Raunak Agarwal (RA): What made you opt for SNU?
Amit Ray (AR): Coming from IIT, certainly, I was hesitant to come to a private University, as I was not very sure, but Shubhashis Gangopadhyay and Sumantra Sengupta kept on contacting me and insisted I at least visit the campus. So finally in September 2012, I came to SNU and interacted with people. Even after spending the entire day here, I was having a tough time making up my mind. Hereafter, I threw questions one after another at Shubhashis, and surprisingly, anything I asked him, he accepted and said, "Yes". I was actually hoping that somewhere he would hesitate, but on the contrary, he accepted everything. I did not find any reason to deny it. By the night, I was leaving Delhi, I talked with my wife, and eventually, decided to come here. At the end, I think I made the right choice.

RA: You have a professional work experience of over three decades at various reputed institutes. What difference do you find in our university in comparison to your past experience? (Both positive and negative)
AR: I could compare SNU with IIIT Jabalpur, but not with IIT Kanpur. Simply because IIIT has a legacy of about 50 years, and SNU is just at its beginning. I would rather look at it ten years later. In fact, a lot of faculty members here do compare, but quickly they forget that this place is only two and a half years old. It takes a lot of time. Somewhere like thirty years, when I joined IIT K, there were a lot of things we did not have. There was no regular load-shading for long hours. All of us had kerosene lamps or limited electricity. We had to cook in kerosene since there was no regular gas supply, and yet we never complained of the situation. We did not have the luxury to get white bond paper because the institute could not afford it. Looking at SNU from that early time, SNU is much better off.

One thing that is still to be inculcated in the faculty members here is the kind of dedication we had. We spent so much time preparing our lectures, and then going and confronting the students. That is the thing which is still missing here. With the students too - for example, I got a mail from some student requesting me to postpone the class on Monday because he was going out on Diwali. This is something I cannot imagine in IIIts. It is what makes it IIT. It is the dedication they have. I do not know whether you have it here or not.

RA: You joined the School of Humanities and Social Sciences in the Department of Art, Design and Theatre. Could you enlighten the readers more about your area of expertise?
AR: It was a wonderful experience I have had. I have a background in arts, but over a period of time I shifted to Industrial Design, because art and design are very closely related. Industrial Design actually deals with all kinds of consumer products. Production of gear is not our focus. How to use the gear is our focus. If I design a cup that looks nice, is something different? But then, technically, we need to verify my grip of the cup: Is it comfortable? Is it safe or not? What age group does it cater to? The pressure on the cup should be measured so that you can hold it properly! After that, what is the material of the cup, say, china clay. Then some knowledge about china clay is significant. Industrial Design is the synthesis of the art-aesthetic part and the other technical part. In short, it mainly deals with product designing, i.e. consumer products are the domain. However, Visual Communication is also directly under the domain of ID.

RA: You’ve been involved in various research projects in your field. Could you tell us something about your area of research and any research project you are currently working on?
IMPRINTS showcased a musical play, “Aazadiyan”, on October 30, 2013. This play exposed the current situation in the society, where parents expect their children to follow the career paths envisioned by the parents, not even considering the interests of their child. A child who wanted to be an architect becomes overburdened by the weight of different career coats that he is forced to wear. His mother expects him to become a doctor but his father always wanted him to become an engineer, though his teacher encourages him to become a lawyer. The dilemmatic situation suppresses the child to such an extent that he shatters, cries, and prays to God to show him some way. His soul is finally awakened by the angels of fate who shower their blessings, and he finds himself aazaad (free) from all chains and hence strongly determines to become an architect.

Language has never been a barrier to express emotions and feelings. Through the music, drama, and dance, this play has demonstrated the truth of this saying.

“Khwahishein”, a drama centered on the daily life of a student in a college, disclosed almost everything which goes on in a college student’s life. This was beautifully visualized as it explained how a student is misguided by the constant peer pressure imposed on him. In this, the father of a boy named Sunny taunts him for sitting idle at home for a year and asks him to continue higher studies. Despite suffering from the financial problems at home, he gets into an engineering college. But as soon as he enters college, he gets attracted by the magnificent things such as freedom to roam around, enjoying hostel life, and use of alcohol and drugs. He never read his father’s letters, but one day, after all drunken-dipped days, his roommate passes him one of his father’s letters that explained how ill his father was. He immediately rushes home and finds his neighbors talking about his father’s death and about him being an irresponsible son. He realizes that his father’s only khwahish[wish] was to see his son turn into a well-educated person. Sunny is shattered, realizing the terrible mistakes he had made.

This tragic play ended with grand appreciation from the audience.

Imprints took an active part in the celebrations of Food Week initiated by Go Green Club by staging a skit performance, “Keemti Khana” in front of the students of SNU. The skit was based on the theme, “food and its importance”, and tried to send across a message to the audience about valuing food instead of wasting it. It showed that many of us who do not know the true value of food and waste a large amount of food daily by dumping the leftovers into the dustbin, that the same food can fill the hungry stomachs of so many people who are deprived of food. This skit also opened the eyes of the students, defining the actual meaning of “hygienic” food. A lot of efforts that were put into it through rehearsals and script-making came out to be fruitful when the audience in the end gave reviews like “splendid performance”, “awesome skit”, etc. and the hall was filled with thundering applause from the audience.

The performers and producers hoped that they could explain the importance of food to the audience and help in the reduction of wastage.
In Conversation With

Dr. Amit Ray, Dean, SNU

Cont. from Page 1

AR: Industrial Design does not deal with virtual work; rather it is more interested in producing products which are functional. I have had a lot of funded projects from the Defence, to government to private. When I had my first Defence project, I was myself amused, for how could they give a guy coming from art background, a DRDO project? Then I realized, I have crossed that barrier and now they recognize me as an Industrial Design person. Currently, I am working on a ‘waterless dish washer’ which has been approved by DST. The first prototype is also ready.

RA: You recently came up with a CCC called ‘Indian History and Civilisation’. What was your chief objective behind that? How do you think it would benefit the students?

AR: I think majority of the students have not learned history properly in schools. They go to universities; graduate and go out for jobs. They know nothing about their history! The history I am trying to teach is through the work of art. There are no dates here to mug. It is a kind of a passage of art and culture. The stories I am trying to teach is through pictures and designs. They usually demand to have a DRDO project approved by DST. The first prototype is also ready.

RA: You recently came up with a CCC called ‘Indian History and Civilisation’. What was your chief objective behind that? How do you think it would benefit the students?

AR: My chief objective behind that was to share some of the highlights and challenges you’ve faced in your capacity as the Dean, Student Welfare and UG Studies?

AR: One major difference coming from an IIT background is the difference in work culture. Out there things happen much faster. I just make a phone call to the purchase section concerning my requirement and they immediately start with the proceedings. They do not wait for me. Through phone they find out my technical specifications and within couple of hours I send my paper. So the work starts immediately. At IIT, whenever a faculty requests something, it is good enough. They will immediately trust it and take action.

Universities believe in a lot of hierarchy; everything has to go to the hierarchy; everything has to go to the dean. I think that a lot of young faculty members are very keen to do things for the university. It was just that they were not getting the opportunity. Hence, I made a committee which should look after the timetable for the institute. They have been working for the next semester so that before students leave for the vacation they should be able to do the preregistration. I find a lot of young people who are very enthusiastic to do things, and if this enthusiasm remains, I think there is a bright future for the university.

RA: Do you have any message for the students?

AR: I believe in liberal education. It means I may be professionally good at one discipline but I should have an open mind to accept, listen and learn a lot of new things. I think it goes to my root as I am from Santiniketan. As a child, you start learning a lot of things around you: social consciousness, brotherhood feelings, taking part in a lot of social activities. I am a person who believes and practices liberal education.

In your hostels, there was an incident of blowing fire-crackers. Immediately, I made sure that the hostel students’ committee should start taking up more responsibility and become more vigilant. Hostel committee knows who are doing it! Let them take the decision on how to control it. Initially it will not be very effective; gradually, as we push on it, things will be much better. I believe building a culture of trust and fellowship are extremely important values for any community which strives for the best, and a liberal education policy inoculates such an environment.
Have you ever wondered if the stuff that you read in sci-fi books is possible? Did you ever find the concept of the Time Turner in Harry Potter mind-bogglingly awesome? Do you believe that a blackhole is a wormhole? If any of the above fits you, you are not going to be disappointed.

A blackhole, simply put, is a dead star with infinite gravity that pulls everything (including light) which is inside a particular area surrounding it, called its ‘event horizon’ into it. No one knows what happens once something is pulled inside a blackhole. The New Zealand mathematician, Roy Kerr predicted that if something fell into a blackhole, it might be sucked down into a tunnel called the ‘Einstein-Rosen Bridge’ (the technical term for a wormhole) and would be shot out of a white hole. A white hole is like the reverse of a blackhole, i.e., it cannot be entered from the outside, but matter and light can escape from it. The wormhole might connect two different universes or two different parts of the same universe. It might also lead you into the past, and that would make you a time traveller! Many physicists have wondered if this would be possible in the future, but there are skeptics too. There have been hundreds of wormhole solutions found to Einstein’s equations. So what is the problem? It is just that Einstein’s equations break down while dealing with sub-atomic particles. What that means for us is that wormholes might be unstable, or intense radiation surrounding it could vaporize anyone who dared to enter it. As Michio Kaku put it, “So it’s still a bit premature to buy tickets to the nearest wormhole to visit the next galaxy or hunt dinosaurs!”

But is that the only way one could time travel? As it turns out, the answer is no. There is a phenomenon called Time Dilation. Say for example, I were travelling in a spaceship, orbiting the Earth at almost the speed of light, say at 99.5% the speed of light. If I was 20 years old when I left Earth and stayed in space for five years, when I return, I will find that all my friends have aged much faster and are 70 years old. In this case, I’m not actually ‘travelling’ in time; time is simply moving slower for me than for the people on Earth. Due to this, when I experienced only five years of life, my friends would have experienced fifty. This is forward time travel, and can be done with sufficient amount of energy. In fact, it has already been done. Meet Sergei Krikalev, the greatest time traveler ever. He stayed in space for a total of 803 days, 9 hours and 39 minutes and time travelled into his own future by 0.02 seconds. Backwards time travel is mathematically possible, but the equations concerning it need some order of infinity (which isn’t physically possible to achieve). Till then, let’s just keep hoping?
The volleyball league was the third league of the season. In all, a total of 19 games were played, with the Silver Hawks coming out on top, with a comprehensive victory over the Shadows in the final. Led by the cool and composed Arvind Raj, the Hawks were totally dominant in the first set, romping home with a score of 25-15. But the second set saw an excellent comeback by the Hawks with their captain Bala and blocker Raghu showing some great moves. At one stage, the scores were all level at 17-17, but Arvind turned out to be the villain again with some great smashes and counter attacks, helping the Hawks take the set 25-20 and hence the game. He was deservedly awarded the Player of the Tournament trophy, and his team, the Champions tag. The Titans, led by Senthil Murgesh, finished third.

The following are the trophy winners:
1. Most Valuable Player of the tournament: Arvind Raj
2. Best Universal: Senthil Murgesh
3. Best attacker: Arvind Raj
4. Best Setter: Varun Ravi
5. Best first pass and defense: Surya Kamal
6. Spike of the tournament: Vamandev (For Skylarks against Silver Hawks in last league match)

The final pool table is as follows:

<table>
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<th>Rank</th>
<th>Team Name</th>
<th>Played</th>
<th>Won</th>
<th>Lost</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Shadows</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Titans</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Supersonics</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Skylarks</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Flying Dutchmen</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SNU’s Culinary Club started during Breeze ’13. It was the brainchild of foodies who wanted to do something during the fest. So, they decided to cook! They put up a Live Pasta Counter where students themselves made pasta.

They, under the guidance of their faculty advisor Prof. Rajeev Kumar Singh, circumvented the various road blocks encountered and started SNU’s first food club.

SIGree aims to have all foodies and aspiring cooks under one roof. It is unique as it has both faculty and students involved along with the college staff and the mess managers.

SIGree recently conducted a Sandwich and Salad making competition where 28 teams participated. Five teams reached the finals held on 28 October out of which the team led by Jaya Shukla (Ph D) emerged as winners while Aishwarya Sharma’s (B Tech 3rd year) team came in second place.

It was a great competition as it brought out the qualities of teamwork, creativity and time management. The judges for this tough competition were Chef Mansingh and Chef Amit (Head Chefs of SNU mess.)

Achal Awasthi (BS 2nd year), the group leader of the team selected as “Heads Choice for Salad” described his experience: “I have always loved watching cookery shows like Master Chef Australia or Eat Street. But I always wondered what the contestants would feel like when they were presenting their dishes. I just wanted to explore that feeling. It was a rewarding and enriching experience. And with a dependable team around, it was fun all the way.”
**DEMOCRACY V2.0**

By Sundar Ramanujam
Class of ’15

Come summer and Indians go shopping for a new government. The political parties preparing for the elections remind me of two families preparing for a wedding in the house - the excessive spending of the party’s funds for decorating public spaces with party flags and graffiti. The traditional ritual of politicians lining up behind their leaders, trading accusations and insults across the aisles, while clearing out the skeletalos of their own closets - all in the hope that they get the party ticket for the elections. Posters deck the streets of every Indian village, autos of every town and billboards of every city. Television channels are peppered every now and then with political ad campaigns during primetime hours, paying tribute to the populist schemes launched by the ruling party which are often seen as half measures that address some of the country’s serious problems.

I call these incidents traditional, since they have been happening since the birth of this republic (with the exception of the TV ads, which came in the 90s). And this election appears to be no different. Yet in this election, Indian voters will witness the historic transformation of the way politicians conduct their campaign and business in this country. Because this time, the Internet is there to play an unprecedented and a rather significant role in influencing the outcome of the polls.

**THE SIGNIFICATION**

Having observed the immense success enjoyed (twice) by the then US Presidential Candidate, Barack Obama, in tapping his voter base using the social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, Indian politicians and political parties have identified the true power of the internet. More importantly, the leaders who consider themselves to be working at the grass-roots level, do not leave any stone unturned when it comes to connecting with their fans or followers on every online platform available.

It is very interesting to note that this kind of evolution of the Indian democracy has resulted in ensuring that election campaigns no longer remain a one-sided affair. Earlier, campaigns usually painted a picture of this kind on your minds: leaders being glorified by the party workers on a high pedestal, occasionally with a tent on top and loudspeakers installed everywhere, while the crowds stood under the hot, afternoon sun and hopeful that perhaps this time things would be different, while the candidate sings the same old rhetoric of roti, bijli, sadak, makan. This always left them with no opportunity to cross-question or interact with their policymakers.

Today, given their presence on cyber media, this paradigm shift in the functioning of India’s democracy highlights the contrast one sees when it comes to the manner in which political parties project themselves. Anything that is said on the internet is immortal and is cached in online databases. This, in turn forces the politicians to think ten times before posting or promising anything, lest they be bombarded with tweets and Facebook comments.

Also, interestingly, the transparency has redoubled as all records and claims are readily available at the click of the mouse, leaving politicians red-faced when they get “Fact Checked” over their tall claims.

This kind of change in the conduct of our political leaders was hard to imagine just a few decades ago. Still this doesn’t mean the Internet has single-handedly fixed the Indian election system. This is just a start and it is on its way to slowly build its momentum.

Let’s talk about an example. This December, I voted for the Delhi Assembly Elections. And just some weeks ago, Facebook, using its smart sense technology, figured out the candidate of my constituency running on the ticket of the party which I was in favour of, and posted on my news feed a glimpse of his fan page. A feeling of familiarity swept through me, even though I never had heard about him before. But that was about to change, as I had just messaged him about the issues that mattered to me for this election (electric bill and VAT). Within a matter of three hours, to my surprise, I read his reply, which talked about a brief plan as how he planned to fix both of it, should he get elected. Right now, nobody can say that for sure as to whether he will keep his word, or whether he is going to eat them up, only time shall tell.

But what has to be observed here is that until receiving that Facebook message, I was really unsure to whether he will keep his word, or followers on every online platform available.

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But what has to be observed here is that until receiving that Facebook message, I was really unsure to whether he will keep his word, or followers on every online platform available.
The Faculty Development Center of SNU organized a one day Symposium on Emerging Research Trends in Sciences & Grantsmanship on the 21st of September, 2013. Among the audience were the guest speakers, faculties from the School of Natural Sciences, Ph.D. and Masters students. The event started off with Prof. Rupamanjari Ghosh giving a brief introduction about the University, its multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary aspects and research focus, and welcoming the guest speakers of the day - Prof. Alok Bhattacharya, School of Life Sciences, JNU & Vice President, INSA, Dr. B.S. Dwarakanath, Head, Division of Biocybernetics, INMA and Dr. Pawan Sharma, Senior Consultant- Healthcare, NER-BPMC, DBT.

Prof. Bhattacharya spoke about the differences in the grant system in India and abroad, and highlighted some salient features of the same. He also shared some points on writing grant proposals. Dr. B.S. Dwarakanath spoke about the DRDO and the kind of collaborations that it is looking for grant funding to academic institutions. Dr. Pawan Sharma touched upon DBT’s efforts to improve research in North-Eastern India and invited academic institutions to collaborate with government agencies for pursuing research for a social cause.

Mainak Banerjee, Ph.D. Chemistry, said that the Symposium was extremely helpful as it let them know the reviewer’s perspective, that is, let them know what the reviewer would expect in a grant proposal. As Dr. Shailja said, it was a “good opportunity to showcase the work and the facilities available [at SNU], which is very important for getting funds”. According to another Ph.D. Chemistry student, it was “an eye opener” and a “give and take opportunity”. Dr. N. Sukumar said that the Symposium helped to acquaint the faculties, many of whom had done their research abroad, with the nuances of grantsmanship in India. The Symposium was a grand success and the Faculty Development Center looks forward to holding more such workshops in the future.

Freezepix is a photo sharing website created by a student of SNU exclusively for the SNU community. It’s a tool to store memories; it aims at giving you a better campus life and a better college experience. It helps you have a look back at the amazing & awesome moments of fun with your friends, your peers, the one you admire, the one who admires you, the secret lovers and a long list of people who matter to you and without whom your life is incomplete.

For all the photographers out there, how many times did you not know whom to give certain pictures to? Well, this is the site for you... upload them and you’re set!

Freezepix lets you capture those best moments of your life, when your study-load was at its peak, but still your fun never died. You collect and organize things that inspire you to fight back when the chips are down.

One is not omnipresent, but with Freezepix you can stay updated on what is happening on campus all the time. You can see the collection of memories of everyone organized in one place for easy browsing. Do you get bored with the website too soon? Don’t worry; freezepix gives you the option to customize the brand color and header of the website. You can go to a new freezepix every day, or may be every hour if you like.

Find us at: http://freezepix.com/