being the most cold-blooded ever of the Inspectors who had served in the area. He had only one mission in life, or so his subordinates said - the complete, the complete annihilation of those 'vermin', as he called them, the black men in white ruled S.A. His deputy, himself no mean believer in the imperiority of the whites and the necessity of maintaining their age old domination over the blacks, whom he considered only barely capable of any but menial tasks, had shuddered when faced with the intensity of hatred Van Dyke harboured against the majority community.

Van Dyke never talked about it but it was common talk among his subordinates that this man had been a genial man not very long ago. A kindly family man. But the vagaries of this protracted and vicious struggle continuing in the name of the colour of a man's skin had warped his simple mind, his very being.

Many a gory detail was recounted for who knows the nth time, of that day when Van Dyke had walked into the open door of his home. Sylvia and David his two cherubic little loves had not been at the gate to welcome their father home. Well, the man with a strange kind of foreboding had run into the house on the outskirts of the white township.

Like a mad man he tore through the ransacked rooms shouting the name of his beloved wife and children. There was no response. How could there be, corpses never respond.

Van Dyke's eyes had become bloodshot his hands had trembled as he beheld the sight of three wantonly mutilated bodies in the cellar. Those bodies had that morning seen him off to work as his wife, his son, his daughter. His wife, his son, his daughter were no more.

Van Dyke did not burst into tears, he did not shriek. The sorrow lay all locked up in his heart. All he felt was a numbness, a sense of being dead even in life. Then he had found the note pinned to the body of his daughter with a knife.

'Can you recognise the colour of this skin?'

That was all that the note said. It sent a searing flame up the being of Van Dyke. His aim in life would now be to wreak havoc upon the black skinned vermin he knew were responsible for this gory deed. He would have his revenge.

That day witnessed the birth of a ruthless officer who did not hesitate to kill to exact a personal vendetta.

The phone rang. Van Dyke picked up the receiver and listened. A smile played upon his lips and his eyes glinted. But his face now was a mask of sadistic hatred. He barked out orders for a truck to embark with a force of 50 policemen, armed.

Van Dyke got in beside the driver and the armoured truck set out trailing smoke to the trouble spot — the makeshift incarceration centre at the street where the captive blacks were held after the recent round of arson and murder at Soweto. The reason: the men had tried to beat the guard and escape. Confusion still prevailed as Van Dyke and his men entered the prison precincts. The armoured car was pelted with stones. He ordered the vehicle to stop at the centre of the compound and the men to step out and shoot to kill.

Human shrieks rent the summer air and soon the acrid fumes of the police guns mingled with the stench and filth of the camp.

Van Dyke saw two blacks grab the nearest armed police man and as one choked his windpipe the other let go a burst of fire at Dyke's men with the gun he wrenched from the man.

Van Dyke took aim and fired. The black seemed to clutch at his throat where a crimson stain appeared and spread. Van Dyke turned his attention to the second man and finished him off with another round.

Van Dyke ran into the black mass of women and men running from the police fire. Cursing loudly he fired at them. He came upon two women hiding beneath the stairs to the main office. He shot them point blank, satisfied to see the terror of death in their beady eyes.

He ran further to the western perimeter and the fence. There was no one there. He turned, but something caught the attention of his eye. He sprang back and saw two small diminutive black figures staring out at him in fear over the barbed wire of the vegetable garden of the prison.

Hate welled up in him again as he saw the two black kids look at him. These were the vermin who had butchered his beloved ones. He lifted his gun to fire and then his eyes met the eyes of the two young ones. Round black eyes set in small glistening black faces. Small curly hair on the small head and the tiny hands gripping with all their little might the barbed wires of the kitchen garden fence. A fear of something the young minds felt but could not comprehend, writ large on their faces.

And slowly Van Dyke's anger and hatred seemed to evaporate. How could these innocent ones be punished for a crime they did not commit? Who was he to extinguish the living light from their eyes? His eyes dropped down and self revulsion gripped him. Had he come down to that lowly state of being a savage to snuff out young lives?

He looked up again at the two faces, still staring at him were the two pairs of eyes. His David's eyes, his Sylvia's eyes !! He put the gun back in its holster and walked over to the fence. The children cowered away from him.

He sat down on the grass, this side of the fence, on his haunches and smiled at them. After a few seconds the children broke away from their petrified state and walked towards him with slow and unsure steps. The fear not fully erased but some trust having crept into their expressions. The two came up to the kitchen garden fence and the small black hands curled once more over the wire.

He held out a hand to them. They looked at his hand outstretched and then at his smiling face and the two innocent faces broke out into smiles. Those smiles seemed to radiate and fill the world around Van Dyke with light and warmth.

He lifted them over the fence and one on each side of him the young ones walked, their small hands barely encircling his massive wrists.

In that moment of time Van Dyke knew what it was to really love. Not just one's relatives and near and dear ones but the entire

humanity. And the State he served was suppressing that natural love of man for man from taking root and in that lay the basic, tragic flaw. A flaw that has caused needless spillage of human blood, the cultivation of hatred in young and old for the colour of other men's skins. Apartheid has perpetrated the worst ever divide between man and man. And its victims Van Dyke looked at the two black kids holding his hands and then remembered the faces of his own David and Sylvia.....

Tender victim of apartheid
Don't you ever ask them why.
If they tell you will cry
Just look at them and sigh.

Well just sighing would achieve nothing. Every sane white Van Dyke realised, must bring it to bear on the others the necessity to mend all that was wrong, so that S.A. could be a society where there would be no need to sigh, looking at the innocent faces of the generations born today and those yet to come.

Jan. V.J.

§ § §



'Guess who?'

THE BAN AND AFTER

This was two years back. It was the 16th inconclusive meeting of the subcommittee on Higher Education Policy, presided over by none other than the chief henchman of the Minister and attended by a faceless crowd of secretaries, under secretaries and just plain secretaries, of various interconnected departments of the mighty edifice that was the Government of India. The important man was in a surly, aggressive mood and none dared to open his mouth.

Then the important man spoke, "I see that 70% of the budget for higher education goes to the IIT's. And what do we get in return? Nothing. What I propose is that we impose a ban on students travelling abroad after finishing their degree. A heavy bond would do, I think." And he looked around triumphantly, for as he expected, the motion was passed without a murmur.

After the letter from the Ministry reached the Director, the campus was in an uproar. The Senate was hurriedly summoned and there were scenes of muted jubilation as the modalities of implementation were hammered out.

The SAC met and deliberated weightily on the situation. Several members of the august body offered valuable suggestions. In the end a resolution was adopted unanimously, soundly condemning the new stricture and a subsequent resolution decided that in the next meeting a letter would be drafted to be sent to the authorities in the Ministry. The minutes were duly prepared and exhibited on all the notice boards.

The GSB was petrified - shocked beyond comprehension as the full implications of the move penetrated into them. Years of apathy, sloth and indifference had taken their toll of the rebelling abilities of the GSB, but this ultimate news brought them in a rush to the fore. There was even some talk of a strike but as with other things at IIT, it quickly petered out. Letters of protest and indignation appeared in the campus magazines and in one or two of the newspapers. It was rumoured that the U.S. was a bit perturbed at losing a steady supply of talented, law abiding students and dashed off a letter to the Ministry to this effect. The students, not to be outdone, organised a march, with the complete paraphernalia of banners, loudspeakers, posters et al, but to conserve energy, confined themselves to the campus.

The Government was not in the slightest bit relenting. The students were aghast and confused.... They did what they know to do best - resigned themselves to the situation.

The Placement Office was mobbed and suddenly the companies found willing scholars eager to join them. GATE suddenly became more competitive. The IIT Post Office reported a sudden drop in the mail and the Facilities Centre received certain books in extremely large numbers, which were however sadly left unsold. The Professors heaved a sigh as a major portion of their paper work was done away with. A certain organisation at Allahabad was reported to be considering closing down since there was a dramatic decrease in its activities.

Time has helped the IITians to get over the cruel blow; but such things inevitably leave their scars. The IITian of today is quieter, more reserved than of yesteryears and as he talks he sighs wistfully and it does cost him an effort to break out of his depressing thoughts into his usual sunny self.

They have framed the commiserating letter from the past students of IIT (H.Q.: NY) and hung it in one of the hostels. Moves are afoot to organise a museum wherein will lie the tomes of QB in state, and the myriad books and tapes now sadly unused, all of which helped to bridge the gap between the two mightiest democracies in the world.

- R. Ganesh

§ § §

PUN FUN

A good pun is its own reward.

. . .

Salutation to a tasteless punster: "Sir, I would toast you if you were better bread."

. . .

The priest denounced nuclear weapons.

The church members came to a critical mass.

. . .

FACADE

Ramu, the tailor boy, was one very happy boy as he watched the sun sink into the clear waters of the temple tank. The chirping of the birds brought into his mind pleasant thoughts as he sat on the steps of the temple tank smiling to himself.

"Thuck" went a stone into the water, breaking his reverie and Ramu was jerked into the harsh reality of the present: Vision of his drunk father beating his mother flashed through his eyes and he dashed for home only to find his father had not returned from the liquor den he used to visit. He could hear his mother in the kitchen of their two room hut with its cracked mud walls and holey roof preparing their dinner. He ran in to tell her the good news.

The very thought of the kindness of the lady of the big house brought tears into his eyes. He told his mother about how she had found him crying outside his school after one of the customary beatings by his father.

She had taken him home, promised him her son's old clothes, books; she had also offered to help him with his studies. As Ramu narrated this to his mother, the vision of a rosy future danced before his eyes. His one ambition had been to study well, to become a Big Man and take care of his mother.

Just as he finished he heard some swearing in the street and immediately a man lurched into the hut and collapsed on the floor in a drunken heap. This heap was Arumugam - Master tailor by title and professional drunkard. His way of lashing out at society and its bigwigs who had dealt him such a lousy hand was to drink one or two more and beat up his hapless wife and young son.

Poor Ramu neither big enough to stop his father nor small enough to ignore him altogether was in his own private hell and the glimmering of a way out was just starting to shine through the darkness of night.

Raja was the son of the "big house", a spoilt brat petted by doting grandparents, and everwilling father. His mother Sheela was Ramu's guardian angel. A graduate in Sociology and Economics, she considered herself to be a very fair and just lady. She had grandiose plans of working for the betterment of the poor, she felt she treated all her servants as her social equals. The grooming of Ramu was the cornerstone of her social welfare policy.

On hearing someone call out for Ramu, his mother came out into the street and immediately recognized the visitor as the lady of the "big house" who had been so kind towards Ramu and whom Ramu had been eulogising at every available opportunity and just then Ramu arrived to relieve his flustered mother. Sheela said "Ramu, this velvet cloth is to be made into a jacket for Raja and I have brought another shirt for measurements. There is to be a costume play in his school tomorrow and I want the jacket by evening". Ramu was thrilled by this opportunity to help his benefactress. He sat up half the night, cutting and stitching the jacket and finally slept over it.

The day dawned bright and clear and Ramu woke up to find he had to rush to school. He decided to give the finishing touches to the jacket during lunch time and give it to Raja in the evening.

The job was completed to his satisfaction in the lunch time though he had to skip his lunch to do the same. Ramu went back to school and counted out the afternoon classes. The clock finally struck 4 P.M. and the attendant rang the bell to dismiss school. A light hearted Ramu ran all the way home, for his deadline was 5.00 P.M.: and then TRAGEDY struck.

On reaching home, he found his mother lying battered in a corner and his father in the other in a drunken faint in a pool of vomit with the jacket also lying nearby stained with vomit and dirt. Poor Ramu stood there stunned. Now how could he give the jacket on time? What reason could he give?

Later in the "big house" Raja was throwing a tantrum and was egged on by his grandparents. The old lady shouted at Sheela "This is what comes of trying to raise people above their stations." Cha, Ellame Neram Than !" This ignited Sheela's temper and she ran down to the tailor's house. Sheela screamed at Ramu. "You ungrateful wretch, after all I have done for you, you pay me back this way. If you hadn't wanted to do this little favour for me, you could have told me and I would have gone to another tailor." Ramu stood there crying in silence, which enraged her even more, and she kept on her tirade. With each word of hers, Ramu felt his dreams shattering into little bits and falling all round him. Finally an infuriated Sheela stepped inside the hut to tackle Ramu's parents and she stood there SHOCKED.

The battered mother in one corner, the drunken father in a pool of vomit in another and the jacket (stained and dirty) lying nearby.

A flash of REVELATION shook her as she realised all her caring for the poor, her feelings of the social equality of man etc. were but a mere covering, a facade to cover the real Sheela who now stood exposed.

Madhusudan. C.P.

§ § §

A CAGED BIRD

Four walls
a roof and a floor -
this is my domain.
I am caged -
by my ambition.
'Priorities' says one
'Compromise' says another;
My soul cries
in indignation -
at the price demanded
for what little given.
Status and money -
Words of little promise
hold me in no lure now.

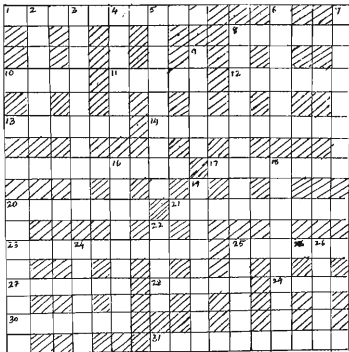
But I have
one consolation -
The window.
I look out of it:
at the greenery
at the stars
at my love, Nature.

So I continue
facing the window
paying the rent.

P. Seshu

§ § §

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

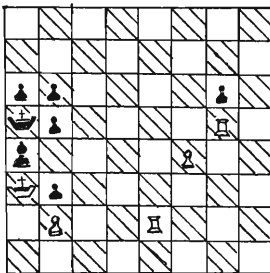
- 1) Give weapon to old Mafia chief for great battle (10)
- 8) Veer from south to west perhaps (6)
- 10) Tap sharply back during boxing practice (4)
- 11) Magic formula used over a period of time (5)
- 12) Sailor who was despatched is not here (6)
- 13) Note the solid is icy cold (6)
- 14) This plant will bite the monster! (10)
- 15) Country of vehicles is a flower (9)
- 17) Firm politician is first on before he introduces acts (7)
- 20) Sea fish is closing up (7)
- 21) Way indicated by Polaris (9)
- 23) Famous Greek scientist(10)
- 25) Is a book of the Bible, absolute truth? (6)
- 27) Girl goes north and becomes a Scandinavian (6)
- 28) Can a learner form a duct? (5)
- 29) Central Asian desert (4)
- 30) They are used to measure royalty (6)
- 31) At noon tide there is an explosion (10)

DOWN:

- 2) Killer who tore apart ? (6)
- 3) Pertaining to natives, sailor met the first (10)
- 4) Rubbed out what was seared badly (6)
- 5) Plungers take charged particle to provide distraction (9)
- 6) Ocean of the communists? (3,3)
- 7) This line decides how long you stay in prison (8)
- 8) Galleries are not in prominence (6,3)
- 9) The appeal was silently dead (5)
- 16) Principles hold men in dwellings (9)
- 18) Put pressure on man who handles publicity (5,5)
- 19) Most letters are of this type (9)
- 20) Are bridges used to tighten nuts? (8)
- 22) The order was cited wrongly (5)
- 24) Shakespearean play in small village (6)
- 25) Pour bile on a liquid measure (6)
- 26) Nascent creature tore my robe (6)

§ § §

CHESSMATE



White to move and mate in two

§ § §

Solution: 1) E2 C2! B3 C2 - forced 2) B2 B4 - mate
Any other move will lead to a stalemate and if the other rook is
moved away, a check mate for white!

A WALK IN THE WOODS

'IIT has a large campus filled with sprawling woods', says the Guide to Campus Living (or something like that) and at first sight the forest does seem to be peaceful and idyllic. But after a few weeks stay at IIT-M, one realises that all is not well with the woods. The problems it is beset with are many-cutting of trees for firewood (which seems to have increased sharply this sem.), uncontrolled construction of buildings. pollution (atmospheric and sound), littering, use of the forest for various shortcuts and as an open air toilet, stray dogs and cattle, use of the lake for washing clothes and fishing, even poaching of deer - the list is endless. It is only a matter of time before the GTCL will read 'IIT is filled with desert and concrete jungle'. Maybe in 5 years, maybe in 10, It is entirely up to us, the campus residents to decide on what sort of a legacy we are going to leave to future IITians.

However, the whys and wherefores of the denudation and degradation of our campus will not be taken up here - there being a separate campus publication to go into such issues. Of course, it remains to be seen whether the new editorial board of the aforementioned magazine will tackle such major problems which can cause irreversible damage to our environment, or will content themselves (and the GSB) by raking up non-issues like 'PG problems' and continuing to flog dead horses like the attendance issue, which has been the case in the past. Let us instead, look at and appreciate what our campus has to offer us in the form of wildlife, before it is too late.

Mammals, reptiles, amphibians and fish are rather poorly represented here. Commonly seen mammals are axis deer, black buck, bonnet macaque, common mongooses, bats, palm squirrel and black naped hare. Jackals have been sighted on occasion. The only reptiles present are lizards, monitors, turtles and a 5-foot crocodile, living in one of the oxidation ponds, out of harm's way. Interesting fish, including catfish with barbs and some garishly coloured fish with large poisonous spines on their backs, can be seen when people fish with nets at the lake.

The most interesting creatures are the birds (of the feathered kind). Over 70 different species have been spotted and identified here. Some of the common birds that you would have seen but may not have been able to identify, are described below.

The Stone Curlew is a brown-streaked ground bird with long yellow legs and distinctive white 'goggles' around its eyes. This bird should be familiar to those who jog in the stadium. Many can be heard making

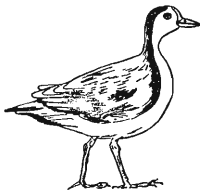
series of sharp 'screams' of pick, pick, pick. pick... and some come out into the open near the edges of the stadium late in the evening. When approached too close, it presses its body to the ground and sits immobile, perfectly camouflaging itself.



The Openbilled stork is a large black and white waterbird, somewhat resembling a vulture in flight. It can be seen overhead in large groups, in the evenings and mornings. A colony of around 300 birds lives in IIT, and goes out to feed elsewhere, everyday. These birds can be observed in their nests, at close quarters, from the top of SAC. The Openbill gets its name from the gap between its mandibles, which is present even when the beak is closed. What exactly this gap is for, no one knows.



The Whitebreasted Waterhen is heard more often than it is seen. It is noisy in the rainy season and makes a metallic krr-kwak, krr-kwak..... noise, which has been likened to the sound made by a bear when skinned alive. In appearance it is grey, with white face and breast and a bright red patch under the tail. It can be seen during the monsoon, wading in water-logged areas. Its relative, the Indian Moorhen, is similar in appearance and can be seen at our lake.



- Kurinji Sathasivam

§ § §

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD:

ACROSS

- 1) ARMAGEDDON 8) SWERVE 10) SPAR 11) SPELL 12) ABSENT
13) FRIGID 14) SNAPDRAGON 15) CARNATION 17) COMPERE
20) SEALING 21) NORTHERLY 23) ARCHIMEDES 25) GOSPEL
27) NORMAN 28) CANAL 29) GOBI 30) RULERS 31) DETONATION

DOWN

- 2) RIPPER 3) ABORIGINAL 4) ERASED 5) DIVERSION 6) RED SEA
7) SENTENCE 8) STANDS OUT 9) PLEAD 16) TENEMENTS
18) PRESS AGENT 19) CONSONANT 20) SPANNERS 21) EDICT
24) HAMLET 25) GALLON 26) EMBRYO.

ANSWERS TO QUEAZY TIME:

- 1) Sir Barnes Wallis. Also designed the R100 airship, the Wellington bomber and swing wing aircraft.
2) 35 imperial gallons or 42 US gallons.
3) Because they believe that the Dalai Lama is reincarnated this way.
4) Brighton Rock (Graham Greene).
5) Miniature Russian flags were scattered on the surface of the moon by the Luna 2 in 1959.
6) A gap separating two of Saturn's rings.
7) Saturn, which has a density lower than that of water.
8) The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947.
9) Spencer Perceval (in 1812)
10) Four. Lincoln, Garfield, Mckinley and Kennedy.
11) William Shakespeare.
12) Pilotless hot-air balloons carrying bombs released by time-fuses. Sent over by the Austrians in 1849.
13) Pelican - renamed the Golden Hind later.
14) Vitamin B12.
15) Baseball.

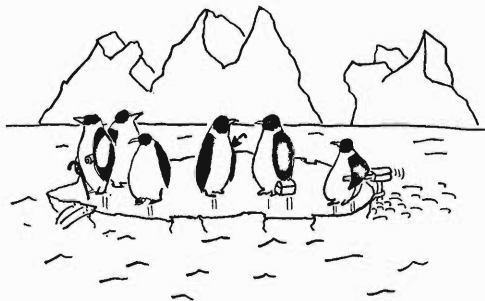
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Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

- Thomas Gray

§ § §

..... Last Gry



or