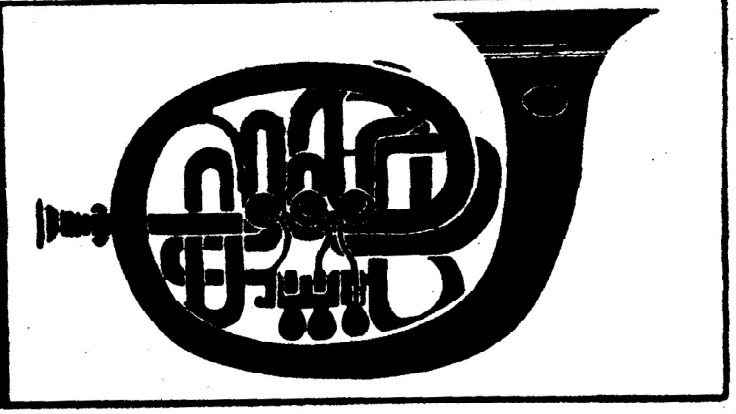


the  
Wheshite  
Rat



IIT KANPUR AUGUST 15, 1976

A GOOD CAT DESERVES A GOOD RAT

After a three month long cat-nap, the cat returns with its claws sharpened. When news reached us that there was existing amidst us, a species hardly going extinct, we gathered our best field team and sent them out to their natural habitat to observe and study their ways and habits. The team soon reached Hall IV. Resisting the lucrative offers the National Geographic made for the resulting work, we here in this issue, bring to public light this wondrous creature God no doubt made in his most humorous moment - The 'Phud'.

## Daddy, when I grow up, I'm gonna be a phud.

*Oh, to be phud in IIT/K  
Doing research on Gamma rays  
Life is a ball, a slice of the sun,  
Its one big round of fun, fun and more  
fun.*

*Of Tennis ball cricket  
A connoisseur you soon become,  
Though you still find time to let  
Your guide beat you at carrom.*

*You're not always,  
At the Hall IV canteen.  
At the Red Ross too,  
You have been seen.*

*Politics you indulge in  
And ideologies you debate  
Your life style is 'Idle Rich'  
But socialism you advocate.*



*A Post Graduate Course is what  
They call your stay at IIT/K  
But you and Mr. Nair know,  
(Line expunged).*

*They say you have  
A thesis to write  
But you are not worrying, are you?  
(Line expunged)*

*Unkind People sometimes say  
Your scholarships are ,undeserved.  
But you know they're just jealous,  
Of your swinging world.*

*No wonder then.  
You love it here.  
You're reluctant to leave,  
Though its yoursevenlil year.*

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## DISCOVERY

If you think one can't be a dry cleaner by profession and an ascetic by vocation, you have not met the Grand Old Man of campus drycleaning – Mr. R. K. Bhatia, Meeting him is an experience because there aren't many who can explain the



commission system among retail cloth merchants in Kanpur, then go on to elucidate why belief in Kama does not imply fatalism and finally recount with delightful simplicity how he lost his two front teeth facing up to a bouncer in a cricket match in Lahore, way back in 1935.

He graduated from. the Hindu *Sabha* College, Amritsar in 1937 with Art as his Major, then married and settled down in Lahore as a handloom merchant. A popular businessman, he was soon elected Gen. Sec. of the local chapter of the Handloom Cloth Association.

The partition, which came upon unwitting, peaceful people like the proverbial thief at night, turned his world upside down. Sheltered by Muslim friends in Lahore, he reached Amritsar and there, in turn sheltered Muslims. He was stupefied to see respectable, even religious people, caught in that maelstrom of passion, killing, maiming and raping. Dumbfounded by this miasma of blood and destruction, he waged a one man campaign to restore sanity. Frustrated, he turned to philosophy and religion for comfort and read voraciously. The Vedas, the Koran, the Bible and the verses of Kabir and Guru Nanak he studied and found solace in. Soon he was initiated into the holy order of Baba Sawan Singh Ji. In 1955 he came to Kanpur and started a wholesale cloth shop.

But he had irrevocably changed and his mind was no longer that of a businessman. He lent money freely and offered credit to the needy, even though they were bad business risks. His savings decreased and he had to sell his shop. But he was not unduly worried because money didn't mean much to him now. All he wanted was a job which brought in enough to satisfy his family's simple needs. At the instance of a friend, he decided to try drycleaning at IIT/K. And that's how on a bleak winter's day in 1964 he entered Hall I for the first time with no little trepidation; for 60 is not a very young age to start a new, uncertain venture. The first day just one student gave him a pair of trousers. Mr. Bhatia kept at it and today, 12 years later, he takes back at least 70 garments daily. He is content with his work and although he is not rolling in money, he gets enough and enough is all he wants.

Mr. Bhatia is totally unpretentious. His conversation is laced with quotations from the scriptures and Urdu couplets, yet he is no pedant. He's a delightful conversationalist. We just mentioned meditation and soon he was telling us how an hour's meditation every morning goes a long way. He even sat down cross legged on the bed and demonstrated a few *asanas* and recited a few mantras. The talk turned to languages (He knows English, Urdu and French) and he was off at a tangent, speaking about the remarkable similarity between the sentence structure of French and Hindi.

We could have listened to him for hours, for it is rare to find a scholar who is not didactic; but we had to stop at lunch. He left for his lunch, which he told us was very simple and consisted of little more than a tall glass of buttermilk.

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## HOW TO GET REGISTERED

The road to an Engineering degree is as slippery as the proverbial banana skin. And especially in the wet weather - when you have to register - the chances of your remaining upright reduces to nil.

A shrill, terrified sound escapes you as that bum of a compounder pokes in the needle at an angle, straightens out and tilts it again. (It's either a yelp or a faint - otherwise he won't take the bally thing out) Actually, he is a professional tattooist - only trying to leave a permanent mark for luck. This done, he leaves you to face the wild world of accounts dues et. al. Not much on this earth can beat our moneymen. By the time you ascertain the right dues and muster enough cash, they disappear. And return only to muddle you up with age-old messbills, egg-refunds and the like. Bullheadedness? Red Tape? No. It's only their love for the comic.

Next you locate an F in your grade card. (I was much luckier than my roommate. He was not given his grade card because he had not registered. And he could not get registered because he did not have his grade card!) This F is staggering. You become thoughtful "What's the CPI?" demands the advisor. '5.2 sir, and this is my first F'. He looks at you with disapproval. 'You will drop the course.'

'And increase my backlogs to two, sir?' 'Take an elective' and he jots something on your card. (Actually 'jots' is not the right word, for the Prof. is a laborious penman who mutters energetically while he writes) You go around and after finding the time tables for sixteen frightful courses (including Nuclear Ceramics and Psychology through X-rays) manage to fit in one. You now have to register for the elective. For this you see the Instructor who says that you have filled in seven cards only instead of the usual thirteen. And anyway you look weak and he doesn't think: you will survive his tough standards.

Your condition now is like a plucked chicken but you don't give up. 'Courage' ;you tell yourself, Surely registration can't be this bad'. You get back to the department. After much industry, you manage to clasp your 5 subjects. 'Sir', you tell the Prof. 'If I do my elective next sem. and take a higher HSS now on a PCO, while doing my Dept.. courses everyday except Tuesdays 3.30 to 4.30, I can save myself. 'The Prof. nods and asks you to see the Head. Head wants everyone to take electives. So there you are, back to where you started 100 words ago.

Why, oh, why the hell did I get that F? You clench your teeth and try to pull out your ears. But relax, it's not so easy as that. the next two hours are spent in a delirium. You scramble here and there for advice. In the heat of debate somebody offers you 'Courses of Study 76-77.' You nearly throw the goddamn thing at him. Then comes a break It seems you can drop your HSS and pick it up again as an elective. You beam with joy and rush to the HSS fellas. 'Sorry, mister,' they say 'this course is already full'.

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*A gay, young phud named Tiwari  
Flunked the verbal in the GRE  
Said he with despair  
'Dar's some mistake, I swear  
Phor I had byhearted de dictionary'.*

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## **MAIL**

Every place has these chronic letter writers who take it upon themselves to drive nuts every editor of any rag. Ours is no exception. Deciding to victimize the editor (we have never had one; so, we forced the weakest guy among us to answer this gibberish) some of you have sent out your epistles, some viz. the bottle, others stuck to improvised poison arrows.

**'Doggie' Mehta**  
Hall V, IIT Kanpur

*Dear Editor,*

***What this campus needs is more such serious articles and messages like your paper. Hurrah for you!! I deemed it best to go to you for some personal advice. I grow my hair over my ears in the new style and my friends say it makes me look like a dog. I am sending my photograph to you. Please tell me if my friends are right.***

**Editor:** Dear Mehta, you have sent your dog's photo by mistake. Please send us your photo.

**Manvindu Kaul**  
GH, IIT Kanpur

*Dear Editor,*

***When I read your mag, I imagine a strong, big, handsome man editing it. Won't you send me an autographed photograph of yourself?***

**Editor:** Dearest, darlingest Mannu, love, my sweetheart, my girl-in-my-dreams, my princess, my jasmine, my lover-girl. Send Rs. 5/- in postal stamps.

**P. H. D. Rao**  
Hall IV, IIT Kanpur

*Dear Editor,*

***We all laughed heartily at your joke on the last page of your March issue. But one of my friends does not find anything funny in it. Will you please explain the joke to him?***

**Editor:** What joke?

**Sunil Srivastav**  
Hall I, IIT Kanpur

*Dear Editor,*

*It was very decent of you not to mention my name when you wrote about me in your 'Bit tids' about the pseudo conversation you overheard. Thank you.*

Editor: Don't worry, Sunil. Your name will stay a secret.

**T. Gupta**  
Hall IV, IIT Kanpur

*Dear Editor,*

*My thesis is not being published, nothing is being published. At least. Please publish my letter to you?*

**Editor:** Instead, why don't you send your thesis to some humour magazine?

**PUBLISHED BY A FEW GUYS**

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