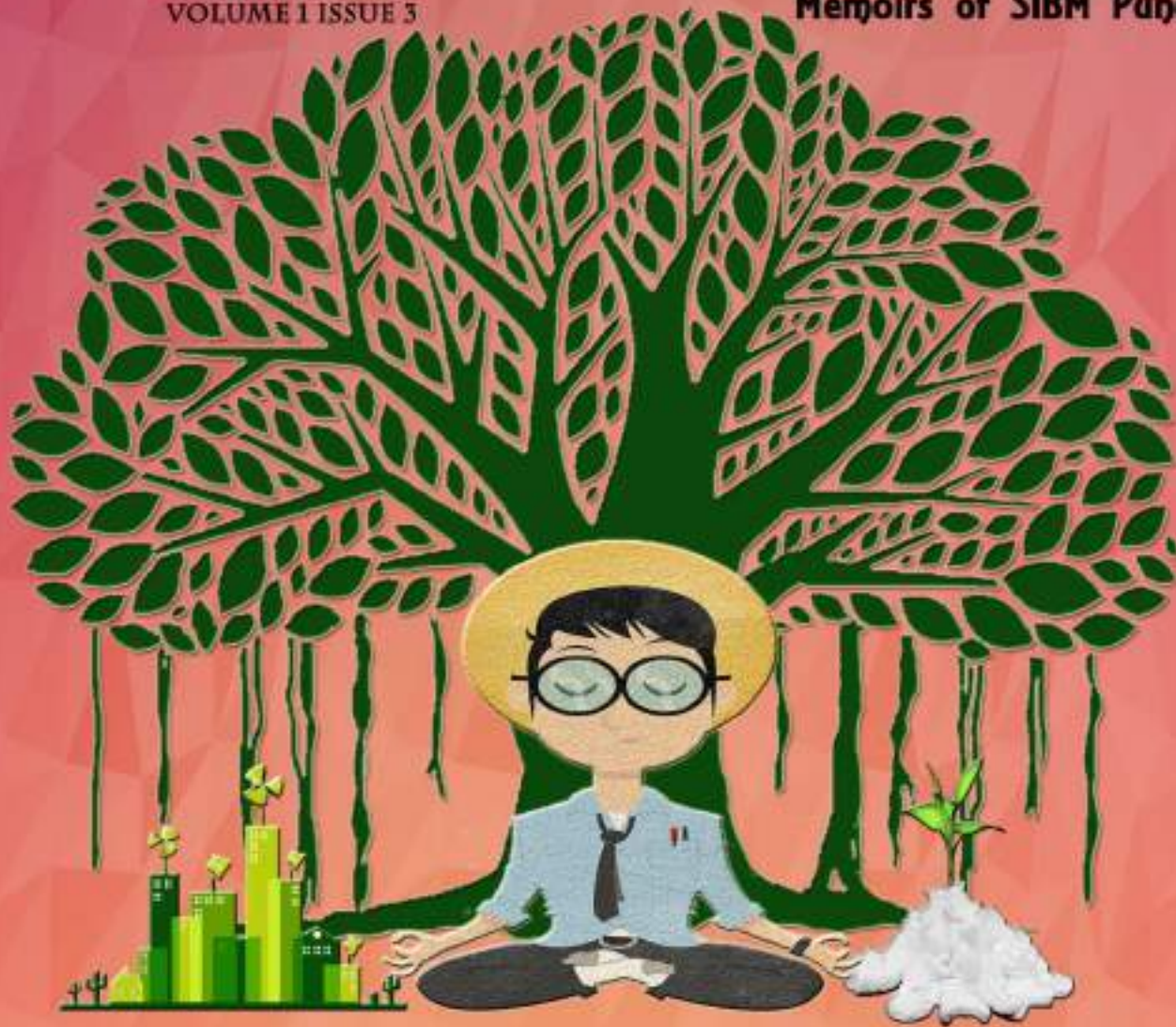




Prithanta

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VOLUME 1 ISSUE 3

Memoirs of SIBM Pune



In Time , An Intern

Student Triumphs Entrepreneurial Spirits




WONDER YEARS SIBM PUNE


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From the Coordinator's Desk...

As second year MBA students move towards the beginning of the end of their journey, we bring you a very special edition of *Vritanta* — one that is dedicated to the internship experiences of some of the best and brightest that Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune (SIBM Pune) has to offer.

The internship at the end of the first year of the MBA programme is a formative part of the career of every student of business. It is a time in which we learn a great deal not only about the world we are entering, but also ourselves.

In this edition, we showcase some of the achievers who have made the institute proud over the last month or so. In our special 'Spotlight' section we highlight the winners of Mahindra War Room 2014, a first in SIBM Pune history.

We interview Pradeep Gidwani – the beer mogul and an esteemed alumnus, speaking of his experiences with entrepreneurship in companies of all sizes.

We also bring to you the highlights of the Symbiosis International Institute Inter-Institute cricket tournament and an interesting debate on the present viability of Green Logistics, in 'Divergent Views'.

The focus, however, remains on the students who excelled in competitions, with stories on the students who participated — and triumphed — in Nomura's Investment Banking Challenge, the Telenor Youth Summit, Coca-Cola Showcase, and of course at Mahindra War Room.

It was our sincerest desire to capture the story of the grit, determination and hard work that goes into participating in these challenges and competitions. We also wanted to exhibit the elation of the winning teams.

We hope their stories keep you engrossed till our next edition.

Arnab Bassi
Coordinator, iSMaRT, SIBM Pune



Team Centurions



of Symbiosis Institute of Business Management Pune was declared winners of Mahindra War Room, Season 7. Anisha Saluja (MBA II HR), Dhruv Anand (MBA II Marketing), Kungumaraj Mohan (MBA II Operations) and Varun Gandhi (MBA II Finance) made up the winning team. Read more on the planning, experience, and motivations of these student achievers in our special interview section, Spotlight, Page 4.

"SIBM Pune Wins across Corporate Competitions"



Read the success stories of our students in corporate competitions of all kinds and against the odds in the Ground Zero section.

From the international Telenor Youth Summit to the inaugural NHRDN & Prof. Ram Charan National Awards, Nomura India Investment Banking Case Study Challenge to Coca Cola Showcase, the students of SIBM Pune have been winning laurels for themselves and the institutes across corporates and competitions.



This month's feature covers the internship experiences of some of SIBM Pune's best and brightest students. Turn to Page 1 for the full story of how the summer months mould young B-School students into true professionals.

White Collar

#Focus #Corporate #Alumni
#Achiever

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Ground Zero

#OnCampus #Events #Summits
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Paatshala

#Academic #Education #Professors
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Zeitgeist

#Students #HilltopHappenings
#Life #FoodForThought

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In time, an intern

The internship is a foundation laid for the career of every student of business. Here, we see the stories of some of our students, in their internships... their struggles, their triumphs, their learnings.

Since time immemorial, students from Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune (SIBM Pune) have undertaken internships at corporates of international repute. The internship takes place between the first and the second year and provides students, who by this time are familiar with the theories behind Marketing, Finance, Human Resource management and Operations management, a chance to engage in fieldwork. It exposes them to corporate life and surroundings.

The internship lasts roughly two months. More than anything else, the internship experience acts as an enabler. Models that were taught in classrooms become the backbone for research. Case studies become precedents. There is little to no handholding and all of a sudden there is a whole lot of accountability as companies decide whether their projects have any intrinsic value.

One sees how this can be a life-altering experience for the students. One may even term the entire experience as a rite of passage. What follows herein are the internship experiences of some of the brightest and

best that SIBM Pune has to offer – experiences working and learning at a variety of corporates, each posing its own set of unique challenges.

“During the summer internship, the most important part is not how big the organisation is but how well they treat their interns, whether they take their suggestions seriously and the level of importance they give to the intern’s project. In all these aspects, Castrol scored. As an organisation that is beyond huge and highly reputed, it was indeed a dream company for an aspiring summer intern like myself. It gave me a project that was very pertinent to the present focus of the company



Akanksha Inda

– and that too in my home city, Delhi! My mentor was eagerly involved in the project happenings on a regular basis and always provided his valuable inputs. He gave me insights and learning that was not restricted to the project scope but was about the business and beyond. Overall this helped me understand the project better and how it would impact the organisation,” said Akanksha Inda, now a second year student specialising in Marketing.

Some don’t find it easy from the get-go but rather have to ease themselves into their internships. What’s more, along the way they discover something about themselves. “I sometimes consider myself to be a borderline misanthrope, and my project entailed me sitting for

hours with each and every employee of the company to prepare their scorecards. And there were just so many! So it did come as a surprise to me that I actually enjoyed working with each individual there.

Also, during the internship, I realised that I loved autonomy. I could work with ambiguity to an extent. The liberty to self-direct my project, eventually turned out to be my biggest

strength," said Vasundhara Singh, a second year student specialising in Human Resources, who interned at Madura Fashion & Lifestyle, a division of Aditya Birla Nuvo Ltd.



Vasundhara Singh

For Dhruv Bhanot, a second year student specialising in Marketing who interned under The Group Management Cadre (GMC) programme run by the Mahindra Group, it was the opportunity of a lifetime as he got to utilise all



Dhruv Bhanot

the theoretical knowledge garnered in the first year and put it to great use. "My project required me to analyse the CSR-driven market for off-grid solar products and suggest a Go-to-Market approach for Mahindra ekoSol. Thus, I had to extensively study the CSR mandate laid down in the Companies Act, 2013, and examine various potential partnership avenues and

finally come up with a final recommendation for a GTM strategy."

Dhruv, like Vasundhara and Akanksha, believes that the curriculum of the first year should act as a reference point rather than a knowledge repository which the student should depend on when approaching the internship.

"I personally feel that the curriculum at college makes one equipped with the ability to give a preliminary structure to the project. It gives a general overview of the

approach to be followed but beyond that you need to step out of your comfort zone and read up as much as possible during the internship. Interact with people in office and try to gain as much knowledge from around you as you can."

Vasundhara chimed in as well: "I didn't expect the coursework to help completely, either, because theoretical knowledge does have its limitations. It gave me a base I could build on, and that helped."

The students also realised how tough the transition into full-time work is going to be, and are thankful for all the support they receive. "While

working in the Credit Analysis division on a project that saw us performing comprehensive qualitative and quantitative research, I was so grateful to my mentor for being there for me every step of the way. He sat right next to me throughout and our work was carried out with ease. That's the best part of working for a company of the calibre of JP Morgan. It's a friendly yet professional environment where meritocracy is the only factor when it comes to growth



Ankur Singh

within the organisation," said Shama Rangnekar, a second year student specialising in Finance who interned at JP Morgan. For some the internship experience goes above and beyond. Ankur Singh is a second year student specialising in Finance who interned at ICICI Bank, and reflects on the experience with great pleasure. "There is a reason that ICICI Bank is known for producing CEOs. They are known for their leadership



Shama Rangnekar



Tarun Girdhar

programmes. After obtaining my Pre-Placement Offer (PPO) from ICICI Bank, I attended a Leadership & Mentoring session organised by them for Management Trainees and PPO holders, which emphasised the importance of good leadership. It helped us imbibe the values of a good leader. It was an eye-opening and vivid experience."

For others, it is the learning that is paramount. Tarun Girdhar, who is a second year student specialising in Human Resource management, believes that there is much more to an internship than just completing the assigned project. "My greatest learning is that one should never restrict oneself just to the project at hand. There is always so much going on at any organisation. One should study the organisation itself, from the bottom up. Take care to understand its values and culture. There is so much to learn, always. Participate in every event that the organisation has to offer. It is truly only then that the top brass will view you as a cultural fit," said Tarun, who interned at Cisco Systems.

Another person for whom the internship experience was an eye opener in terms of learning was Kungumaraj

Mohan, a second year student pursuing Operations management, who interned at Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages Pvt Ltd. "It was truly a humbling experience. I primarily worked on stock-outs and availability. It shocked me to see just how much business by volume Coca Cola does in India. Having visited one of their 59 plants, I can tell you that the volume is truly staggering. I can also safely say that before this experience, I really had very little idea



Kungumaraj Mohan

about how the beverage industry really works. And for a company of that size to trust me to do something for them... it was the most enriching and rewarding experience."

No matter what the agenda behind the internship is, all of the students agree that once you have worked for one of these behemoths of the corporate world, you are hooked. You can't get enough of the corporate experience. However, some amount of preparation must take place beforehand. "There must be a willingness to learn. Read up carefully on the company you are going to work for. Understand every vertical and remember to absorb the corporate culture while you are there. For me, the internship was a great experience because I remembered to do these things," said Dhruv Anand, a second year Marketing student who interned at ITC. "Since you have adequate time to prepare for the internship, create a Google Alert for the company so that you don't miss any of the latest happenings," suggested Tarun.

All of them have their own tips for first year students. "Having small aims on a weekly basis was the key to success. It taught me to be patient, as initially you don't understand the full scope of your project and what the bigger picture is. It is only as you move ahead that things become clear and persistence pays off," said Akanksha. "Be open minded, articulate and ready to learn from your peers at all times," added Vasundhara.

Ultimately, you have to learn to take the challenges of the internship in your stride. "I believe that I am a sales guy through and through. However, my internship taught me how to be versatile and structure my approach towards any kind of problem solving," said Dhruv Anand, summing it up. It's not just what you learn about management that makes an internship special – it's what you learn about yourself.

The internship process will continue to chug along, as students currently in their first year await with trepida-



Dhruv Anand



In the Spotlight

This year, students of SIBM Pune won Mahindra War Room for the first time since the inception of the prestigious corporate strategy competition. We catch up with the members of the winning team, The Centurions: Anisha Saluja, MBA II HR (AS); Dhruv Anand, MBA II Marketing (DA); Kungumaraj Mohan, MBA II Operations (KM); and Varun Gandhi, MBA II Finance (VG).

First of all, congratulations on winning Mahindra War Room! How does it feel?

AS: After the hard work the entire team put in, from selecting a case to coming to a solution, revising it until there was no chance of a mistake – constantly thinking about it... you feel like a winner. You feel at peace.

DA: It's an inexplicable feeling. Fantastic maybe is the word which comes closest to defining it.

KM: It was exhilarating, and I'm ecstatic to have received the War Room trophy from Mr. Anand Mahindra. All I could do for the rest of the day was sport a huge smile. It felt wonderful to be recognised for all the efforts put in, and I feel a real sense of accomplishment. The War Room Journey is a once in a lifetime experience, a story to be shared.

VG: It feels amazing. It's a different feeling altogether. It is a huge win for SIBM Pune. The feeling hasn't sunk in yet.

What was your one standout moment from the entire experience?

AS: When we got the award. What happened on stage during those ten minutes was outstanding. The announcement made that the

winners of Mahindra War Room Season 7 are the Centurions from SIBM Pune; going up on stage and meeting Anand Mahindra himself and receiving his business card – he went out into the crowd, stood with the photographer, took a photo with his own phone and tweeted it! – that entire time on stage, when we were crowned victorious, was truly incredible.

VG: My one big moment was the win and the con-



From L to R: Mr. Anand Mahindra; Anisha Saluja; Varun Gandhi; Dhruv Anand; Kungumaraj Mohan; Dr. Raman, Director SIBM Pune.

versation we had with Mr. Anand Mahindra.

DA: I believe it was our (*KM and DA*) trip to Rajasthan for primary research. We spent nights in the bus, train and even at the airport.

KM: We covered roughly 4,000 km over three days. We hardly slept, and if we did it was in bus stops, in railway stations, or outside the airport. A chance to have good food was as rare as finding water in a desert. Those three days are the most memorable.

What was your strategy?

AS: Our team was such that we had one member from each specialisation, which helped broaden our base. We read all the cases put up, discussed them threadbare; each picked out the top three cases that we would like to work on and shared them with the team, with how we would each contribute on that case. Finally, we zeroed in on one case which we'd all find interesting and challenging to work on. Then we started on intensive research to understand the current scenario in the field and how Mahindra could benefit from it.

DA: We came to consensus on the idea, and went all guns blazing. Whenever we received new information (our case was on the edible oil industry), we tweaked our solution to suit.

KM: We approached the case selection on three criteria: to leverage on our past experiences, apply our current specialisation learnings, and do the most value add – in terms of primary research, coming up with solutions... and overall, something that fit the War Room theme.

VG: We did extensive research, analysed our findings, and thought of possible solutions. It is difficult to come up with an idea that has not yet been done but is still very much feasible.

What was your biggest learning from MWR?

AS: Understanding business context and business scenarios, and looking at the big picture. Strategy cases help you understand how a business runs. You have to understand holistically how one business line helps the whole organisation.

DA: Not one but many. Look at the bigger picture and never miss the context; always be relevant

to the theme of the competition.

KM: For me the learnings from War Room are on all fronts – professional and personal, working in a team, respecting others' time, getting your point across (and even more crucially, listening to others' views), conducting yourself properly in the midst of high profile individuals, keeping a tab on your emotions, learning to balance your work and personal life. Of course you don't always get it right the first time, learning in itself happens though mistakes and corrections, and one should be open to change.

VG: Your plan of action should be innovative yet implementable and practical. Believe in yourself, your team and your ideas.

What's your one piece of advice to your juniors?

AS: War Room is like an internship; you're given a project and two months to work on it. A lot of people give up halfway, get bored. Work throughout that time and utilise it to your best advantage. You need all of that time to understand the sector, the market, and the business.

DA: Do not let the slack period sink in. Look at the problem and your solution from all angles before making the final choice.

KM: Don't be intimidated by the scale of the event or by the competition. Your passion and tenacity will see you through the long months of War Room. And, true to this year's theme of War Room – "Dare to Dream"!

VG: Brainstorm ideas, look for solutions that are out of the box. Make sure you consider all perspectives while coming up with solutions. Since the competition gives you a long period to work on the solutions, do justice to the entire period.

And, finally: Can you describe your experience with the competition in one line?

AS: A great learning experience.

DA: We dared to dream!

KM: A resilient journey culminating in a resounding, vindicating victory – Glory to SIBM Pune!

VG: The experience of presenting a solution to such eminent panelists is something to cherish for life.



Entrepreneurial Spirits

In conversation with Mr. Pradeep Gidwani, Founder – The Pint Room and an alumnus of SIBM Pune (batch of 1987). We talk to him about what it means to be an entrepreneur in today's world – the attraction, the risks, and the reward.

You're an alumnus of SIBM Pune – the 1987 batch. What was your greatest learning while here?

How to do everything yourself. I think that's something you get out of here that you don't get any place else. Whether you're part of the cultural committee or you're part of sports, it's something you have to organise yourselves. As students, there are no funds available, and you have to do everything yourself. That's the most important thing, I think, that I picked up.

What was one thing that changed in your life once you left SIBM Pune?

The big change in my life was Foster's. It was not a multinational, it was a multinational abandoned baby. And we built it pretty much as an entrepreneur would. I think that was one real big change in my life, because it forced me to think like an entrepreneur. Today I think I'm strong in my own company because there, I had to worry about where my money was coming from. I had no money, so I had to make money. That was the changing point in my life, where I really learnt to work as an entrepreneur.

That actually leads me to my next question: Between being a part of a large company entering a new market, and starting up a completely new business of your own – what's the real difference?

The difference is that you are the owner. If I was working for Carlsberg, there was a parent organisation to support me and look out for me. I didn't have to worry about money, I knew there was a team to fall back on. Starting up, you're alone. It's scary. You don't have a Board to correct you or guide you, you have to take decisions in your own

There's no one to guide you when you're starting your own business. That's the real difference between entrepreneurship and a corporate career.

head, you have to sound yourself off in your own head, have the debate by yourself. That's the biggest difference – there's no one to guide you when you're starting your own business.

Given that, and the fact that you've worked in some of the best corporations in the world... what led you to entrepreneurship?

I think I was very lucky to be a part of many startups. Even in Unilever, I worked as a part of Brooke Bond and Taj Mahal teabags when they were launched in 1987, and it was a new launch – so even though I was part of a big corporation, I was still with a startup. All the companies I've worked with, no matter how established, have all been startups. So that got me thinking about entrepreneurship.

Speaking of your experience in the corporate world, one doubt many of our budding entrepreneurs have is: Do we go out and get some experience in the corporate world? Or do we invest right away, in ourselves and in our big ideas?

It's difficult to say what the best way is, because experience isn't confined to the corporate world. There's experience being an entrepreneur, too. If I look at my own journey in the corporate world, I'd say I've learnt from companies like Unilever and Red Bull, where I had relatively short stints. At Foster's and Carlsberg I learnt through experience; not really from the company. As an entrepreneur too, I'm learning from experience. Four years ago I had no idea of the retail space. Today I've made my mistakes and learnt through those mistakes. So it's quite difficult to tell which way to go, it depends on you as an individual to a large extent. If you feel you have a strong idea, I'd say go for it.

The idea, the risk appetite or the amount of hard work the entrepreneur is willing to put in? Which would you say is the most important factor?

More and more, there's no such thing as a fantastic

idea. Because with technology as it is, a fantastic idea will get copied. Today it's about having the idea, but more about having a very clear vision, and it's about execution. The strategy and execution are crucial, it's not about the idea and it's not about the money. Money will come if you do the right things, with a clear vision and hard work.

... and qualifications? How much value would you say an MBA really is for an entrepreneur?

I think an MBA really gives you an overall understanding of various business aspects. It's not like being an MBA will make you a successful entrepreneur, we've seen enough examples of people with minimal formal education becoming extraordinarily successful. An MBA broadens your horizons. An MBA from an institute such as SIBM Pune, where there's constant corporate interaction and learning, broadens them further. The more experiences you have, the more inter-

An MBA broadens your horizons. An MBA from an institute such as SIBM Pune, where there's constant corporate interaction and learning, broadens them further.

esting activities you undertake, that's when you get the most out of your MBA. When there's a great ecosystem already in place, and you already have opportunities such as these events, that's when your MBA works best for you.

And what would your one big piece of advice be for us... your juniors?

Stay hungry, stay foolish!

Experiments with Youth

Student of SIBM Pune to represent India at the Telenor Youth Forum 2014 in Oslo, Norway

Bringing further laurels to the institute, a final-year student of Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune (SIBM Pune), Nipun Matreja, is among only two Indians chosen through the Internet For All Challenge to represent the nation at the Telenor Youth Forum. The Forum, organised in association with the Nobel Peace Center, will take place in Norway in December 2014.

The Internet For All (IFA) Challenge 2014 was launched by Uninor, a subsidiary of Telenor, in August this year. IFA provides youth with a platform to innovate and to present ideas by which internet technology can be used to address a social need. The Challenge is also used to select representatives of each participating nation for the Telenor Youth Forum. In India, more than six hundred youth participated in the Challenge, from several regional circles.

Nipun Matreja (MBA II Marketing) emerged as the winner in the Maharashtra and Goa Circle of the Uninor Internet For All Challenge 2014. Only two of India's seven national finalists, chosen from the regional rounds, were selected to be present at the Telenor Youth Forum, of whom Nipun is one.

Nipun Matreja, who is specialising in Marketing at SIBM Pune, developed a Facial Recognition software for the IFA Challenge. Nipun's software would be able to identify a criminal, a loved one or a dead body. This app could help locate lost loved ones, or potentially dangerous persons about to do harm.

Nipun will represent India at the Telenor Youth Forum 2014 in Oslo, Norway. He will also receive a cash prize of Rs. 50,000 to help him develop his idea further.

The Jury members for the India finals (held in Delhi, October 16th) were Mr Sigve Brekke – EVP & Head of Telenor Asia, Mr Morten K Sorby – CEO Uninor, Ms Rita Soni, CEO – Nasscom Foundation, Mr Javed Syed, Editor – Delhi Market, The Economic Times, and Mr Sigvald T Hauge, Deputy Chief of Mission, Norway Embassy.

Swati Sachdeva (MICA) took first place and will also represent India at the Forum.



Nipun Matreja, who will represent India at the Telenor Youth Forum, 2014

India's Young HR Icon

SIBM Pune's students stand tall at inaugural NHRDN & Prof. Ram Charan Awards

The first ever NHRDN & Prof Ram Charan Young HR Icon Awards 2014 was conducted recently. The event included separate categories for HR professionals and students.

Of the three student winners, two were from SIBM Pune – Ketki Dnyaneshwar Navale and Priyanka Khosla.

Ketki secured the position of first runner-up, while Priyanka came in as the second runner-up of the national-level event.



Ketki Navale receiving the award for first runner up

(inset) Priyanka Khosla, second runner up

The Young HR Icon Awards were given out post a holistic analysis of the individual on all aspects, across a comprehensive three-level evaluation process, including verbal and psychometric tests, a video interview, and a written round. A research paper on the topic 'Sustainable Growth in the VUCA world' was to be presented as part of the regional round.

There was also a group discussion, interview, an HR awareness test, and a behavioural interview.

The ten students who survived this process reached the final round, where they were faced with a one-day business simulation round, a panel interview with 6-7 senior HR leaders, as well as a test of creativity.

"The exposure, networking and learning were unforgettable," said Priyanka Khosla. "It was an extremely memorable experience – and easily one of the best things that have ever happened to me!"

"Our personal introduction at the conference to CHROs and CEOs took the experience to a whole new level!" Ketki Navale agreed.

The Awards were presented to the Winners at the 18th NHRDN National Conference, on November 21st, in the presence of the largest gathering of HR leaders and practitioners in India.

Financial Expertise

SIBM Pune wins first and third at the Nomura Investment Banking Case Study Competition

On November 3rd and 4th, the finals of Nomura India Investment Banking Case Study Competition were held at the headquarters of Nomura Services India Pvt. Ltd., Powai. Four teams represented SIBM Pune at the finals, presenting their solutions to the case on study before members of senior management of the organisation.

Teams from SIBM Pune placed first and third in this national-level case study challenge, in which some of India's top B-Schools participated.

Team Banksters (Abishek Balendran and Ketan Chawla) placed First, while Team Fintastic Freshers (Akshay Sharma and Gaurav Phadke) were the Second Runners-up at the event.

A fictitious pharmaceutical company occupied the centre of the case study challenge. Aiming to be a world leader in the sector within a span of just five years, the company needed assistance – it faced stagnation in some of its business lines.

Each team accepting the challenge was required to pitch a strategic solution to the company. Assuming the garb of an investment banker, the teams could advise solutions of all natures. It could involve divestiture of one of those stagnating business lines, or perhaps the acquisition of another company to strengthen the business.

As a completely open-ended case, the competition was quite challenging. In addition, the overall width of the pharmaceutical sector added to the complicated nature of the case.

"It was a fantastic experience to create a full-blown deal pitch-book and then present it to senior bankers," said Gaurav Phadke, whose team came in third at the event. "The competition itself was very well orchestrated. The interaction with the company management was itself a great experience. And of course, SIBM Pune winning two places out of the top three was just the icing on the cake!"

Showcasing Talent

Students of SIBM Pune finish as National Runners-Up at Coca-Cola Showcase 2014

Commemorating the centennial of the inception of the iconic Coca-Cola contour bottle, which comes up in the year 2015, Coca-Cola launched Showcase this year for students of major B-Schools.

Coca-Cola opened much more than a bottle of happiness through this case study competition, which asked students to innovate, put on their thinking caps, and come up with a unique campaign to celebrate the 100-year journey of the contoured bottle. The campaign would have to capture the imagination of the people, conveying the story and message of the bottle at the same time.

This national-level competition was wholeheartedly embraced by the students of SIBM Pune, who participated in it with much enthusiasm, verve and energy.

Two of the five teams that entered the national finals of Coca-Cola Showcase were from SIBM Pune, of which one team was placed second.

The Cola Warriors, comprising Dhruv Bhanot (MBA II



National runners-up of Coca-Cola Showcase 2014.

From L toR: Eshwar Parvataneni, Dhruv Bhanot, Yamini Bisht, Rahil Mukesh.

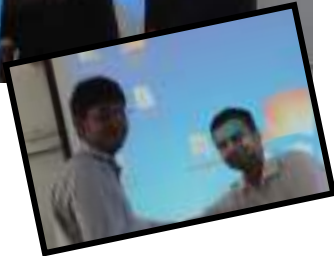
Marketing), Eshwar Parvataneni (MBA II Marketing), Rahil Mukesh (MBA II Marketing), and Yamini Bisht (MBA II HR) were national runners-up at the event, judged by a panel of ten Coca-Cola business leaders (including Mr. Venkateshwar Kini, President – Coca-Cola India and South West Asia).

"It was a fantastic experience, as we got to experience firsthand the power of the Coca-Cola brand value. We had the privilege to interact with a Coca-Cola brand manager, who gave us inputs before the presentation. The judging panel was comprehensive, with representation across fields, which really showed how seriously Coke takes Showcase," said Dhruv.

Case in Point

Campus finalists at Tata Steelathon and RPG Blizzard 3.0 — these teams will go forward to the national finals of the respective competition

RPG Blizzard 3.0



RPG Blizzard is the flagship campus outreach program of the RPG Group, connecting with students of selected campuses. The case study competition included cases across functional areas – Operations, HR, and Marketing. Two other student outreach programmes were launched at the same time: Campus Brand Ambassador for second-year students and Brand-It! for first-years.

Winners:

Team Three Musketeers: From L to R: Rajiv Pandit (MBA II Operations); Himanshu Sharma (MBA II Operations); Bhaskar Sharma (MBA II Operations)

Campus Brand Ambassador: Nitin Chinta (MBA II Marketing) (*inset*)

Tata Steelathon

An intellectual marathon by Careers at Tata Steel, Steel-a-thon is a cross-functional case study challenge. Providing students with the opportunity to



experience diverse cases, Steel-a-Thon also gives students access to Tata Steel's senior management who act as tutors and mentors. The first round of the competition, to select the best teams from each campus, was conducted purely via submission of solutions online.

Winners:

Team Steelsters Squad: From top left, clockwise: Anuj Dutta (MBA II HR); Arjun Singh Chadha (MBA II HR); Karan Jakhar (MBA II HR); Ruchir Khare (MBA I HR)

Encore West 2014

SIBM Pune's biggest alumni meet... back with a bang!

Encore is an event organised by SIBM Pune for its alumni, unique in various respects. It combines the formal setting of an alumni meet with the informal environment of a batch reunion. It enhances the connection alumni have with their alma mater, and ensures that the alumni have an entertaining evening and accumulate many new memories.

Encore West 2014 came after a two year gap, and the response was tremendous. On September 27th, alumni of SIBM Pune from batches ranging from 1980 to 2013 showed up at the ITC Maratha in Mumbai in huge numbers – making this SIBM Pune's best-



Alumni posing for a photograph at Encore West 2014

attended alumni-related event.

The contagious energy of SIBM Pune's alumni, and their eagerness to hear all the campus news, brought smiles to the faces of all present. From the registration process onwards, the reunion of long-unmet classmates and friends led to many enthusiastic conversations.

The Director, Dr. Raman, listed the latest news on campus for the benefit of the alumni. "I am very happy to see the scale of the turnout at this event," he said. "This clearly shows the bond between the alumni of this institute and their alma mater."

The evening turned into an informal occasion with old friends catching up and reminiscing about their Wonder Years. The alumni had a wonderful time joking with their friends, and dancing to some exhilarating music.

No one was ready to leave at the end of the night, not even the organisers! The event was extended by an hour, and by 1am the gathering reluctantly began to move towards the doors, sad to be leaving but taking memories of an amazing evening with them.

Encore is an escape from the daily routine and a chance to relive one's college days. The alumni of SIBM Pune look forward to Encore every time it rolls around, because it lives up to this promise – delivering exactly what they expect from it.



The Blueprint 2014 November 22nd, 2014

The Blueprint aims to establish a platform for students to gain a holistic view of contemporary issues and engaging topics across sectors of the industry through guest lectures and panel discussions which will serve as a medium for sharing knowledge and business expertise.

Blueprint 3, on *Proactive Reinvention*, included a panel discussion on '*Adopting a holistic approach to stay relevant in the minds of the Indian consumers*'.

The panelists were **Ms. Ipshita Ray**, Head HR – ATU & CIM and BPM, TCS;

Mr. Prakash Chellasamy, General Manager, Product Development Division, Ashok Leyland;

Mr. Jatin Panchal, Associate Vice President – Head Modern Trade, GCPL.

Legacy 2014





On the Wings of Success (Part Three)

The value of optimism

Values, ethics and soft skills – the Colonel's column features all these and more.

There are three basic differences in the reactions of optimists and pessimists. The first difference is that the optimists see setbacks as temporary, while pessimists see them as permanent. Unfortunate events, for optimists, are temporary events, something that is limited in time and that which has no real impact on the future. Pessimists, on the other hand, see negative events as permanent, as part of life and destiny. Ironic, but true.

The second major difference is that optimists see difficulties as specific, while pessimists see them as pervasive. This means that when things go wrong for the optimists, they look at the event as an isolated incident largely disconnected from other things that are going on in their lives. The remedy? *Isolate the incident*. If something you were counting on fails to materialise and you interpret it as an unfortunate event – but something that happens in the course of life and business – you would be reacting like an optimist. If however you were a pessimist, you would see the same thing as being pervasive, as an indication of a problem or shortcoming that pervades every area of life. *Look at setbacks as temporary events*.

The third difference between optimists and pessimists is that the former see events as external, while the latter interpret them as personal. When things go wrong, optimists tend to see the setback as resulting from external factors over which they have little control. Optimists, when cut off in traffic, for example, instead of getting

To
Optimists,

Unfortunate
events are
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Difficulties are
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Events are
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To
Pessimists,

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Difficulties are
pervasive

Events are
personal

angry or upset, simply downgrade the importance of the event by saying "This too shall pass". Pessimists on the other hand, tend to take everything personally. When cut off in traffic, they will react as though the other driver has deliberately acted to upset and frustrate them. Let us not take these small issues as 'failures', because they are not.

So... *don't take failure personally.*

The uncanny ability to be objective and unemotional when caught up in the inevitable storms of routine life is the real hallmark of the fully mature, fully functioning; self-actualising personality. The 'superior' person continues to talk to himself in a positive and optimistic way; keeps his mind calm, clear and completely under control. The 'mature' person is more relaxed and aware and capable of interpreting events more realistically and less emotionally than is the immature personality. The mature person exerts a far greater sense of control and influence over his environment, and is far less likely to be angry, upset, or distracted.

So... *remain calm and objective.*

We all face setbacks at some point of time. Look upon the inevitable setbacks you face as being temporary, specific and external. View the negative situation as a single event that is not connected to other potential events and that is caused largely by external factors over which you can have little or no control. Refuse to see the event as a permanent, pervasive or indicative of personal incompetence of inability.



Colonel Sunil Brijkrishan, Visiting Faculty at SIBM Pune, shares his thoughts through this column every month

Take a long view. Think like an optimist, no matter what happens. You may not be able to control events... but you can control the way you react to them!

A poem written on the occasion of Gurupurnima for the educators of SIBM Pune

*It's been more than a month,
Since I have stepped in an enriching hill,
A fulfilling pro-learning brunch,
Lectures as caramel, case-studies as crunch.*

*Today, as the sun steps down,
The moon brightens in a pleasant light,
It looks as graceful as my loving mother,
As divine as an enthusiastic motivator.*

*This is the time of the period,
When we provide the homage to our teacher.
For they have been the source of this inspiration,
Transforming a void into delightful creation.*

*I hope you have a good time ahead,
Enlightening souls to the core of their head,
As we bring this nation back on its story,
The culture, the heritage and the glory!*

- Ravi Agrawal, MBA I HR



Why has the dragon slowed down? A deeper look at China

Taken from Professor Manasi Phadke's blog, which can be found at manasiecon.wordpress.com



One of the main issues in the globe today is the fact that China just won't grow... it shows a lacklustre all-time low 7.3% growth rate this quarter, a far cry from the 10% that it used to post without too many problems just about four years ago.

Why is there a slowdown in the GDP? To understand that, it's important that we understand the major players in the Chinese growth story.

"A paradoxical kind of a scenario, with higher property prices, higher savings, higher investments, higher credit – and lower GDP growth rates! — has been characteristic of the Chinese economy over the past three years, and the signs of weaknesses seem to be compounding recently."

Consumption has always been the weak link in China and it traditionally has been the investment component that has fuelled their GDP. So households do not consume but they save majorly, for old age, social security and healthcare, all three domains in which Government reforms have been sadly lacking.

So China saves 50% of its income for that rainy day, compared to 20% that is the global average according to the IMF (Of course, Asia in general saves a lot more than global average.)

However, this has been changing lately and there are

both quantitative and qualitative indications to support this fact. Firstly, as China puts in health reforms to offer an insurance cover to 96% of its population, the rainy day assumption automatically takes a back seat to create sunny days immediately: it goes without saying that this will herald the consumption boom tomorrow. Secondly, take a look at the urban income growth in China and you see that income growth to the households continues at double digit figures, very

comfortably at 11.5%, outstripping the GDP growth rate of 7.3%. This increase in income has to do as much with Government regulation on minimum wages as it has to do with the idea that China is increasingly at a Lewis point, a point at which it's reaching near-to-full employment levels, causing pressure on wages.

So whether the banks will continue to get generous amounts of savings in their deposits in the future could be a cause of concern; but as of now, the Chinese save a lot. The bigger Chinese banks have access to this huge bulk of deposits that is used for lending, whereas typically the smaller Chinese banks access the liquidity indirectly, through the inter-banking route. Now this lending is where the problem begins, because there are a whole lot of qualitative issues when it comes to understanding the activities that have been driven by credit in China

Investments are what have been fuelling the China story in the past 3 decades. Normally, these investments rev up the demand for goods, for people, cause overheat, high wages and high inflation if you are not too careful.

But that doesn't seem to have happened in China... so what's going on? Well, firstly, once the firms start spending, they do drive demand for investment goods. But the cost of labour in most Chinese enterprises is low. Even with the understanding that it's increasing, it's still much lower than in any other developed economy and hence an increase in investment spending does not push household incomes to the extent you'd expect. Secondly, your average Mr. and Mrs. Lee, on getting the income, want to save. Now, that means that the households' precautionary behaviour helps to keep the consumer goods inflation well under control, even with higher incomes getting built into the system.

But that's not all. We need to focus on those activities that are getting funded through these deposits created by the Chinese households. And, in the past three years, a major chunk of these savings were given out by banks to people who wanted to buy – property. The same property, at higher and higher prices.

Now, this means that it wouldn't really create a demand the way that investments in plant and machinery would. So there has been no major ripple effect on demand for investment goods and services and hence obviously, while savings and investments and the credit binge continued, the GDP would slow down. Which it did!

Realise again that the GDP would only be “fresh” production of goods and services and so the same property being bought over and over again wouldn't really contribute to the GDP growth rate. But it would contribute to something else – a property bubble.

So, you would get a paradoxical kind of a scenario, with higher property prices, higher savings, higher investments, higher credit – and lower GDP growth rates!

These have been the characteristics of the Chinese economy over the past three years, and the signs of weaknesses seem to be compounding recently. There's also been talk of “malinvestments”; which is the right type of investments that create multipliers, but not really required for the economic system. You build urban areas with no people living in them and new roads with no one to drive on them. That creates employment and demand in the interim period, but end of the day, it's investment that is not immediately useable. And at a time when the credit supply is increasingly directed towards the property bubble, the opportunity costs of such investments are huge.

There's more to it – there's the Chinese version of Lehmann – fondly known as shadow banking. As the policy makers tightened the pace of bank lending to “bubbly” projects such as property, such projects have increasingly been seeking credit from “shadow” banks or trusts. These trusts offer a return of more than 10% to retail investors. Trusts only have to match the frustration of the lenders with the greed of the borrowers and you get a first class shadow bank, adding further fizz to the property boom.

Some industries have grouped together to avail of funding and in the process, have guaranteed each other's loans. To the extent, these loans have been channelised towards property or steel, both of which seem to be cooling off significantly, owing to the mere fact of oversupply. It creates a strain on the capacity to return the loan, causing stress to the guarantor, the trust as well as the household, whose money is involved in this scenario.

All this has prompted regulators to move predictably, slowing down credit growth through rate hikes, by

Divergent Views Green Logistics Viable in Future

Faculty of SIBM Pune debates a current management issues.

The Finance Perspective

“The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that somebody else will save it” Robert Swan

Green logistics is a set of all attempts to measure and minimise the ecological impact of logistic activities (the transportation, storage and handling of products as they move from the source of raw materials, through the manufacturing system to their final point of sale from where the purchase happens for end consumption).

As the global community has learned that the economic development and environment protection should go hand in hand, the last decade has seen a tremendous increase in the public and government concern for the environment. As a result there has been an excessive amount of pressure on major firms to reduce the environmental impact of their logistics operations.

Transportation of goods has a negative impact on the local air quality, generates noise pollution, leads to accidents and, in totality, makes a noteworthy input to global warming. It is estimated that goods transportation accounts for around 8% of energy-related Carbon Dioxide emissions worldwide. The inclusions of warehousing and freight management are likely to add another 3% to this total.

Globalisation, rising standard of living, increasing use to technology, road congestion, urban mobility, local air pollution, and the need for CO₂ reductions and energy conservation will have a dramatic impact on future transport systems and supply chains in all industries and geographic regions. Companies and public authorities

will be forced to reduce the impact on the environment of their supply chains and transport systems and will have to develop sustainable transport and supply chain strategies.

Green logistics includes all activities of the forward and reverse flows of products, information and services between the point of origin and the point of consumption. It is the aim to create a sustainable company value using a balance of economic and environmental efficiency.

Following are the four areas wherein a successful green logistics implementation can have a positive impact on the overall Supply Chain of the organisation:

- Network Optimisation
- Packaging Reduction
- Sustainable Procurement
- Warehouse Layout Optimisation

Adopting Green Supply Chain best practices results in multiple environmental benefits. These benefits are visible across retail chains, Consumer Goods manufacturers and logistics, and Transportation Service providers.

These benefits include improvements in energy and waste reduction, less packaging in related activities, and decreased GHG emissions. Consumer Goods manufacturers can decrease GHG emissions and waste by investing in LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) certified green buildings and retrofitting their distribution centres to be more environment-friendly. The above mentioned processes will enable the Consumer Goods manufacturers to access carbon credits. Unused credits could be sold to other organisations worldwide.

One thing we all must remember “we do not inherit the world from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children” so green logistics is one of the initiatives that must be taken by all.

The Operations Perspective

Green logistics refers to the practices that strive to reduce energy and environmental impact in terms of freight distribution.

The term has been growing in importance especially as the transportation industry was perceived as a major contributor of environmentally unfriendly output. Implementing green logistics raises a number of contradictory issues. Timing is critical for logistics which leads to more utilization of transport services resulting in higher pollution and less energy efficiency. Efficient transport operations can contribute to green logistics. Logistics companies may go for less polluting vehicles benchmarked to international standards. Use of lighter and thinner packing materials can improve mileage and also increase space for including more consignments in the vehicle. Since reverse logistics promotes recycling and reuse of materials, it also promotes green logistics.

Green logistics provides benefits to the economy, society, and environment as a whole and through continuous improvements in operations it can be made viable though it does definitely push up the costs.



*The Finance perspective is presented by
Dr. Shubhra Anand, Asst. Professor SIBM Pune*



*The Operations perspective is presented by
Dr. V.V. Ravi Kumar, Associate Professor*

*This painting was created by
Rounak Gunjal
(MBA Innovation and
Intrapreneurship)*

Theme: Restraint



*Restraint
by Rounak Gunjal*

On the Front Foot

The Symbiosis International University Inter-Institute Cricket Tournament was a great success.

The Sports Board of Symbiosis International University organised an Inter-Institute Cricket Tournament between its constituent institutes between November 10th and 18th. Seventeen teams participated in the event.

SIBM Pune mounted an exhilarating campaign, rising regularly and convincingly up the steps of the ladder. The ever-improving team showed gritty batting performances from the top order and some inspired spells by the bowlers.

At the end of the nine-day campaign, SIBM Pune had made it to the finals – falling just one place short of clinching the ultimate glory.

One of the standout performances of the tournament was seen in the semi-final. The team faced a steep target of 170. The target was, ultimately, easily achieved – thanks to an amazing opening partnership of 140 runs put up by Rajiv Pandit and Suraj Nair. Rajiv scored a masterful century in the same match. This was a first in the tournament.

The final was however the pick of the fixtures. A roller-coaster ride of a match, the control swung from one side to the other regularly throughout the game.

The finals of the Tournament ended in a draw, with the captain Suraj Kalbag scoring a crucial boundary of the last ball to tie the scores. Sadly, the super over was not as successful for the team, and SIBM Pune could not clinch that top spot. That honour went to SCMS, Noida.

The team secured its place in the hearts of its supporters, a never-say-die attitude trumping all adversity to achieve greatness. This impressive perfor-



mance warranted a call to the limelight for young heroes and veteran stars all at once.

With the prospect of the Symbiosis Premier League (SPL) just on the horizon – a unique sporting tournament exclusive to SIBM Pune, modelled on the Indian Premier League – exciting times are in store!

New Sporting Formats Take SIBM By Storm

With a long tradition of being a student-led institute, Symbiosis Institute of Business Management Pune (SIBM Pune) has for many years been at the forefront of sporting activity.

For some years now, SIBM Pune's leaders of tomorrow have been organising and participating in a unique format of sporting activity – Box Cricket. This year, a new arrow has been added to the institute's quiver through the inception of a Rink Football tournament.

The two tournaments, which see teams composed entirely of students of a single class or specialisation (with the exception of the Girls' Rink Football teams), were held this year from September 26th onwards.

Box Cricket sees two teams, each of five men and one woman, facing off against each other in short-format cricket matches. With boundaries reduced for ease of play, each match runs for a maximum of six overs. Twenty-five teams registered for the 2014 edition of Box Cricket.

This year's new sporting event, Rink Football, has been kicked off decisively, with sixteen teams registering for the inaugural edition. Of these, four teams were com-

posed entirely of girls. The field of play for the Rink Football event is restricted as well, as is the size of the goalpost.

As the busy first semester ended, students turned out in large numbers to participate in both sporting tournaments. The tournaments offered a much-needed opportunity for the students to unwind after a packed schedule of academics, competitions and students' council activity.

The three-day sporting fest sees audiences turn out every year in large numbers to watch classmates, batchmates, juniors and seniors face off against each other. The event, organised by SIBM Pune's students themselves, is a welcome change of pace and break in routine, before the gruelling pace of examination season takes over.

Students from MBA I Marketing took the first prize in Men's Rink Football; students from MBA II placed first in Women's Rink Football; and MBA II Marketing students took the honours in the Box Cricket finale.



Elation, sportsmanship and some fancy footwork — all in a day's work with the Box Cricket/Rink Football tournament!



GoT: Lessons Learnt

How a popular TV Show can influence the field of management.

Are you not able to influence people? Do you find difficulty in executing operations in hostile environments? Or do you get confused between your friends and foes?

These are all common business dilemmas that have answers in one of the most religiously followed TV Series: *Game of Thrones*. An adaptation of the famous novel *A Song of Ice and Fire*, written by George R.R. Martin, this wonderfully crafted TV series has become synonymous with strategy and tactics. Here are some of the lessons that one can learn from GoT:

MAJOR SPOILERS AHEAD!!

There are no permanent friends and foes

It's a very old saying in politics as well and more importantly it reflects that ultimately one has to choose the best option for oneself, be it in business, career or even life. Walder Frey who was once a friend to House Stark, was the one who killed all Starks in a ceremony because of the incentives offered by the King's Hand. Managing to be at vantage point is certainly dependent upon the friends or foes you choose to be with.

It's not the physical but the mental size that matters

Most GoT fans have figured out who I am talking about – yes, Tyrion Lannister. A four-foot-tall dwarf character has lot to talk about. He is never apologetic, even for being tyrannical. Being fully self-possessed is a great asset in business. He leads the army in the Battle of

Blackwaters and inspires hope in the losing army to fight for their Kingdom, not their King. Sometimes small things can indeed cast a large shadow and that's exactly how business situations work out. Miniscule missed information can lead to great losses – and for that matter, can cost lives sometimes. On a lighter note, Hodor is another example.

Missed out is left out

In this fast-moving business world an individual has to adapt to changes and has to be competitive enough to stay on top of competition. This also requires the art of deception, as Jon Snow did, to understand the workings of the Wildlings. He minimised the danger and saved the Wall – and thus the Kingdom.

There are certainly other lessons that one can learn from the show which need to be implemented in business scenarios. Else you're banished to serve in the Night's Watch – a womanless, frozen land!

— Karan Sood

MBA | Marketing

Happenings on the Hill

Every month through this column, we solicit student input on campus life, whether inside or outside the classroom – outside preferred! This month, we share articles by **Nitin Chinta** (MBA II Marketing) and **Pooja Deshpande** (MBA I Operations). If you're a student and would like to see your words in print, do send in your inputs to prteam@sibmpune.edu.in by December 20th.



October and November have been full of corporate case study challenges. Tata Steelathon, Mahindra War Room, Asian Paints Canvas, RPG Blizzard... the list just goes on and on! It's not easy to participate in so many challenges, following each other in fast succession, but the opportunities they presented – for learning and for more mercenary rewards – have inspired us to take them on, one after the other, to the best of our ability.

Honestly, I don't know how anyone's had time for classes. I know I haven't!

This is our last semester on campus, as students of SIBM Pune. Soon, my batch will join the long lines of alumni who return to this institute year on year, time tinting the fond memories of their Wonder Years golden and dimming the horrors of mess food. These are our last few months on campus – the home straight of a long drawn-out race.

I, personally, intend to make the most of these months, my last opportunity to acquire an Education. Classes, competitions, hard study, burning the midnight library oil... not for me the natural beauty of this campus or the wonders of the night canteen. Give me a Kotler and a highlighter, and I will die happy. My life shall revolve around GDP projections and forecasting techniques.

The longstanding tradition at SIBM Pune is to value outside-the-classroom learning as equal to academics. Peer learning, interaction, networking, and discussion – our watchwords when it comes to gaining knowledge.

So spend time with friends—this time won't come back!

— Nitin Chinta

MBA II Marketing

Back to the Journey of Adventures

It was a start of the cold month, November,

With joy, fear and an excitement at heart,

I re-joined the second inning, still being a newbie to the hostel-chart

Life re-started with old friendships, sharing and struggle of being ourselves,

The fight of keeping our uniqueness has indeed not been an easy task,

But we succeeded, and without failing in any self-test at all!

Academics, co-curricular, and extra-curricular,

And the most important was the peer learning, happening outside the class,

Glad to be part of all of that again, the learning has been real, at its pace!

Shared; and we all were the confidants for each other,

This place gave us tremendous experiences,

Loved them, hated them, but learned though every single of them!

Now I wait for the new adventurous challenges here,

Hoping to sustain the friendships that would last the lifetime or more,

With fingers crossed at my heart, I pray that this phase never grows apart!

— Pooja Deshpande

MBA I Operations





Is questioning the question a valid question?

Every month, we give you an idea. Something to chew on; to digest; and, on some occasions, to spit right out! This month, check out student responses to *Is questioning the question a valid question?*. We share an opinion this issue, from Vinod Nagappan (MBA II Finance).

Next month's idea: *Is questioning the question a valid question?* Let us know where you stand. Agree? Strongly disagree? Where would you place yourself on this Likert scale? Write in with your views to prteam@sibmpune.edu.in by December 20th – at least one student response will be published every month.



What does this question mean? By phrasing the above sentence, I have questioned the question; a question of questioning questioning a question.

tions than answers – and more questions questioning questions than any other field of study.

These secondary questions are not, I would submit, exactly 'valid'. Valid questions are more along the lines of What is the meaning of life? Who am I? Where did we come from?

The secondary questions, questioning the valid questions, are more like... well, let's take a simple example... Who cares?

— Vinod Nagappan

MBA II Finance

Or at least, I think that's what I've done.

If I can do that, I'm pretty sure I can question a question.

Of course, the statement we're reading here isn't about semantics. We're talking philosophy here.

Philosophy is the most confusing of our sciences – it makes most sense when it is the least rational and the most intuitive. It's a lot like management, in that sense. The common sense approach is more likely to yield results, eight times out of ten, than the rationally arrived-at position.

Applying common sense to the above question, the immediate and obvious answer is Yes, of course it jolly is a valid question, if you'll pardon my French. If you ask me a question, and I reply with "Huh?" that is – well, actually, that is not a valid question in a grammatical sense, but it is one from any other standpoint.

Philosophy is a fascinating thing. It has more ques-

TAEH<-C->HESS

A black for you, A white I say
You had a chance, now you stay!
I walked a step for silence echoed
You took a move, A Grey erode...

I walked straight you jumped over me
I stood in front, for you to see
You beveled me to reach to the king
The way you killed my shields of wing

The king may be the one, you aim
all he can walk is limited to a frame!

Twas your move, now no going back
Mission all yours for vision you lack!

If twas a game, well played!
If a mistake; checkmate!
One had to win: for all you roared
I wish we'd stayed out of the board.

Amrit Raj Kapoor, MBA I Marketing

*Senior
Team*

iS MaRT

INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND MEDIA RELATION TEAM



Arnab Bassi
Co-ordinator

Anjun Singh Chadha



Karan Jakhhar

Nitin Chinta



Paras Kumar

Vinod Nagappan





ritanta
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Memoirs of SiBMPune



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