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SAMPADA

Your window to UVCE





EDITORIAL

2022 is here! Happy New Year to all our beloved readers a.k.a namma UVCE Alumni. Team Sampada wishes this year brings prosperity and good healthy to you and your loved ones.

Phew! As I pen this down, I see the calendar and almost half the month of this new year has gone by, surely time is flying! Well, back to business. As we wish each other happy wishes for this new year, there is more good news on the table for our UVCEian family.

For those of you wondering what it maybe, here it is: UVCE Act 2021 which grants autonomy to namma UVCE has been passed in the Karnataka Assembly! The Karnataka Government has promised to provide additional funds for the upgrading the institution as well. Well isn't that some great news to begin the year with. Request for grant of autonomy to UVCE is something that our alumni have been advocating for since past couple of years and our avid readers will surely recollect easily all the articles we have had out about the same in Sampada regarding the same.

As we head towards this news with happiness, there are definitely a lot of thoughts and question come to our minds regarding how will it be implemented and what role will we play in it. UVCEGA is definitely working towards creating a steady platform for the alumni to join hands to work towards giving back and contributing in the welfare of the college. Some alumni have expressed how we should extend our support to the college as supplementary stakeholders and not lead in the direct process as that would be the responsibility of internal stakeholders (college authorities, faculty and others) who hold the absolute responsibility of brining about the changes in the institution. Our team definitely agrees with thought as we must extend our support while the college authorities must be the lead on decision making process.

Unfortunately one caveat to this supposed situation is the current state of namma UVCE as of 2021 where we have the college administration failing in providing the basic facilities to students. For instance, the current batch of students are in a fix as their marks cards have not arrived for few semesters now and have been way overdue. This kind of incompetent action on part of the college administration/university affects the students in many ways including placements in companies or higher education opportunities where these documents play a pivotal role. With these kind of scenarios being present, it becomes critical on our part of alumni to not let any gaps in the college administration affect in the autonomy opportunity and hence work towards becoming a catalyst to start the process and bring momentum to the whole system.

Today, UVCE is not just plagued by the above marks card issue but many other issues. To cite another example apart from the marks card issue above is : the Mechanical Block Labs which is in shambles even after 3 years of renovation in progress with students having difficulties in gaining practical experience (more details inside the edition). All these are issues that not just affecting the students but also the feedback on UVCE leading to plummeting CET Ranks as more and more students choose to step away from choosing UVCE as their option. Yes, the institution which was once a top option for students for engineering and had huge competition to get in is now moving down and further down in their preference list. As concerning as this is, we as alumni must stride forward, join hands to extend our support and restore the institutions' reputation.

As steps towards this mission, UVCEGA has been trying to work at the root level to help our students more and more in whatever ways possible. With initiatives like MARVEL (technical lab for student learning and innovation), Best Class Competition (competition to build a unity amongst students in their classes and yearn to be more active in college outside academics), UVCE Mathukathe (sessions where alumni and students share their thoughts and discuss on their concerns) have been held online albeit the restrictions due to the pandemic. We request our alumni to participate more with UVCEGA to build more such initiatives and grow them in order to be build a stronger UVCE.

UVCE BILL-2021 PASSED IN KARNATAKA ASSEMBLY

We are elated to announce that the UVCE Act-2021 was passed in the Karnataka Assembly which grants autonomy to our alma-mater and will help to achieve the glory it deserves.

Being the First Engineering College of Karnataka, UVCE deserved this opportunity to shine and grow on par with the institutions at national and international level. We thank the Karnataka Govt, Basavaraj Bommai, Hon'ble Chief Minister; Dr C N Ashwathnarayan, Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education; concerned officials and the Special Committee Members for taking it up and making it a reality. You can read the newspaper article (<u>Deccan Herald URL</u>). Also, here is the video from Karnataka Assembly as it happened (click on the image below):



Dr Ashwathnarayan LinkedIn Post

https://www.linkedin.com/embed/feed/update/ urn:li:share:6879066824537989120



You can read more information and highlights of the Act in the next pages, based on the Meeting we had few days back. On behalf of UVCE Graduates Association, we would like to mention that this is the right time for the alumni to come together and give back to our alma-mater. From UVCEGA, we are planning to create a platform for everyone interested to join hands. We invite you to share thoughts, ideas and how you will be interested to help. We are intending to have 2 fold action plan – Short Term (within next 6 months) and Long Term (for next 4-5 Years) and we need your expertise and inputs. When more alumni join hands, the momentum of making the college a worldclass institution will take further strength. You can write to us at info@uvcega.org

Meanwhile, we would like to draw your attention towards one more video - Sharath Bacchegowda, MLA in the assembly talking about UVCE and the Act. He raises couple of concerns - which were also discussed in our meeting - About 25% being reserved for IIT-JEE admissions; Age limit of Director being 70. We would like to thank the MLA for voicing his opinions and highlighting about UVCE. Please click on the image to watch the video.



UVCEGA MEETING - CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

UVCE Graduates Association held an online meeting along with few of the alumni on 8th January, Saturday to discuss about the UVCE Autonomous status and the next action plans we should focus on. During the meet, various points were bought under consideration. The meeting began with the Association wholeheartedly thanking the members who were in the UVCE Autonomous ACT for taking the right step in making UVCE an autonomous institute.

Below are the few points those were shared during the meeting:

1. Highlights of the UVCE Act was shared along with the Key Recommendations in the Report submitted by the Committee

2. Few concerns and Mechanical Block issues were mentioned and it was urged to get at-most attention to fix the issues in Mechanical department.

3. Current Stats (Intake, CET cut off, Fees and Expenses) were calculated to estimate the financial requirement of the institution if acted as an independent body.

You can check the presentation in this 20-min video which is the same as mentioned <u>here</u>.



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Below are the selected points mentioned by participants:

* Maj Gen Neelakantappa sir mentioned that the concerns regarding Director's age are not something to worry about, but to get more information about the purpose of them.

* Suresh sir from 73 batch mentioned that Mechanical Block woes need to be addressed by the Principal/VC and the Mechanical Dept faculty alone could not be held responsible.

* Govind Lakshman sir raised the concern about the funding for the new building if the Govt has stated that the money has to be raised internally and now Bangalore University can wash off its hands too since UVCE is becoming autonomous

* Prakash Belawadi sir mentioned that we need to act immediately and focus on the fund raising activity along with other plans on war footing.

* Dr Anandram sir mentioned that we may need to take some more time to build the trust and confidence amongst the alumni about donating funds.

* Dr Prahlada Ramarao sir mentioned that we need to have more alumni joining hands on these initiatives and get the groundwork done now

* Surya Raghu sir mentioned concerns about the Branding and Positioning of UVCE; Organizational promise and the vision of the institution after which more alumni could come forward

* Maj Gen Neelakantappa sir mentioned that we will make sure that two eminent alumni will be part of the BoG (irrespective of which Association they belong to). He agreed to SuryaRaghu sir's points and said the current status is a sad state of affairs but we hope that the Autonomous status will bring in accountability and transparency in the administration.

* Dr Prahlada sir suggested to have a co-ordinating committee in addition to the 3 Verticals (Research & Innovation; Industry Collaboration; Fundraising & Branding). We need to work on getting some brochure to support everyone who is interested to spread the word. Prakash sir offered to create a small video as well for the purpose.

* Venkatesh Adiga sir mentioned about the branch-wise representation/ plans with a wellplanned vision/mission and track the progress

* Ramdas sir added that the Outcome of the Mission has to be clearly defined and that time is of the essence now

* Govind Lakshman sir mentioned that he is committed to discussing on the Mechanical block and try to get resources pooled in for this cause.

* Ramdas sir mentioned that he shares the concern that when someone like Govind Lakshman has been following up from past 3 years and willing to fund, it is surprising why the authorities are not joining hands.

* Prof R Natarajan has mailed one important point that Alumni are supplementary stakeholders and cannot assume control. It is the internal stake-holders (College authorities, BoG, faculty etc), who have the direct responsibility for bringing about changes in the University.

Post discussions with its members and on their advice, UVCEGA has discovered the dire need of more alumni actively participating to be the volunteer in driving the campaign of making UVCE an Autonomous institute and have chalked out the following plans.

- 1. Association will be creating 3 Committees which will have minimum of 5-6 alumni members apart from the Co-Ordination committee.
- 2. This Committee will need to submit an Action Plan with at least 5 Short Term and 5 Long Term Suggestions for UVCEGA and alumni.
- 3. The timeline will be from Jan 25th till March 5th for submitting the Action Plan to the Co-Ordination Committee.
- 4. In addition to this, we will also revive the Branch-wise Subcommittees, which were created earlier so that some activities can be continued specific to branch.

You can read some more information in the blog and also fill the Form, if you are interested to share the ideas/suggestions - <u>https://uvcega.news.blog/2022/01/16/uvce-act-2021-highlights-uvcega-next-steps/</u>

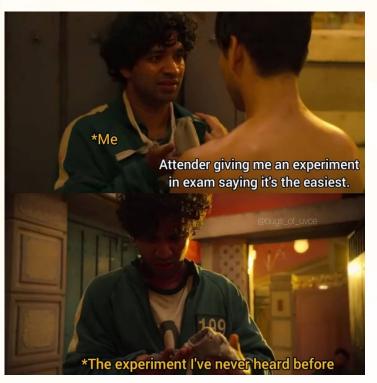
If you are not a member of UVCE Graduates Association yet, we request you to register now and be part of the proud UVCE alumni community! Also, please spread the word among your other UVCE friends and batchmates. You can share the video so that they get the overview of the UVCE Act-2021. We are always reachable via info@uvcega.org

- Secretary, UVCEGA

BUGS OF UVCE

Me and my Bois deciding which Java coaching institute to join after 7th semester





MARVEL - JOURNEY CONTINUES

We really have come a long way. From setting up basic furniture to internet facilities in the lab, to a month into full operation, a lot has happened.

Students have been making the best out of all facilities and have been making stupendous progress as far as completion of tasks go. Once a task is completed, students update their progress on the google drive. This enables MARVEL coordinators as well as students to keep an accurate track of what is being done in the lab. It also functions as an error-record, allowing us to document errors, bugs and other mistakes made along our learning journey.

Yogesh, a co-ordinator at MARVEL, conducted a workshop with a presentation for students on 'How to Write a Technical Report' that also explained the Do's and Don'ts of the same. Technical report writing is an invaluable and immensely useful skill for engineering students, not just in the MARVEL lab, but also in their academic and professional journeys.

Hands-on soldering and the basics of electronic prototyping (using breadboards, perfboards, proper component selection etc.) which is a necessary skill for students from the Designing and prototyping and Internet of Things



Domains was also covered on the same day. We thank our committed coordinators for their dedication! No simulation can beat hands-on work. The joy of seeing something you made work provides the additional drive required to continue and improve. Thus, it was deemed necessary to instill skills which would enable students to rapidly prototype and validate their circuits. MARVEL will continue holding workshops to continuously up-skill ourselves.



Thanks to efforts from a student from MARVEL, Abhishek Y, we now have a new and sleek website which will gradually help future aspirants to easily access data like syllabus, eligibility, etc. The most important feature of this website is the capability to submit project reports via their user profile. Coordinators can then check the reports and suggest any changes if necessary. This makes the entire process very streamlined and efficient. The syllabus has seen some redesign and reorganization. This was done against the backdrop of

constructive feedback provided by students and coordinators of MARVEL. Due to the ongoing COVID pandemic, MARVEL had shut offline sessions for a week. The health and safety of our

students is of prime importance. However, work continued online. After all, if the past couple of years has taught us anything, it's that work waits for none!

MARVEL is growing fast, and with your help it can reach greater heights. If you see promise in our academic adventures and wish to make any contributions, it would be very appreciated!



Until next time, it's Farewell!

MEMOIR OF RODDAM SIR

Some memories are hard to be erased out of mind. They stay with a strong grit, facing against the tide of time and remind us what it meant to have lived a moment that's now a memory. For me, one such moment was meeting Prof. Roddam Narasimha sir in person, having a variety of conversations in a short span and most importantly seeing a small spark of vision of what I want to pursue in the upcoming days. I've already shared this experience in one of the past edition of Sampada but even when I write this now, I feel a sense of reliving that day; the first day of UVCE Payana.

The first striking aspect of his personality was his simplicity and humility. During our journey from his residence to the venue of UVCE Payana, he spoke to me with such a grace that the cab driver might have mistaken us for old acquaintance.

Few months ago when I was scrolling through Twitter feed, I stumbled upon this wonderful and warm letter he had written to then assistant provost of Caltech, Mrs Lea U Sterrett about their safe journey back to India. This letter is short, crisp yet humble and full of gratitude. The moment I finished reading this, I was very sure that this has to be a part of Sampada, and here it is! We would like to thank Duvvuri Subrahmanyam sir for happily sharing the original photocopy of this letter.

Department of Aeronautical Engineering INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, BANGALORE 560 012 Telephone: 3 44 11 Ext. 417 Telegrams: AERONAUTICS 'SCIENCE', BANGALORE MALLESWARAM Prof. Roddam Narasimha AE: RN: A6a: 60.2 17 June 1983 Mrs Lea C Sterrett Assistant Provost Office of the Provost, Parsons-Gates 205-31 Dalifornia Institute of Technology Pasadena, California 91125 USA Dear Lea. We are back in Bangalore, recovering from jet lag, and fighting the monsoons (which we almost seem to have brought with us). Neelima and I want to thank you for making our stay in Pasadena so pleasant, and in particular for helping with our children's school admissions. The eight months I spent at Caltech this time were so thoroughly enjoyable, professionally and socially, that I shall always recall them with the greatest pleasure. Will you please convey to the Fairchild foundation my gratitude for making the visit possible, and my admiration for the excellent programme they support? With warm greetings, Sincerely yours, Koddam Naravin (RODDAM NARASIMHA) RECEIVED JUN 28 1983 OFFICE OF THE

(Duvvuri Subrahmanyam is the assistant professor of Aerospace Engineering, IISc. The image used here was taken from the tweet - @mangaloreman)

- Niranjana Hegde B S, Batch of 2021 ISE

For viewing the original tweet , <u>click here</u>

MECHANICAL BLOCK WOES

The Mechanical Block of UVCE at K R circle continues to be a big concern. The Workshops/Labs were demolished almost 3 years back and students continue to struggle for practical experience. From UVCE Graduates Association, we have been raising this concern for a long time now with various authorities. The same is highlighted in the article that was printed in Vijayavani newspaper on 26th December.

Further to this, there has been a letter from the Govt approving the project (Mechanical Building) worth of 85 Crores, but the catch is:

- Money will need to be internally funded by the • University (and not by the State Govt). This is in lines with the request from the Bangalore University letter which was sent on 3rd November, 2020.
- In the Budget of 2021-22 of Bangalore University, a total of 29 Crores will need to be set aside to call for tender and start the work.

The major question is where will the University mobilize the resources from as promised? UVCE has always been neglected in the Bangalore University's budget. The million dollar question remains - What is the action plan for Mech Block?

IEEE UVCE IN SPOTLIGHT

We have great news! As we had published in our previous edition, it is a huge pride for namma UVCE as our very own faculty member Dr P Deepa Shenoy Ma'am is all set to lead the IEEE Bangalore Section as the Chair for 2022. Congratulations Ma'am!

Also, adding to the glory of namma UVCE is IEEE UVCE winning the Outstanding Large Student Branch Award and a special recognition with a Token of Appreciation for the support provided at the IEEE Bangalore Section Level. Making us UVCEians more proud, Congratulations Team IEEE UVCE!



ವಿಜಯವಾಣೆ 💴



ಕಲ್ಪುಟಾಗಳಲ್ ಎಲ್ಲಯದಿಂಗಿದು ಮೆಣಗಳಾಗಿದ್ದು, ದ್ವಾಕಗನ ಕೆಲವೊಂದು ಕ್ಯೂಡಗಳು ವಿದ್ದು ಹೋಗುತೆ, ದ್ವಾಕಗನ ಕೆಲವೊಂದು ಕ್ಯೂಡಗಳು ವಿದ್ದು ಹೋಗುತೆ, ಕ್ಯೂಡಗಳನ್ನು ತೆರವುಗೊಳಿಸಿ ಪೂಡಿಯವಿಗುತ್ತಿ, ಮಹುತ್ತಿಬ್ಬ ಮಡಳಗುಗಿತೆ, ನದರಿ ಜಗನಲ್ಲಿ ಹೊಕಾರಿಗಳು ಹಂಡಿರಿಯವಿರಿಗ ವಿಷಾಗದ ವಿ.ಟಿಕ್ ಹಾಗೂ ಎಂ.ಟಿಕೆ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳ ಅಧ್ಯಯನಕ್ಕೆ ತೆರಗತಿ ಕೊಡಿಸಿ, ಪ್ರಿಯೋಗಾರುವ, ವೇಕಗಳಾಗ, ನವಿಕಿಸ ವಾಹ ಹಾಗೂ ಡಿತರ ಮೂಲಗಳಿಯಾಗಳನ್ನು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಬೇಕಿದೆ. ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳು ಹುಷ್ಟು ಪ್ರದೇಶದಿಂಗಗಳನ್ನು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಬೇಕಿದೆ. ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಹಲೇಕಪ್ ಡತರ ವಿಷ್ಣಾಗಗಳು ಅಧ್ರಹ ಪರಿಕೆ ಎಂಜಿನಿಯವಿರುಗ ಕಾಲೇಜಗಳ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಾಲಯವನ್ನು ಆವರಂಭಿಗಳನಾಗಿದೆ.





UVCE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION UPDATES

UVCE Alumni Association is the parent body which can work as a platform for all UVCEians to network and work towards making UVCE a better place. Most of the senior alumni prior to 1990s would have been the members of the UVCE Alumni Association. But, there are serious issues going on w.r.t UVCEAA which we have highlighted multiple times in Sampada (including elections not being conducted in transparent manner from past 15-20 years, a small group occupying it and intimidating others, no information to members, no activities barring 1-2 which are limited to certain group). For those of our readers, who are not familiar, here is a quick glance of the timeline from 2017 :

- <u>http://www.visionuvce.in/uvce-alumni-association-timeline/</u> (Until Mar 24th, 2018)
- <u>http://www.visionuvce.in/update-uvce-alumni-association-elections/</u> (Previous Elections)
- <u>http://www.visionuvce.in/latest-news-on-alumni-association-elections-sgm/</u> (2018 AGM)
- <u>http://www.visionuvce.in/uvce-alumni-association-update-2020</u> (Until 2020)

Summary of it is that there has been multiple concerns raised by the alumni with the Office Bearers themselves in the initial days. Later, Dy Registrar of Societies and Principal Secretary of Co-Operative Societies were approached with valid documents and a Govt Order was passed for the appointment of the Administrator to set things right. The Office Bearers approached the Court for stay on this order in Aug 2019. (Read in detail in above links)

As you all are aware, in this pandemic scenario, the Courts stopped functioning since March 2020 and the case was left cold. One of the alumni had approached multiple times to make him petitioner to the case, which was also pending for almost 20 months.

Cut to December 2021, we suddenly heard chatter about Elections being conducted in UVCEAA and only few alumni received the email just 2 days prior about Election Notification. Couple of alumni even visited the Alumni Association building to check if any notification was put up physically (though there was a small-ad in one of the newspapers). The website - www.aauvce.org is down from a long time.

Further, one day prior the same small list of alumni receive one more mailer saying the Elections are cancelled due to being elected unopposed with wrong dates. Here is the screenshot of the mailer. Few of the alumni responded too but they could not be present personally for the AGM since it was a weekday 28th December, 2021.

Those who visited the Association for AGM had a shocking update that they have been disqualified because they are also members of UVCE Graduates Association. Our members list is open for scrutiny since its available for everyone online. They had taken printout and claimed that a resolution was passed for the same.

What followed was something we all need to feel ashamed of. Home guards were called as the alumni

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somehow managed to get in and the Office Bearers illegally occupied their chairs on the dais. Further chaos continued since there were some students present too, just to display the strength. When the students were asked why they were here, they had no clue. A big clash happened and the police had to intervene asking both groups to settle it in a legal manner. We are very sad to share this and we felt the same disgust that you are feeling now.

Further, couple of senior alumni have again approached the Dy Registrar and Principal Secretary to know why, how and when the Order by the Govt to appoint the Administrator was nullified and also appraise them of the facts.

73 BATCH SCHOLARSHIPS

We are glad to inform our readers that alumni from 1973 Mechanical Batch have disbursed the Scholarships for this year. This Academic Year 2021-22, 9 Mech students have been awarded Scholarships from this group. In total, from the past 20+ years, this group has awarded Scholarships to around 39 students (repetitive in successive years until they graduate based on performance) worth of Rs. 6,22,500/-

From UVCE Graduates Association, we congratulate the efforts of this enthusiastic group and hope more such alumni come forward in similar way.



OBITUARY

We profound grief we inform you all that Dr Krishnamurthy who was a Retired Professor at Civil Department of UVCE passed away on 5th January, 2022. He was also the Head for academic and research activities of RASTA. His specializations were Highway Geometrics, Drainage, Pavement Elevation, Construction.



We pray that his soul rests in peace and that his family finds the strength to bear this loss.

UVCEIAN IN SPOTLIGHT

Nasir Ahmed was, until very recently, an unknown engineer from Bangalore and the man behind the discovery that allowed modern society to send image and video transmissions over the Internet. Since 1975, his creation has been key for the world to evolve, but it was only recently widely recognized in 2020, thanks to the show "This is Us /Episode: In the Room" which highlighted the positive impact that Nasir's Algorithm had on every family during the COVID19 lockdown. Nasir Ahmed's Algorithm is being used by billions of cameras everyday, but this is the first time Nasir and Queli, his wife and biggest supporter, get to tell their story to a camera in their own words. The footage from "This is Us" is courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox,

All rights reserved.



The Algorithm That Transform The World. The Story Of Nasir Ahmed.

Team Sampada came across this video about Nasir Ahmed Sir and waned to share it our readers. Nasir Sir is from the Batch of 1961 EEE. We are so proud to find our UVCEians in spotlight with their continued achievements. We are trying to reach out to him and connect.

MARKS CARD VOWS: THE WHYS AND THE HOWS

Marks Card, the proof that we have written exams each semester. Which is why we have been asking for it since our first year. Over the past one month, we have had enough of a roller coaster ride with this.

We were promised to get it in the second half of December. And then it got postponed by a week. And then another week.

The CRs were called for a meeting on a Sunday without prior information. We were asked to submit the students' passport size photos to a specific person, which goes on to show that the college does not keep these records handy.

After this meeting, we were promised that we would get the marks cards within a week. 3 days later, we were asked for the photos again. Despite having submitted it just a couple of days ago, as per the Principal's instructions.

The next day, this person to whom we submitted the photos contacted students directly and asked us to go to BU and verify the marks card. This was around when the covid cases were increasing. We found someone who was available and ready to go to BU. But when he went, he was questioned by BU as to why he was there.

After some convincing, he was shown the marks card. There were a few misprints, which they said they would fix and show in 30 minutes. Fast forward 30 minutes, they said "the systems are not working, come back tomorrow." Coincidentally, the next day was a govt holiday.

After all this, students from CSE and ISE were called to collect their marks cards. It turned out that the marks cards could only be collected by the department people. So they had to go and get the marks card on a Govt holiday. Students who went to collect the marks card were treated with resentment by the department for having made them work on a holiday. Also the passport size photos that we were asked to upload and reupload? They were not printed on the marks cards.

It looks like the marks card vows of CSE and ISE branches have been answered for now, while the other branches continue to struggle. We are all just ghosts passing through this great institution, and it only gets more daunting as we think about how long it will take to get our hands on our degree certificates.

We from Sampada Editorial Team can vouch for the genuinity of this article. In fact, from UVCE Graduates Association, we have raised the Marks Card issue multiple times. Our President Maj Gen Neelakantappa sir spoke to the college authorities about this concern around 6-8 months back. In all our interactions with the students—say be it UVCE Maathukathe, Scholarships Announcements, Best Class discussions etc - we have been hounded by questions about the marks cards. This is the harsh reality which we are unable to answer.

We would like the readers to be in the students shoes and think about their worries and frustrations. You want to apply for Higher Studies? Need marks card. You want to attend a job interview off campus? Need marks card. You want to validate your scores while applying for a Scholarship? Need marks card. Imagine for not able to get your marks card for three and half years and you are on the verge of graduation, but still running around for marks card, which is actually the duty/responsibility of the College/University. The College collects around 2,000/- as Examination fees every semester. Someone needs to be accountable for this and should be questioned by the University/College authorities.

We boast to be the First Engineering College, we always talk about the legacy of the college. But, if we don't treat the students in a proper manner, why will they have an emotional connect with the college? We are having lots of troubles convincing the recent batch students to join the UVCE Graduates Association as members. This will also dent the college reputation and the repercussions are visible in the CET Rankings year on year. Sad state of affairs..

UVCEIAN IN SPOTLIGHT

The Bangalore Press and its iconic calendar

It's the fourth day of the new year, which means that in hundreds of thousands of Bengaluru homes, the annual ritual of hanging up a fresh red and black calendar from The Bangalore Press has been completed to everyone's satisfaction. What many of the calendar's loyalists perhaps do not realize is that this tradition is over a century old – the first calendar was published in 1921!

The story of how The Bangalore Press came to be is probably apocryphal but very plausible. In the year 1912, a dozen years after Maharaja Krishnarajendra Wadiyar IV was married to Pratapa Kumari Ammanni, he happened to mention to his newly-appointed Dewan, Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya (Sir MV), how expensive the wedding invitations had been to print, joking that he could have used the money to set up a printing press instead. That was it. Sir MV decided that princely Mysore would have its own printing press, and got to work on turning the idea into reality.



The British government, as expected, was less than enthusiastic. Concerned that it would be used to print anti-colonial propaganda, they refused to support the idea financially. The state itself could not afford it. Not to be daunted, Sir MV set up a public limited company – The Bangalore Printing and Publishing Company – with 18 eminent personalities, including the philanthropist-administrator Sir KP Puttanna Chetty and the polymath-polyglot scholar C Hayavadana Rao, and established The Bangalore Press on the premises of the State Bank of Mysore on Kempegowda Road, in 1916 (which makes it one of India's oldest existing companies).

With such stalwarts as its founding fathers, the Press was bound to go places. The first calendar, published in 1921, was a runaway success, in part due to its clean design, but mostly because it was the first complete 'Indian' calendar in English. In consultation with Hindu and Muslim astrologers, Archbishops, and Jain religious leaders, the calendar listed auspicious times and important festivals and other dates for all religions, apart from lunar and solar months, full moon and new moon nights, sunrise and moonrise times, and more. All this, in addition to general holidays, bank holidays, restricted holidays, and more!

The calendar's designer, Bengaluru Puttaiah, was quite a legend himself. In 1912, Puttaiah was sent off to London for a course in printing technology by his employers, the British -run Government Press (the building in which this press was housed was set up in 1871 – over 130 years later, the heritage structure was knocked down to make way for the Vikasa Soudha). In 1915, the Bengaluru boy did his city proud by topping the list of candidates taking the Typography exam for the UK and the colonies. Naturally, Sir MV co-opted him for the calendar design project.

Puttaiah's design looked very much like the current one, except that the floral border was green instead of red (the red was adopted in 1960). But the unique thing about it was that it was a 'vertical' calendar – weeks are arranged vertically, instead of the more common horizontal convention.

The first Kannada calendar was published in 1936 – it was Jnanpith awardee Masti Venkatesh Iyengar, then a senior copywriter at the Press, who pushed for it, offering the Press the rights to all his future works in return – a great bargain for the latter, as it turned out!

Today, The Bangalore Press prints over 1.8 million calendars each year, and is valued at a staggering 200 crore rupees. To its fans in India and across the world – nostalgic NRIs who visit over Christmas pick up a calendar or ten – it continues to be a priceless, beloved link to their past.

(Roopa Pai is a writer who has carried on a long-time love affair with her hometown Bangalore).

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She is UVCE alumnus from 1992 batch and we wanted to highlight some historical facts about Bengaluru in Sampada apart from UVCE stories alone.