

THE HIGHLIGHTS

While the detailed report on the working of the Institute during 2008 is given in the following pages, some highlights of the same are given below.

1. Dr. K.K. Birla, Former Chancellor and Founding member of the Institute died on 30th August 2008 at Kolkata after a brief illness. The General Body and the Board of Governors mourned the sad demise of Dr. K.K. Birla, in its special meeting held on 14th September 2008.
2. The General Body unanimously elected Dr. Kumar Mangalam Birla as the Chancellor and Smt. Shobana Bhartia as the Pro Chancellor of BITS, Pilani in its meeting held on 14 September 2008.
3. BITS Pilani-Hyderabad Campus, the fourth campus of BITS, Pilani started functioning from August 2008.
4. NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) has reaccredited BITS, Pilani with the grade A with a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 3.71 on a 4 point scale. This is a combined grading for the three campuses of BITS, Pilani at Pilani, Dubai and Goa.
5. The University Grants Commission expert team headed by Prof. A.M. Pathan, Vice Chancellor, Maulana Azad National Urdu University, visited the Institute during 28 – 30 September 2008 to assess the performance during the X plan period and need for XI plan period and appreciated the work done by various groups.
6. Major research grants worth Rs 17.20 Crores for the research projects submitted by faculty members, were sanctioned by UGC, World Bank, DST, CSIR, ICAR, ICMR, DBT, DRDO, DIT, ICSSR, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers and Ministry of Water Resources.
7. BITSAT 2008 was conducted from 9 May to 13 June, 2008 in 19 centres across the country and received a staggering 1,17,089 applications with 83,930 candidates appearing for the test.
8. 157 companies visited Pilani and Goa campuses for recruiting students. 2040 job offers were received by graduating students of these campuses.
9. First batch of 389 students graduated from Goa Campus.
10. 78 new PS stations including 4 overseas stations in Finland, Singapore, UK and USA were added during 2008. There has been a considerable improvement in the facilities being extended to students by PS II stations. (*Details are available in Annexure '15' to '19'.*)
11. A team of BITS, Pilani students showcased the first humanoid, Acyut, at the Robo Games 2008 organized in the USA during 13 - 15 June 2008.
12. The number of students registered in the Off-campus programmes of the Institute reached 15265. *Details are available in Annexure '1'.*
13. Higher Degree Programmes were started in Goa campus with the introduction of two programmes, namely, ME (Design Engineering) and ME (Biotechnology).

14. Two new Work-Integrated Learning programmes, namely MS (Educational System Management) and Diploma in Office Management were started during the year.
15. A number of infrastructure development activities are being carried out. The on-going construction projects include the construction of women's hostel, a boys' hostel, research buildings, and warehouse for BITS Cooperative Store etc. Two new modern laboratories for students interested in Robotics and Embedded Systems have been commissioned at the Goa Campus. (*Details are given on pages 115 to 128.*)
16. Project Embryo entering in its third year of operation organized 24 lectures across many disciplines from varied time zones. Alumni from different parts of the world delivered lectures to the students on a variety of topics.
17. Centre for Entrepreneurial Leadership entered its fifth year. It conducted an E-Week to celebrate the spirit of entrepreneurship through various events and also 'Conquest', the annual international business plan competition which witnessed business plans presented by 30 teams shortlisted from 200 entries. (*Details are available on page 109.*)
18. Several International and National conferences, workshops and Training Programmes were organized by various disciplines across the campuses. To mention a few—*International Conferences* on Interface of Chemistry-Biology in Biomedical Research, Soft Skills Development Strategies: Corporate and Academia Perspectives, Water Resources Development and Management, Indo-Russian conference on Topical Problems in Solid Mechanics, Environmental Research and Development and *National Seminars* on Dynamics of Transformative Cooperation in Business and Society: A Millennium Challenge, Photonic Polymers: Materials, Devices and Applications. (*Details are available on pages 23 – 29.*)
19. Several distinguished personalities visited the campuses of BITS, Pilani. (*Details are available on Page 174.*)
20. Piyush Suraj Raathor, First year Mechanical Engineering student at BITS, Pilani received the prestigious Aditya Birla scholarship for the year 2008. (*Details are available on page 173.*)
21. 70 new courses were introduced in the on-campus programmes and 16 were introduced in the off campus programmes. (*Details are available in Annexure '9'.*)
22. Lectures by many visiting scholars on varied topics were arranged during the year. (*Details are available in Annexure '10'.*)
23. Computer literacy and cataloguing of books and journals training program for rural based girls and women was conducted by the Centre for Women Studies. (*Details are available on page 35.*)
24. There were several continuing co-curricular and extra-curricular activities of the students. (*Details are available on pages 129 - 150.*)
25. Sustaining its collaborative efforts BITS signed 14 MoUs with Institutions in India and abroad during the year 2008. (*Details are on pages 85 – 86.*)