

## The Death of Formal Introduction; the End of an Era

*Students at Pilani explore how ragging and the absence of it have changed the cultural chemistry between seniors and freshers. The Era had finally come to an end.*

**BITS Pilani Campus TEAM**

"Intro?" booms a great voice, resounding with the weight of seniority, as a poor, cowering first *yearite* makes an attempt to gather his wits and not blabber hopelessly under the hawk-like scrutiny of the fearful seniors around him.



[http://merachandigarh.org/thumbnail.php?file=3682RaggingLogo\\_793724522.jpg&size=article\\_medium](http://merachandigarh.org/thumbnail.php?file=3682RaggingLogo_793724522.jpg&size=article_medium)

"I see English seems to be a problem for you..." a sarcastic voice quips from a corner. "Is there any other language in which 'we want your intro' can be driven into you?" A nervous smile escapes the first *yearite*. The moment it comes, he tries hard to wipe out its existence, but too late. They've spotted it. "Let's teach him how to bury that smile, boys," Fade out...

Cut to a year later. Our fickle first *yearites* in the above tale have now grown up to be lanky, unshaven men with long hair and in unwashed T-shirts. They own the Earth, they rule the show. And after the indignities they've been put through in their first year, they feel entitled to a little poetic justice from the guy up there. So while wending their way back to the wilderness amid the cactus shrubs, they dream of a day when

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they too shall surround some innocent *freshie* and demand in raspy voices "Intro?" Nothing fancy, you understand, just the old intro and maybe a few questions and perhaps a little fun with a bucket and floor mops...

But before the happy film over their eyes has time to dissolve, a rude shock awakens them from their reverie.

"I ----- bearing ID number----- hereby pledge that I shall neither indulge in nor abet any form of ragging as I know it to be a punishable offence under the Indian penal code..."

Their throats dry up, as those pleasant images of reclining on a bean bag with two first *yearites* fanning them and a third running to order food at Sky, suddenly dissolve into Technicolor pixels before vanishing altogether. They gulp. They sign. They leave, with broken spirit and broken heart.

Once out of the sight of authority, however, the thoughts come creeping back to them. Courage seems to return. They band together and soon, raucous cheers are heard. "This will not stand! This hostility will not stand! We have the right to get to know our juniors!" And so the Brotherhood of the Brave is formed.

Finding a poor unsuspecting junior proves harder than ever because now, first *yearites* are no longer allowed to share meat, mead and computers with seniors in the same *bhavans*. They've instead been sequestered away in Ashok *Bhavan*, far away from the poisonous breath of the vile seniors. There are rumors of a spot-fine of 500 rupees if a second year beast is found molesting the virtue of a first *yearite* by talking to him or her.

But luck seems to favour the brave indeed for all of a sudden a first *yearite* practically

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drops into their hands. The little innocent being approaches them with a friendly smile and wants to know the way to C'not. A slow smile of pleasure spreads across the face of the Brothers. "We'll show you the way, little one," they assure him as they usher him along. Their grins become wider as they approach the gates of Budh *bhavan*.

But no sooner do they attempt to cross the border when the 'little first year' stops and turns around to face the nearest Brother. "This isn't C'not. Let me go." he says softly. The Brothers look at each other, grinning mischievously at the naive one. One Brother places a hand on the first *yearite's* shoulder and says "That's not the way it works, boy. You leave when we say you leave."

"I don't think so." The first *yearite* whips out his phone and waves it in the air, arrogance oozing from every pore. "I've got the UGC hotline on speed-dial number 1. Anti-ragging committee on speed dial number 2. And the first year protection squad, number 3. Take your pick."

The Brothers back away from the first *yearite* as men away from hot coal, confused, "Listen boy, relax. We haven't even asked you for an intro yet..." "Yeah, put the phone down. We're from a department; we just want to talk..."

A menacing smile spreads across the first *yearite's* face, "Well, I can't take that chance. I don't plan to be ragged. Now turn around and walk away, I don't want to see your faces ever again."

The Brothers step away humiliated and saddened. As they slowly walk down the road towards the *redi*, they are joined by another group of disheartened seniors from Ram *Bhavan*. They pat each other on the back. "Drinks are on me", someone shouts. They raise their *shikanji* glasses in a toast, "To the death of 'The Formal Introduction' - To the end of an era."

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We have used the license of dramatic exaggeration to a some extent in this article. However, it is based in ground reality. The UGC regulations for anti-ragging are being imposed in colleges across the country. This strategy does comprise of a three tier support system for first *yearites*- a student

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level anti-ragging squad, an institute level student anti-ragging committee and an overseeing faculty group.

And of course, every Indian is well aware of the nation wide fine for 'ragging'- fifty thousand rupees.

In addition, wardens have been on the prowl in Pilani, covering careful rounds, checking every room that might hold seniors indulging in "questionable activities". They are doing all they can to make sure that these juniors feel at home, just stopping short of escorting first *yearites* to their rooms after meals.

And in the light of all these arrangements to make the juniors on campus feel 'comfortable', we are faced with certain questions. Can no one see over and beyond the 'ragging' to see the good it brings? Is this what the bond between a senior and a junior has been reduced to? Next year, how close will the new batch be to their juniors on campus? The BITSian traditions, unheard of in other colleges, of knowing seniors better than your batch mates, having some of your best friends in senior batches and going to seniors for help is dying. We can only hope that a balance is struck between these anti-ragging measures and BITSian traditions, else the BITSians of tomorrow will definitely be nothing like the BITSians of yesterday, the bond will stand broken. A sad day that will be for Pilani.

<http://1.bp.blogspot.com/> -



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## Vijender Singh visits; BITS-Dubai Sports Festival 2009

*The Olympic Bronze Medal Winning Boxer, Mr. Vijender Singh signaled the commencement of the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the annual BITS Sports Festival by lighting the Torch at the event's first ever Torch Lighting Ceremony. BITS-Pilani, Dubai campus reports the events.*

### **BITS-Pilani, Dubai TEAM**



Every good Sports Meet requires a Torch Lighting Ceremony and every good Torch Lighting Ceremony needs a memorable Chief Guest to do the final honors. Mohammed Ali did so at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and this year on April 5 BITS, Pilani – Dubai had its very own 'Ali moment' when the Olympic Bronze Medal Winning Boxer, Mr. Vijender Singh signaled the commencement of the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the annual BITS Sports Festival by lighting the Torch at the event's first ever Torch Lighting Ceremony.

The fanfare surrounding just this one moment required an entire day for itself. It began with a massive Torch Rally as each and every volunteer, organizer and participant, totaling well in excess of 300 students, ran alongside the selected Torch Bearers who passed it hand-to-hand along a 2.5 km long route that eventually terminated at the BPD Campus. The noise from the crowd that gathered to watch the

culmination of the Rally grew to a crescendo as the procession neared the Campus buildings, all of them eagerly awaiting a sight of the Torch and especially the last Torch Bearer.

The Director – BPD, Prof. (Dr.) M. Ramachandran was the penultimate Torch Bearer and a huge roar went up from the crowd as he handed the Torch over to Vijender to complete the remaining distance and set alight the BSF Lamp. This was accompanied by yet another thunderous applause.

Later on the champion addressed the crowd, candidly admitting that he was overwhelmed with the support showed for him by all the BITSians and was immensely glad that even sports like boxing had such a huge following. He also wished the best of successes to the organizers of BSF 2009 and expressed his desire to have a look at the venues and preparations for the event personally. Almost on cue, Mr. Rafiuddin – the man behind the creation of the BITS Sports Festival, escorted Vijender away from the addressing podium to give him a whirlwind tour of the various venues for the numerous sports being conducted all over the Campus.

First was a stopover at the office of Prof. (Dr.) M. Ramachandran and an interview with photo-op with the Press. There were T.V., Radio News Crews and Newspaper Correspondents to cover every word that the Olympic Hero had to say.

After this brief tête-à-tête with the Press, he was toured around the college sports facilities. Coincident with his arrival was the conclusion of the first ever Inter-University Boxing Coaching Camp that was also

organized by Mr. Rafiuddin as part of the BITS Sports Festival. It was indeed a great moment for the dozens of budding boxers to have the Olympic Bronze Medal Winner among their midst for the final day of the camp. Vijender was himself extremely excited at seeing the number of attendees and duly took some time out to give some valuable tips to the youngsters.

And so it ended and quite true to form the visit was a short and quick one, much like the way Vijender admitted he likes to keep his matches! But BITS had been smitten by the confidence and charisma of the young man from Bhiwani and would not lose its adoration for him so easily, a fact that was more than evident when the pugilist made an encore appearance at the BSF Awards Ceremony a week later. Once more he was assailed by a flood of fans eager to get a photograph, an autograph or anything for that matter. As he himself said while receiving a memento from the Director on the behalf of the Institute, "Adoration is not what I'm aiming for. What would really please me would be for these youngsters to finish what I have started and bring more glory to our country in sports." Amen to that!



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## ENGINuity 2009; BITS-Pilani, Dubai

*BITS, Pilani - Dubai joined its cousins in Goa and Pilani in organizing a National Level Inter-College Technology Festival - 'ENGINuity 2009' on February 25th and 26th of this year. Here are the details.*

### **BITS-Pilani, Dubai TEAM**



BITS, Pilani - Dubai joined its cousins in Goa and Pilani in organizing a National Level Inter-College Technology Festival - 'ENGINuity 2009' on February 25th and 26th of this year. The Fest was the brainchild of three students, Abhinav Gupta (IVth Year), Piyush Singh, and Rohan Trikha (both IIIrd Year). It was also supported through the efforts of Deans, Dr. G. Vijaya and Dr. Tanmay Panda.

The word 'ENGINuity' is a play on 'An Engineer's Ingenuity', an apt one considering the level of technical expertise and engineering acumen that is demanded of the participants (and which they displayed with much aplomb). Participants came from seven of the very best Universities of the U.A.E. Preparations for the event began well in advance. An enthusiastic team of over 40 volunteers got down to getting everything right planned to the very last detail.

The events comprising ENGINuity were:

- The Computer Gaming competition emerged to be a popular one. The participants competed in COUNTER STRIKE 1.6 (shooting game), FIFA

09(a soccer game) and Defence of the Ancients (DotA) (a war craft game).

- The Computer Programming Competition challenged the participants to prove their programming skills in one of three programming languages.
- "Jargon", the tech-themed quiz tested the students' knowledge on various science and technology topics.
- The Bridge Building competition was a unique designing competition where the students were supposed to design a self supported bridge capable of withstanding static load on the pathway, using only drinking straws and tape. The competition was an excellent example of being creative with minimum resources



which is the need of the world today.

- The On the spot model making gave a simple task of making two paper planes using a single sheet of paper for each plane but the challenge was to make one of them travel the maximum distance and the other to stay airborne for the maximum amount of time. This event in fact drew the maximum participation.

The entire event got off to quite a spectacular beginning with the Inauguration ceremony. The Chief Guest was the Secretary of the IEEE – UAE branch, Mr. Eesa Bastaki who committed the wholehearted support of his organization behind ENGINuity so that it would become a shining example for other universities to follow. The next two days were a gala of competitions, which provided a rare opportunity for students from the various universities to interact with one another and get involved in the side attractions, such as the food and game stalls that had been put up all over Campus.



The events themselves were quite keenly contested but BPD had that extra edge in majority of the events to finish as the Best Overall College, ending up as winners in the maximum number of events. The Fest concluded with the Prize Distribution Ceremony where the Winners and Runners-Up in each event got prizes sponsored by Siemens, Bosch, Razer, Radio 105.4 and IEEE. It brought a successful end to the first edition of this (hopefully) annual competition.



## Living after Midnight; BITS-Pilani, Goa

*It's none short of freedom at midnight which India achieved in 1947. The feelings of ecstasy resonate in the heart of every BITSian in Goa as "life after midnight" becomes a reality.*



Rohan Menon, 2008A4PS208G



<http://news.thomasnet.com/IMT/fireworks%20materials.jpg>

The inevitable finally happened. The 11:30 rule, which bore more curses than a Pharaoh's tomb was done away with once and for all for the boys of BITS-Pilani Goa Campus on 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2009. The 11:30 rule has been a source of great ire for all the students because it would send us running back to our hostels as soon as the last whistle was blown resulting in some important club meetings being cut short. Well no more. As an eyewitness to that momentous occasion, let me narrate what

exactly took place on the historic night of the scrapping of the rule.

The administration did anticipate trouble with indulgence in hooliganism topping the list. So some of the faculty was deployed to make sure the situation did not get out of hand. Well their fears weren't unfounded. Some of the boys had stocked up on fireworks purchased from Vasco to usher in the new era. Come 11:30 and all hell broke loose. Dancing, screaming, and

jeering outside the girls' hostels, all directing their glee at the hapless girls. They tried feigning disdain and indifference but had to do so inside their hostels! Well, the girls wistfully watched us guys revel in our new found freedom. By 12:30, the supply of firecrackers had been exhausted. Still basking in our new found freedom, we trickled back to our hostels and went to sleep.

And the story has remained the same since!

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## Fresher's to Sophomores; BITS-Pilani Hyderabad

*This is a journey of two freshers to their second year as told by the young BITSian writers themselves.*



**Abhishek Chandna**, 2008B2A3493H,  
**Vivaswan Pathak**, 2008A7PS130H

The more difficulties one has to encounter, within and without, the more significant and the greater inspiration his life will be.

Loads of luggage, water clogged city expressways with the first feelings on reaching the campus being "Run Away Fast!" Well, BPHC is not that bad. Although we have had many problems, starting with the late registration- a lacking maintenance for the registration process, the registration completed successfully.



[http://www.openpr.com/images/articles/1/4/14d1f00a90b6dd4db4cfc567d447eae7\\_g.jpg](http://www.openpr.com/images/articles/1/4/14d1f00a90b6dd4db4cfc567d447eae7_g.jpg)

Finally everyone was trying to accustom themselves in the new environment of our 'very Beautiful' BPHC. Sad feelings of departing parents, but equally enthusiastic and proud feelings of being called 'the BITSIAN' overwhelmed the freshers.

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Suddenly there was good news (bad for some though but awesome for us - "Campus postponed till 29<sup>th</sup> August!")

BPHC had its first batch commence on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2009...we had just entered into a completely different biome with new faces in an all new environment.

"Our minds were as different as our faces: we all were trying to travel to one destination-'Satisfaction'; but few were going by the same road."

We were just trying to feel 'satisfied' by the facilities and the 'Heavenly' mess food. So commencing with our journey forward came our 'Teacher's Day' and we all planned to do something out of the world for our very beloved faculty members. However resources were scarce. No suitable props, no acoustics, no stage and with a very short time of only 3 days, it was a big challenge for us to present something exceptional.

But not only the event turn out to be a great success, it was also appreciated by one and all!!!

Then came the usual BITSIAN life -enjoyment, *masti* and *dhinchak hungama*, with sprinkles of studies.

Proposal of clubs (many of which were rejected by the SWD for unfathomable reasons), Club formations, association activities, and the Elections or highly biased selections for our so called-'leaders'!

The next mega much awaited event was our very first intra-college cultural fest- **PEARL!!**

Shades,clicks,colors,Disco jockey-NYT... all this made PEARL an unforgettable event in the yet to start history of BPHC.

So with the wonderful memories alive in our minds came along a number of DISCO cases-(real serious work ahead) and then came our compre (toughest time of our sem). We managed to cross the hurdle realizing what BITS stood for -"BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TEST SERIES!!!!

The happiness of life is made up of minute fractions—the little soon-forgotten charities of a kiss, a smile, a kind look, a heartfelt compliment in the disguise of a playful raillery, and the countless other infinitesimal pleasurable thought and genial feelings – my romanticism is a result of the semester gap!

Entering the second sem with music and enthusiasm and some fear as it was time to get our CG cards.

The tune of vigyaan divas was heard all over. Students portrayed their best in technical arenas enriching the campus aroma with every imaginable flavour.This event saw the screening of our very first BPHC documentary-"DAWN TO DUSK".

Students working with the campus divisions also expanded their frontiers in unknown territories. The second semester saw various clubs, associations – budding. They came to their full bloom as the Foundation Day arrived. Extravagant sponsorship, cool arts, pro lights and awesome sound arrangement made '28<sup>th</sup> April 2009' a day forever to cherish!!

COMPRES struck! Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Workshop and then the ordeal was over! Yipeeeee!!! Vast Multitudes at the bus stop were to be seen, two months at home was coming up. The thought was amazing and boring at the same time. During the holidays continuous chatting went on —how would the juniors

be? Will they allow us a bit of ragging, or is it going to be the simple intro?

We all were missing our own BPHC!!!Each one of us desperately dying to get back to the marvelous place! Finally the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester arrived but with 'not so good' memories. Firstly the management imposed very serious restrictions on ragging, and then the change in the mess caterers. But meeting our friends after this hiatus made us forget our complaints.

So all in all the first year was a Roller-coaster Ride for all of us. We went through ups and downs, experienced various amenities and showcased our talents in events like SPREE, OASIS, WAVES, BOSM, and of course in the very techie APOGEE!!!

"Happy are those who dream dreams and are ready to pay the price to make them come true."

We the first batch of BPHC can proudly say that in the previous one year, we as a college have tremendously developed and made sincere efforts in making Hyderabad reach the exceptional standards of our mother campuses-Pilani and Goa,and the process is still on! So folks keep your fingers crossed because here at BPHC there is a lot more yet to be revealed.

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit."



<http://www.indiastudychannel.com/attachments/Resources/70882-19524-BITS%20Pilani%20Hyderabad%20Campus.jpg>