

PRESSADISE LOST

A detailed illustration of a woman with long, wavy, reddish-brown hair. She has blue markings on her face, including a circular emblem on her forehead and lines around her eyes and mouth. She is wearing a light-colored, possibly metallic or stone, garment with blue accents. The background is a soft, light blue.

PRE-FEST ISSUE

1

APOGEE English Press

Editorial



Presenting the first pre-fest issue of “Pressadise Lost”. Over the next couple of days, we will bring to you a steady stream of issues featuring CoStAAAn interviews, speaker bios, pre-fest events, and articles related to this year’s theme, “The Digitized Renaissance”.

PS: Shout-out to two of my batchmates for going the extra mile to lead this issue to completion. Thank you.

The Team

Mustansir

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EVENT WATCH

Karasonic

5 PM, MARCH 16

Arduino Workshop

5 PM, MARCH 17

Internet Treasure Hunt

5 PM, MARCH 18

Chess Tournament

7 PM, MARCH 18

Virtual Cloning

5 PM, MARCH 19



Controls

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE COSTAAN

With less than a month to go for APOGEE, Darsh Shah, the CoStAAAn of the Department of Controls, was kind enough to make time for an interview with the APOGEE English Press.

Traditionally, the Department of Controls has been responsible for the logistics of the fest and bridges the gap between departments, clubs, and the Institute. The department divides its workforce into two streams and each stream divides itself into teams of two to four to handle specific tasks. The first stream consists of first-years who handle travels, requisitions, judge sheets, prize money, registration, sales and cash, reprography, and certificates. The second stream consists of second-years who handle scheduling, auditorium logistics, and project presentations.

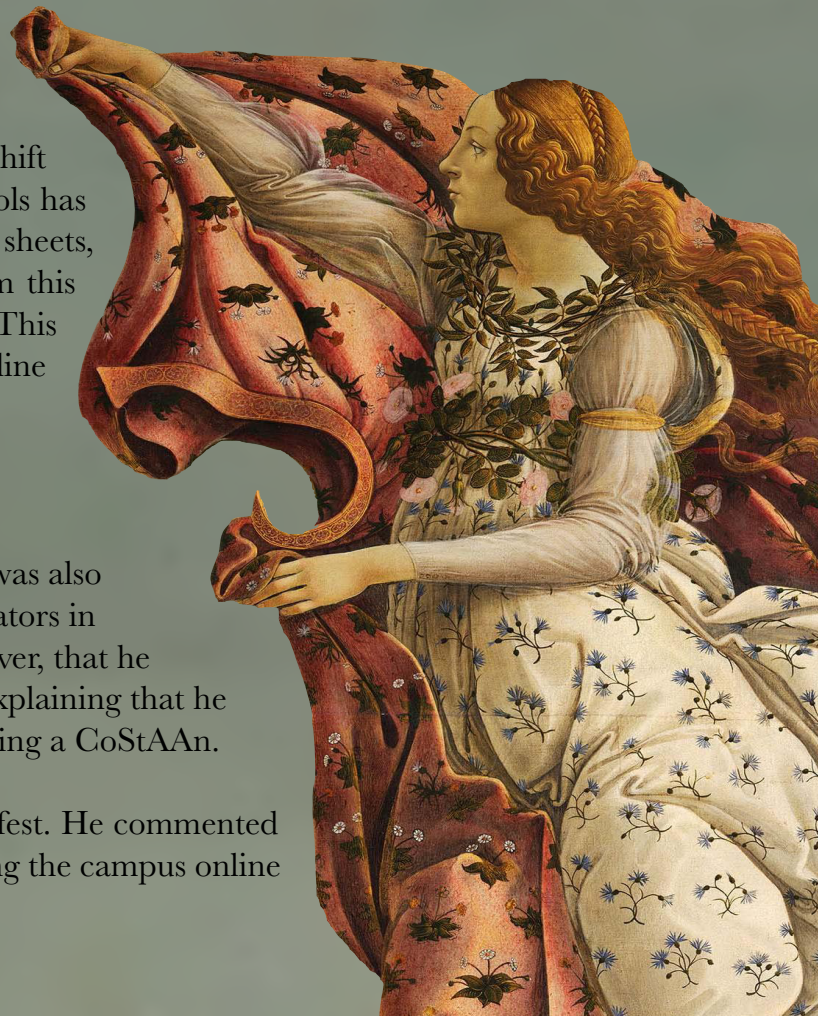
The online mode of the fest has changed the workflow of the department. While their responsibilities remain broadly the same, some roles—such as travel, requisitions, and auditorium scheduling—are no longer relevant. However, many of their key functions such as scheduling and projects remain the same.

The 2020 batch of Controls has missed Oasis and, due to the delayed nature of recruitments for departments this year, will have a reduced role in APOGEE 2021. On being asked about the impact this will have on the fests in the future, Darsh stated that the workflow of the first stream is very manageable for the recruits, and his batch will help and guide them during future fests. He is confident that the second-years will be able to handle an increased workload from the first stream because much of the work in the second stream is completed pre-fest.

A consequence of the online mode for future editions of fests is that Controls will be able to shift their workflow online as well. In the past, Controls has struggled to convince judges to use online judge sheets, but because everyone will be forced to use them this fest, they will become familiar with using them. This would better organise their work in future offline fests and enable faster e-certifications as well.

Darsh was appreciative of the maturity and cooperation shown by the CoStAAAns despite the academic difficulties of the online semester. He was also pleased with the punctuality of the club coordinators in submitting their event ideas. He lamented, however, that he was unable to work with his peers face-to-face, explaining that he felt he was missing out on much of the fun of being a CoStAAAn.

Darsh is looking forward to the platform of the fest. He commented that DVM is doing an impressive job of recreating the campus online and he cannot wait to explore it with his friends.





RecNAcc

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE COSTAAN

The Department of Reception and Accommodation (RecNAcc) is primarily responsible for the logistics and accommodation of outstation participants and guests in APOGEE. However, their duties have changed for the online edition this year.

Sunidhi Garg, the RecNAcc CoStAAn, explained that the traditional job profiles have been scrapped and handling the procurement and distribution of merchandise is their primary responsibility for this fest. Traditionally, this was done by the President, the General Secretary, and the Corroboration and Review Committee (CRC). The department, along with CRC, is currently negotiating with a vendor to conduct merchandise signings online. The hoodies and t-shirts will be delivered to the BITSians who sign up. They have not yet decided on making the merchandise available to students from other colleges.

As the lockdown due to the pandemic changed the way departments function, it was difficult to recruit students from the 2020 batch, Sunidhi added. A major challenge for her was to explain the dynamics of the department to freshers over the internet; post recruitments, the seniors needed to ensure that the juniors bonded with others in the department. Sunidhi mentioned that her experience as a CoStAAn has been unique due to the pandemic, but any gaps in her knowledge were filled by help and advice from her seniors.

Sunidhi commented that preparation for the fest is at a good stage right now and they are getting a positive response from the people they have contacted. She hopes that no major glitches arise in the future.

On a parting note, Sunidhi promised that students will appreciate the platform on which APOGEE will be held this year, and she hoped that it will be a new and exciting experience for everyone involved.

Prof. HC Verma


APOGEE SPEAKER #1

‘There is much more to explore in nature. Don’t focus just on the course content. If you can appreciate the implicit beauty of science and engineering, it will be great.’

— HC Verma

Professor Harish Chandra Verma (HC Verma) is an Indian experimental physicist in the field of Nuclear Physics. He is well known for his work as an author of several undergraduate and graduate textbooks like the Concepts of Physics series.





He completed his Bachelor of Science degree at Patna Science College and finished his masters and PhD at IIT Kanpur. Post his education, he worked as a lecturer and reader at Patna Science College from 1980 to 1994. He then joined IIT Kanpur as an Assistant Professor and pursued his research until his retirement in 2017.

Professor Verma has published close to 150 research papers and more than 600 physics experiments videos which are used by teachers for demonstrations. In order to inculcate Indian values and cultures as well as provide educational help, he started an NGO called Shiksha Sopan, which serves over 250 families. He is also an Executive Committee member of the Indian Association of Physics Teachers (IAPT). He is a recipient of the Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad Shiksha Puruskar and was awarded the Padma Shri in 2020.

This APOGEE, do not miss a chance to see HC Verma as speaker #1 of the Think Again Live series.

APOGEE

A BRIEF HISTORY

A Professions Oriented Gathering Over Educational Experiences (APOGEE) found its humble beginnings in the early '80s. It was the brainchild of Dr Vijay V Mandke, the erstwhile Practice School Division Dean. The primary motivation behind the project was the absence of an organised platform for the presentation and exchange of academic research from the milieu of the time. Archives from the annual event serve as a record of the forces that have helped shape the academic culture on campus.

1983

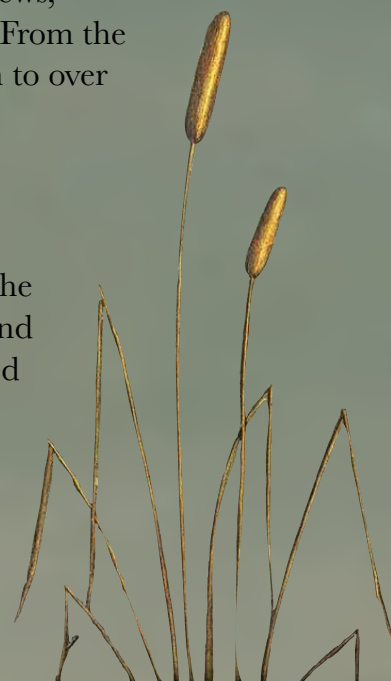
First APOGEE—Paper Presentations, Guest Lectures, and Discipline Exhibitions and Workshops

The first edition saw over 90 students present their work achievements, and 26 guest speakers deliver talks on their fields of excellence. The fest hoped to evolve into a shared space for professionals and students that would allow for a fluid exchange of ideas, eventually expanding beyond paper presentations to host events like campus interviews, science and technology film screenings, workshops, and demonstrations. From the tally of 90 paper presentations in 1983, the number of entries has grown to over 300 in 2019.

1984

Formation of the CoStAA

The Committee of Students for Academic Activities (CoStAA), at the time of its inception, was headed by the President, Student Union, and Coordinator, Academic Week (precursor to the fest) and included representatives of six departments—Planning and In-House Contact, Paper Evaluation and Presentation (PEP), Sponsorship Marketing and Publicity (Sponz), Controls (including Art & Decor, Transportation, and Stage), Publications and Correspondence (PCr), and Security (including Photography and Exhibitions).



1989

Quizzes and Movie Screenings

OverHead Transmission (OHT), the inter-collegiate quiz show, and Brain of BITS (BoB) were the two main quizzing competitions held in 1989. New quizzes like Fiche and Chips and Autoquiz in the late '90s and early 2000s respectively, faded away as OHT and BoB continue to be quizzing mainstays even today. The number of quizzes has increased from two in 1989 to ten in 2018.

Return of the Jedi was one of the first films to be screened in APOGEE. The '90s saw an increase in the number of movie screenings, with several genres like action, comedy, and thriller. These included movies like Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse and 12 Monkeys in 2019.

1992

Mithali and Professional Shows

Mithali began as a staff-student cultural program, the responsibility of which was taken over by Music Club in the '90s. For the past three decades, the event has been a collaborative effort by Music Club, Dance Club, and Mime Club. Mithali has been an integral part of the Inauguration Ceremony.

Diversifying from the academic nature of the fest, Professional Shows add to its cultural element. One of the first Prof Shows of APOGEE was held in 1992 and featured Padma Shri awardee TV Gopalakrishnan, a noted instrumentalist. Today, stand-up comedy (N2O) and concerts attract the biggest audiences in APOGEE.

2012

Think Again Conclave

In 2012, the first edition of the Think Again Conclave witnessed prominent speakers from all over the world.

2014

Papyrus Trails

Papyrus Trails, the annual literature festival of BITS Pilani, has grown from hosting talks to a multitude of events including short film screenings and interviews with renowned film directors.

2019

Entrepreneurship Conclave and BITS MUN

The first edition of the APOGEE Entrepreneurship Conclave was a joint venture by PEP and the Economics and Finance Association in 2019, replacing the BITS Business Conclave, which was introduced in 2018. The event featured a multitude of workshops organised for aspiring entrepreneurs and a business plan competition. The evaluation criteria took into account feasibility, uniqueness, and profitability. The best entries got a chance to pitch their start-up ideas to potential investors.

BITSMUN, BITS Pilani's annual Model United Nations Conference, was hosted in association with APOGEE for the first time in 2019.

