



CELEBRATING CENTENARY



STUDENT ALUMNI INTERACTION CELL, IIT (BHU), VARANASI

# Alma Communiqué

## Alumni Newsletter (May '22)

Read about the glorious achievements of our students and alumni, and get a glimpse of the campus life in the 1950s!



## Institute Updates

1. The IIT (BHU) Foundation, a U.S.-based all-volunteer, non-profit association of IIT (BHU) alumni, received a generous gift of US \$1 million from renowned Boston-based entrepreneur and philanthropist Dr. Desh Deshpande. The Institute will be naming the library in honor of his father, Sh. Shreenivas Deshpande, a 1948 graduate of the College of Technology. This contribution by Dr. Desh Deshpande and his wife, Mrs. Jaishree Deshpande, to the library of the Institute, will strengthen the academic and research ecosystem. The library naming ceremony will be held on 24th June 2022 at 9:30 am (IST) on campus via a virtual platform. The ceremony will be broadcasted via Zoom and live-streamed on IIT (BHU) Foundation's social media handles.

2. Indian Institute of Technology (BHU) Varanasi has been ranked for the first time in the QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) World University Ranking and the Institute has been classified under the 'institute of very high research intensity' on the focused subject area, i.e., Engineering and Technology. The QS World University Ranking assessment is based on eight ranking indicators. The Institute has been ranked in the slab of 651-700 in the recently released QS World University Ranking 2023. Among IITs, the Institute stands at 10th position. Further, the Institute stands at position 115 globally under the 'citations per faculty (CPF)' parameter which is the strongest ranking indicator of the institute. IIT (BHU), Varanasi has secured 6th position among IITs on this research parameter (CPF).

3. PW (PhysicsWallah), co-founded by our alumnus Mr. Prateek Maheshwari (MEC '11), raised \$100 million in Series A funding from Westbridge and GSV Ventures, bringing its valuation to \$1.1 billion and making it India's 101st unicorn. PW is an online education platform beloved by many students of IIT (BHU) as well as across the country. Providing online coaching for competitive exams, they have over 6.9 million subscribers on their YouTube channel, and their app has over 5+ million downloads. Mr. Prateek Maheshwari has a history of working in educational technology and the food and beverage industry. He has founded companies such as Moon2Noon, and Night Panda and is currently the founder of PenPencil and Co-Founder of PW.



## Hostel life in the 50s: A Memoir

It was in April 1956, over fifty years ago, that I bade adieu to my old college, BENCO. It transformed me from a 17-year-old boy to a graduate engineer under the umbrella of Rajputana Hostel, a home away from home for four years.



My association with BENCO began with the receipt of a telegram in the summer of 1952 from the college informing me that I had been selected for admission. Seventeen years old then, for me, it was a moment of joyous elation; I was filled with a sense of pride and self-esteem. It still remains one of the defining moments of my life.

Being allotted a room in the Rajputana Hostel, one of the only three white-washed buildings on the campus at that time, the other two being the Limdi Hostel and Charles King Memorial Pavilion, which had, for some unknown reason, only walls, no roof, made us, the occupants of Rajputana feel, quite irrationally somewhat distinct from others. To live and



study with students from all over Kashmir to Travancore-Cochin, from Burma to East Africa, was in itself a most rewarding experience. Not only our class fellows were from all over India, but they were also from a broad spectrum of social and

economic strata. Very soon, all of us learned that cerebral prowess has no social and economic exclusivity. There were many from remote backward areas, from homes without electricity, who passed out with flying colors.

Everyone on the teaching staff was always accommodating and approachable, even though each one of our teachers had a different personality and their ability to hold our attention in the classroom widely varied. A few of them had endearing eccentricities that were a source of mirth and amusement. But no disrespect was ever shown by any one of us to any faculty. Not one single day's strike, unfortunately so common these days, was observed during my four years at the college, even though other colleges went on strike on several occasions. Our mess for us was culinary nirvana, and we rated our Maharaj at par with a cordon bleu chef, never failing to produce gourmet meals.

[Read more about campus life in the 50s here](#)

## Alumni Giving Back Portal

In its 100-years, IIT (BHU) continued producing top-class engineers capable of solving the world's problems. The Institute has been supported by its illustrious alumni through generous donations that have fueled its rapid growth. Besides Govt. support, alumni play an essential role in strengthening their alma mater's academic and research eco-system. Keeping in mind the importance and support of its alumni, the IIT (BHU), Varanasi launched its dedicated online giving back portal from where any Indian alumni may contribute an amount as per the details provided on the portal for the progress and support of his/her alma-mater. The Institute shall utilize the contributions received in this bank account of the Institute for Infrastructure development or students/faculty/staff welfare as per the donors' choice.

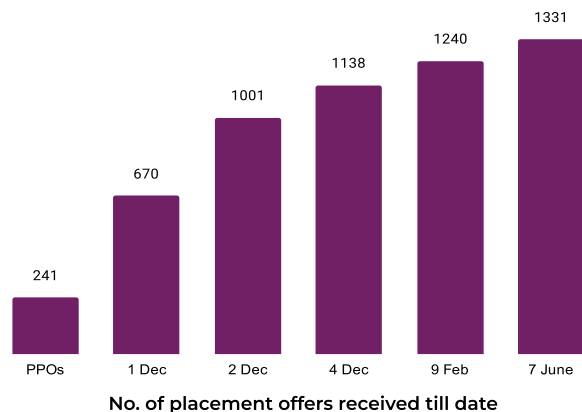
Link to the giving back portal: <https://donations.iitbhu.ac.in/>

All donations by the Indian Alumni to IIT (BHU) are exempted from U/S 80G of the I-Tax Act of the Government of India. NRI Alumni may contribute to a different bank account per the information on the portal.



## Internship/Placement Updates

The Institute has seen unprecedented prospects, with offers from various reputable firms in multiple fields. The Training and Placement Cell, IIT (BHU), Varanasi worked diligently to make the recruitment process as simple as possible for both students and recruiters. A total of 1311 offers were made by 378 reputed companies across dynamic profiles till 7th June, 2022. Apart from this, around 82 students from other institutes were given internships through the cell.



No. of placement offers received till date

## Media Section



US-based alumnus donates \$1M to alma mater



IIT (BHU) professor's edited book rated 5th globally



IIT (BHU) enters the QS World University Ranking 2023

## Faculty Achievements

Dr. Pranjal Chandra, assistant professor in the Department of Biochemical Engineering, IIT (BHU), Varanasi, has brought laurels to the Institute. His edited book, 'Diagnostic Strategies for Covid-19 and other Coronaviruses', has been rated the 5th best book to read in the discipline of Medicine and Medical Science (Virology) in 2022. The book has been published in collaboration with an expert from the School of Medicine, Stanford University, USA. Such books show the commitment of IIT (BHU) and it will surely be a very important diagnostic manual for a wide range of readers.



## Events @ IIT (BHU)

### E-Summit '22

The Entrepreneurship Summit '22 was hosted by E-Cell IIT (BHU) this year from 5th-13th April, which drew participation from over 9000 students and included 15 contests and 20 talks/sessions/workshops with



a total prize pool of Rs. 4 lakh. As part of the summit, Sh. Ravi Bhushan (Founder and CEO of BrightChamps, CSE '05), Sh. Vishal Jindal (Co-founder and Co-CEO of Biryani by Kilo, EEE '92), and Sh. Anurag Sinha (Co-founder and CEO of OneCard, EEE '99) participated in a panel discussion titled 'IIT (BHU) Soonicorns'. The summit also featured keynote speakers such as Sh. Amit Somani (Managing Partner Prime Venture Partners, CSE '93), Sh. Garv Malik (CMO Slice), Sh. Radhakrishnan Pillai (Author of Chanakya Neeti), and Sh. Harpreet Singh Grover (Author of Let's Build a Company!). It also hosted a pitching-cum-fundraising event, Shark Tank IIT (BHU), in which 16 startups were given the opportunity to present in front of Venture Capitalists to raise capital of up to Rs. 10 crore. Fenmo, Examarly, MPYC, MaxTap, TrideMobility, CoachBudy, and PetCare presented their ideas at Shark Tank IIT (BHU) from our Institute.

### Udyam '22



The 13th edition of Udyam, the annual technical festival of the Electronics Engineering Society (EES), IIT (BHU), was conducted from 11th to 13th April, 2022. The fest emerged successful in assessing and refining the technical skills of its participants

through various events related to fields like Digital and Analog Electronics, Machine Learning, the Internet of Things, Data Science, etc. As part of the fest, a 'Virtual Connect' series was hosted wherein students interacted with successful Electronics branch alumni and gained valuable insights from their experiences. Further, event sponsors took engaging webinars to familiarise participants with contemporary technologies. The event ended on a triumphant note with a valedictory ceremony in the presence of our esteemed guests, Mr. Subodh Gajare and Mr. Rahul Pandey of Cisco.

### Prastuti '22

The Electrical Engineering Department of IIT (BHU), Varanasi, following its glorious legacy, organized the 20th iteration of its annual fiesta from April 15th to April 17th, 2022, in the online mode. This



year, Prastuti emerged to be better than ever by putting forward a series of innovative competitions in Power Electronics, Digital Electronics, Cryptography, DSA, Software Development, Artificial Intelligence, and Machine Learning, thereby taking young minds through the technological renaissance. The event witnessed participation from more than 3000 students across the country, giving them the opportunity to win prizes worth up to Rs. 2.7 lakh, certificates, coupons, goodies, and even opened doors to internship opportunities. The electrifying fest consisted of six events, guest lectures from eminent personalities, and many workshops for students to take part in.

## Students' Updates

The **Student Counselling Services** hosted a panel discussion on the 'Dos and Don'ts of Campus Life' to address the students' concerns. They also shared an informative mail notifying the students about services provided by YourDost, an online counselling and emotional support platform. It is available to the students free of cost by the Institute. More than 2700 students have already connected with experts on the platform and found a way to unveil their better selves.



Under the **Science and Technology Council**, the Society of Automotive Engineers conducted a 3-round-long case study event regarding the innovative development of the transmission system of an automobile. The Astronomy Club's team 'Coalesce' bagged first position at the Astronomy case study event conducted under Astrax'22 by IIT Mandi. The Club of Programmers is proud to announce that once again this year the Institute has performed exceptionally well in various Open Source Programs. The Business Club celebrated the win of its members in Bizzaro – a Pan-IIT pitching event organized by SARC, IIT Bombay.

At the **Social Service Council**, a study was undertaken at Kashi Utkarsh to count the number of children not attending school in *bastis*, followed by their admission. In addition, children were taken to their respective exam centers for the Navodaya Entrance Exam. Offline meetings were held in schools by the Health and Hygiene Club. At the Social Projects' Club, projects including Gardeino, Terrific lights, Krishi, AgTech, and Eyegaze, were proposed to the DIC Committee and were subsequently shortlisted. These projects will be implemented soon. School visits to Sunderpur, Adityanagar and Tikari school were made by the Sahyog Club.



For the third consecutive time, ShARE IIT BHU has secured the first position in the Asian Case Study Challenge organized by ShARE. The team in the Technology Learning Unit

emerged victorious among top 15 teams from all Asian ShARE chapters. With this, the junior members completed the Second Module for their leadership program at ShARE.

## Student Achievements

Continuing with the open source legacy, the students of IIT (BHU) bagged numerous selections across various open-source programs.

GSoC selections

23

Open source internships

2

Selection in Outreachy

1

3

Summer of Bitcoin selections

1

Chosen as a Processing Fellow

## Alumni Updates

SAIC continued with its flagship Student Alumni Mentorship Programme. Panel discussions on Civil Services and Finance were held through which the alumni provide valuable career guidance to the students interested in pursuing the respective fields. Further, beginning with the second edition of the alumni-guided Mock Interviews Initiative, the cell has received 300+ registrations from student interviewees until now for the internship drive. The mock interviews provide the students with real-time experience of how their company interviews are going to be and help them better prepare for their dream roles at their dream companies. The Alumni Visiting Faculty program is being organized in the coming semester to provide industry exposure to the students who have opted for these courses offered by our esteemed alumni. More than 300 students have already registered for the four courses being offered.



## Alumni Achievements



Sh. Akhlesh Lakhtakia (ECE '79) has been named one of the 14 members of the 2022-23 Jefferson Science Fellows class by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, U.S. Department of State, and U.S. Agency for International Development. The fellows serve as tenured faculty at

higher education institutions and are tasked with a year-long assignment, using their expertise to contribute to foreign policy or international development. Sh. Lakhtakia will serve his fellowship in the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs at the Department of State, with a specific focus on India.

Sh. Ramakrishnan Gopalan (MIN '99) has been appointed as the Vice President and Head of Products & Solutions of Visa for India and South Asia. He will be leading the product team in developing strategy and long-term design for the growth of Visa's product propositions in the region, including India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives. Previously, he was the Director of Strategic Initiatives for Citi's Regional Cards and Loans team.



## UPSC Civil Services Examination, 2021

In a display of amazing qualities like tenacity, hardwork, and diligence, over five of IIT (BHU) alumni have gotten recommendations from the UPSC following their success in the UPSC Civil Services Examination, 2021. The recommended candidates are:

AIR	Name	Dept.
23	Ashish	MEC '17
25	Shruti Rajlakshmi	CSE '19
153	Divyansh Shukla	CIV '18
178	Smriti Bhardwaj	EEE '18
592	Gagan Singh Meena	CIV '18

\*The list might not be exhaustive. Please [email](#) us if you find a name missing.



# Shreenivas Gururao Deshpande: 74 years of excellence



Sh. Shreenivas Gururao Deshpande with his son Dr. Desh Deshpande and his daughter-in-law Mrs. Jaishree Deshpande

What started as a chance meeting with the principal of the erstwhile College of Technology at the Hubballi train station completely changed the trajectory of his life to become a narrative of perseverance, hard work, and success.

Born on 2nd March, 1925, in Sishuvihal near Hubballi in Karnataka, Shreenivas Gururao Deshpande is a man of

strength and determination. Having lost his parents early on in his childhood, he had faced hardships only a few of us can imagine, overcoming them with great gusto and emerging a better version of himself.

After completing his eighth grade in a one-room school in the village, he moved to Dharwad to continue his education. Twelve years of school education came to an end, and he finally got admission to Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in 1946. A twenty-one-year-old eager to pursue higher education, he sold his share of the inherited land to fund his education at BHU.

In 1948, as the entire country was celebrating one year of its independence from British rule, Deshpande was overjoyed also because of his graduation from the College of Technology in first class with a B.Sc. in Industrial Chemistry. His two years in Banaras were as eventful for him as they were for the country. With the joy of independence still fresh, the country was also reeling from the loss of two distinctive personalities: the death of the founder of the Institute Bharat Ratna Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya on 12th November, 1946, and the loss of Mahatma Gandhiji on 30th January, 1948. In the procession to immerse Gandhiji's ashes in Triveni Sangam, Shreenivas got a chance to see Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

He emerged a grown man after his two years at college. Packing up memories of his hostel days and the teachings from his professors in a bag, he returned to Karnataka and founded a company that manufactured and distributed malaria medication. Unfortunately, it had to be shut down within a year after a disagreement with the co-founder.

He then went to work for the Indian government in Mumbai, where he stayed until 1956. After the state reorganization, he moved back to Karnataka and continued to serve the Karnataka Government in the labor department. The next 24 years were spent working in the public sector, with eventual retirement as the Joint Labor Commissioner of Karnataka.

During this time, he was posted to Calcutta University in 1958, where he earned a social work certificate, and then to the United Kingdom in 1971 to study the workings of the Labor Department.

In 1980, he retired, marking the end of one chapter and the beginning of a much longer and more illustrious career that now spans 42 years. Settled in Hubballi, the place where it all started, he continues to work as a Social Entrepreneur. In 1983, he met Swami Chinmayananda, an educated journalist on his way to the Himalayas. Shreenivas spent 35 days with him in Siddhbari, taking notes of his discourses on the Bhagwat Gita. He then proceeded to serve the Chinmaya Mission in Hubballi for 25 years in various capacities.

He was the President of the Chinmaya Mission and played an instrumental role in the revitalization of his hamlet as a Board Member. For 15 years, he has also served as Chairman of the Sharieff Trust. His works and service have been the inspiration for the Deshpande Foundation's work in Hubballi.

*"BHU has come a long way since I left in 1948. It is now very advanced in technology and is having a profound impact on our country. I hope, true to the vision of our founder Pandit Malaviya, this institute will continue to train students who will move our country forward in the 21st century."*

After 74 years of his graduation, Mr. Deshpande still remembers and cherishes the days he had spent here. Seeing his love and devotion towards his alma mater, his son, Dr. Desh Deshpande, and his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Jaishree Deshpande, have made a generous donation of US \$1 million to the Institute. This gift was given with the hope that the present and future students would be able to soar to great heights in their life while also making a positive contribution to society. In recognition of this noble contribution, the Institute will be naming the library as the "Shreenivas Deshpande Library" in his honor.

[Read more about his life and journey here](#)



SAIC is grateful to the Director, Dean (Resource & Alumni), Alumni Associations, and the entire IIT (BHU) fraternity for their constant support and blessings. We look forward to your valuable feedback. To share information for future editions, reach us at [alumnice11@iitbhu.ac.in](mailto:alumnice11@iitbhu.ac.in).

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