



A monthly e-newsletter brought to you by Merit Swiss Asian School of Hotel Management, Ooty.



A gamut of events at MERIT!

SPECTRUM



"There are three things that can never be retrieved - the spoken word, time past and the neglected opportunity."
Mr. Pumpko

OCTOBER 2010

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Dear Readers,

Greetings from MERIT!!

"Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy."

Well, we did get quite busy this September, and we're proud to share all the happenings with you in this month's issue of SPECTRUM.

The month started off with a warm welcome extended to our dear Freshers. Meritors, true to their reputation, put up a brilliant show on Freshers' Day. Music, dance, culinary arts, carving skills...- all this and more were on display for the new-comers. You'll find snapshots of the memorable event inside.

The Gateway Hotel, Coonoor invited our students to participate in a 3-day Out Door Catering activity in September, and six of our students took part in the event. We congratulate them on a job well done!

The middle of the month heralded a visit by our Swiss Program affiliates, who gave us a briefing of the Swiss Continuation program at BHMS, Switzerland, and also enlightened the students about higher education options abroad.

Meritors joined hands in solidarity to celebrate the holy festivals of Eid and Ganesh Chaturthi in quite a grand manner.

The end of the month saw the departure of our 2nd year undergraduate students to their respective hotels for 6 months of rigorous Industrial Exposure Training. We wish them all the very best!!

And if all this weren't enough, we also had the proverbial icing on the cake - the Annual Sports Meet 2010 held in the last week of September. Sporting talent was brought on centre-stage! Over a period of 3 days, our students participated in numerous track and field events. We discovered many budding sportspersons in basketball, cricket, volleyball and table tennis.

It was spirited, it was invigorating, it was competitive, and above all else, it was fun!!
(We'll have photographs for you in our next issue).

I'm sure you'll agree with me when I say that it has been a 'happening' month. We invite you to sit back, unwind and review all the happenings at leisure. So will we!

Happy reading!!

Anju Mahbubani (B.Com, MBA)

Faculty Advisor-SPECTRUM

Thought for the month- DREAM BIG!!

"All men dream, but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity; but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dream with open eyes to make it possible." - T. E. Lawrence.

Begin now to do something that has long been a dream, something that makes you approach each new day as a journey to accomplish what you want and desire.

Articulate your dream

Take fear out of the equation

Get your timing right

Listen to your intuition

Believe that your dream will come true

Don't be afraid to DREAM BIG

Work hard and stay focused

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again





A sneak-peek into the mind of a Freshman

"Paranoia is a state of mind till confronted."

Almost a month has passed since we freshmen entered the institution that would be our home for the next three years. We came as scared individuals, oblivious to what Fate had in store for us within these walls. Little did we know that She would help us forge friendships that we hope will survive a life time.

On the first night I spent at MERIT, I was absolutely terrified. My roommates were scheduled to arrive the following morning, which meant I had one night all to myself, in a totally new atmosphere! I must have called home about twenty times that night. The next morning, there was a knock at the door- my roommates had arrived. So many questions, nay doubts, raced through my mind. What if we didn't get along? What if they hated me? What if they thought I was weird? The same fears that had haunted me the entire week prior to joining College. The three of us didn't talk much while they unpacked and got last minute instructions from their parents, the same drill I went through the day before.

That night, after our Fresher's Day program, we actually sat down and had a long conversation, the conversation that helped us 'connect', that helped us bond. All the doubts I had that morning were cleared in a matter of two hours.

Our orientation introduced our mentors who would be our Faculty for the duration of our Course. They emitted auras of hope and trust - hope for a better future and trust that we can confide almost anything in them.

Our classrooms proved to be the place where we all would bond into one family, a family equipped with its own quirky personalities. The first few days were quiet as everyone evaluated and tried to interpret each other's body language. Eventually, the silence was broken and the guys and girls opened up to one and other. Most of us now consider our batch mates as siblings or close friends. As each day passes, we become even more close-knit than before. I hope that this will continue even after our life at MERIT comes to an end.

Rochelle Sarah Otter, I B.Sc-HM & CS

Art-Smart

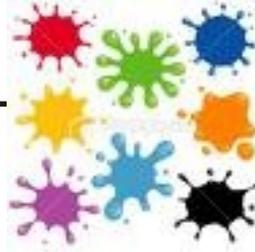
Surya Prakash
I MBA-HM & CS





A gamut of events at MERITI

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Freshers' Day Colourscape

MERIT20 Memoirs



Right: Merit 20 ship sets sail under the able hands of Mr. Rajmohan-Sr. Faculty(Bakery & Patisserie).

Bottom : Colourful stage decor and artwork done by Ms. Kavita, Faculty and her team.



Top: Intricate fruit, vegetable and ice carving displays, created by Mr. Nandakumar- Visiting Faculty, and his team.



Top: Dr. N Gopalakrishnan being honoured with a Lifetime Award by the Faculty at MERIT, for 13 long years of dedicated service to the Institution



Top: Rotaract Club of MERIT being inaugurated by Mr. M. Anandraj, our Head-Academics and delegates of Rotary Club West, Ooty.



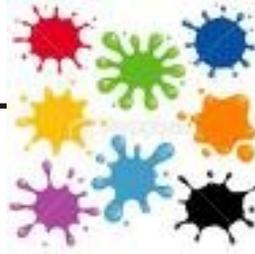
Top and left: Foot -stomping entertainment provided by Meritors. The audience enjoyed the traditional Welcome dance. Bollywood and Kollywood were reincarnated by our dancers!





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Freshers' Day Colourscape

MERIT20 Memoirs



Left: Freshman Anchit Khanna winner of the Treasure Hunt!! The game was organised for the freshers to make them familiar with the Campus, their seniors and the Faculty at MERIT.



Top: Introducing MERIT's very own band - PURE MAGIC!!! Comprising 7 talented students of MERIT, the band kept the audience enthralled with melodious numbers such as *Blue Suede Shoes*, *O' Carol* and *Stand By Me*. The audience loved their catchy renditions-*Labamba* & *Speedy Gonsalves*. Well done, PURE MAGIC!!



Bottom: Mr. Otter, father of freshman Ms. Rochelle Sarah Otter won the 'Guess the weight of the cake' game. His prize-a delicious 2.38 kg rich chocolate cake for the entire family!



Top: MERIT students prepared and served the guests a sumptuous, finger-licking meal along with dessert. All this under the able guidance of senior faculty members - Mr. Nishar Ahmed, Mr. Steve Dadles Santy and Mr. Karthick Santosh.



A gamut of events at MERITI

SPECTRUM

PAGE 5, OCTOBER 2010

Caravan Tourism - Incredible India's latest discovery

Ms. Sowmiya. J, Faculty
B.Sc (Mathematics), MBA

Welcome to the world of 'gypsy caravaners' - a new breed of niche tourists who prefer the comfort of caravans or mini-homes on wheels while on holidays.

The tribe is increasing its footfall in India with caravan tourism slowly becoming a viable option. The concept of Caravan tourism has gained immense popularity across the globe owing to the freedom and flexibility it provides while holidaying, vis-à-vis itineraries and accommodation.

Caravans promote family-oriented tours even to destinations which do not have adequate hotel accommodation. The specially built vehicles being used for the purpose of travel, leisure and accommodation would be termed as 'Caravan'.

Caravan tourism, a new concept in India, is to be launched in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh in the first phase. Under the Caravan or a 'home on wheel' packages, tourists are provided air-conditioned vehicles with all modern facilities such as Wi-Fi connectivity, mini bar, TV besides bed and toilets.



Pic : A Caravan Park

Caravan tour packages save tourists from booking hotel rooms, air or rail tickets and other such hassles while visiting many places in one go. A 'Caravan Park' is a facility to park at least five vehicles at appropriate sites. These parks would be equipped with modern amenities such as water and power connection, sewage disposal system, dormitory for drivers, special corner for children, medical facilities and a proper mode of evacuation in case of any emergency as part of the disaster management system.

Besides Madhya Pradesh, some of the routes envisaged for the Caravan tourism in the initial phase are Delhi-Jaipur- Agra, Delhi-Jaipur-Ajmer-Pushkar, Delhi-Sariska-Ranthambor besides Western Ghats and tourist circuits in Himachal. Like taxi drivers, the Caravan operators would have to register their vehicles as commercial vehicles.

Fast moving family luxury caravans are fitted with a mini kitchen, washroom, bar cabinets, refrigerator, laser television, two spacious recliners, couches, integrated audio system and multi-flow air-conditioning. 'Conference on Wheel' caravans are designed like a boardroom that can host corporate meetings on the move. Currently, travel transporters in Delhi are plying 700 multi-seater utility caravans called 'Travelizzm' that will be used for the *Commonwealth Games* in October 2010. The vehicles are priced between Rs.17 lakh and Rs.27 lakh. Caravans could be rented for Rs.2, 000 to Rs.5, 000 per day.

Considering the diverse tourism products and the multitude of landscapes in India, caravans and Caravan Parks have the potential to add an exciting new facet to tourism in Incredible India and would attract a wide range of market segments including young people, families, senior citizens and international tourists.

Pic : Caravans- designs galore!





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SPECTRUM

News @ MERIT

BHMS delegates visit MERIT for Swiss Program Orientation



Mr. Aslam Shaikh, Regional Director of BHMS addressing students of MERIT

Business and Hotel Management School (BHMS, Lucerne, Switzerland) affiliates of Merit's Swiss Continuation Program, visited the campus on Wednesday, 22nd September 2010 to conduct an Orientation Program for II & III yr B.SC-HM & CS as well as MBA-HM & CS students.

Mr. Aslam Shaikh, Regional Director of BHMS, Ms Nelam Lokhande, PRO, BHMS Regional Office and Ms. Monica Mamdani, PRO, BHMS Regional Office conducted a one-day seminar for the students

The objective of the Seminar was to brief the confirmed students about life, culture and education in Switzerland. They also introduced students to various Study & Work options in U.K and Singapore. The Seminar was very informative and will help students decide whether they wish to pursue a career in India or go abroad to seek greener pastures.

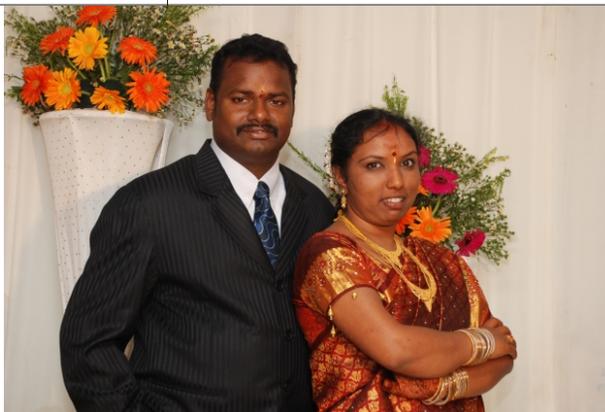
Ganesh Chaturthi celebrated at MERIT

Students at MERIT celebrated a special festival in September, *Ganesh Chaturthi*. The Ganesh idol was installed at *Wellington Hall* on campus, on 11th September and puja s were performed with devotion twice a day for 07 days. The immersion of the idol on the seventh day was also ceremonious. Students cooked and served a special lunch for everyone on campus a day before the immersion.

Hearty Wedding Congratulations to the newly married couples!!

Pic (Right):
Mr D Rajmohan & Ms Sharmila. J
Faculty at MERIT

Pic (extreme right) :
Lt Arun Ramnath and Ms Jyothi
Son and daughter-in-law of
Mr. C R Sankaran, Faculty at MERIT



MERIT students participate in ODC at The Gateway Hotel, Coonoor

The Gateway Hotel, Coonoor, Nilgiris hosted the UPASI Conference from 12th to 14th September 2010 and 06 students of MERIT participated in the ODC (Out Door Catering) Activity.

The Hotel was very thankful of the efforts put in by the students and placed on record it's appreciation for their cooperation by honouring the students with a Certificate each. The students who went for the ODC include Karumbaiah, Manpreet Singh Agroia, Neeraj Kumar, Rahul Jayaram, Satish Rajak and Siddarth Sherwyn Godinho.

Congratulations to all of you on a job well done!!

Dr N.G addresses Officers' wives at DSSC



In August this year, Dr N. Gopalakrishnan, Senior Faculty at MERIT, was invited by the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), Wellington to address the wives of their incoming Student Officers.

The Induction Training to Officers' Wives takes place in July/ August every year and Dr N G has been a Guest of Honour for the Training sessions for fourteen times to date!

Dr. engages his audience in interesting interaction on self-developmental topics such as 'Adding value to your life', 'Men vs. Women', 'Roses in December' etc.,



The clash of the Titans at MERIT!

Sahil Arya
II B.Sc-HM & CS

MERIT has put together another 'first' for its students official sports teams!! **Knights, Gladiators and Musketeers** are the names for the teams as suggested by our senior faculty Dr. N.Gopalakrishnan. I take this opportunity to elucidate to our readers why we chose these timeless warriors as bastions for our illustrious sports teams. So let's travel back in time to understand the glorious history of the legendary heroes.



A **gladiator** was an armed combatant who entertained audiences in the Roman Empire in violent confrontations with other gladiators, wild animals, and condemned criminals. Some gladiators were volunteers who risked their lives by appearing in the arena. Most were despised as slaves, schooled under harsh conditions, socially marginalized, and segregated even in death. Irrespective of their origin, gladiators offered audiences an example of Rome's martial ethics and in fighting or dying well, they inspired admiration and popular acclaim.

However, like many sporting events in ancient history, Roman gladiatorial combat originated as a religious event. The first Roman gladiatorial games were held in 246 BC by Marcus and Decimus Brutus in honor of their father as a funeral gift for the dead. It was a relatively small affair that included the combat of three pairs of slaves in a cattle market. From their humble religious origins, gladiatorial games gradually evolved into defining symbols of Roman culture.

Eventually, gladiatorial games reached spectacular heights in the number of combatants and their monumental venues. The famous Julius Caesar pitted 320 pairs of gladiators against one another in a wooden amphitheatre constructed specifically for the event. At this point, gladiatorial games expanded beyond religious events, taking on grave connotations in Rome.



"In ancient and medieval history, a noble who did military service as a mounted warrior." A **knight** was a member of the warrior class of the Middle Ages in Europe who followed a code of law called 'chivalry'. The modern concept of a knight is that of an elite warrior sworn to uphold the values of faith, loyalty, courage, and honour.

In Athens and Rome the knight was a noble in military service that carried his own mount and equipment. The knights ranked below the senatorial class but above ordinary citizens. By the dawn of the 10th century, the institution of Knighthood was well established and Knighthood was conferred upon the brave, fearless or meritorious by the King/ Head of State.



A **musketeer** is essentially an infantry soldier who is equipped with a musket (a muzzle-loaded, long gun fired from the shoulder). They originated as bodyguards to famous kings in the 15th and 16th centuries, and were a special group of men that no ordinary soldier could match in firing, swordplay, or battle.

In 1622 A.D these men were re-armed with the more advanced flintlock musket and came to be known as the King's Musketeers. They were daredevils and extraordinarily gifted soldiers.

Musketeers carried a reputation for boisterousness and fighting spirit, always excelling at their task as fighters. Their high *esprit de corps* and can-do attitude gained them royal favour and they became a popular element in every battlefield.

Well now, aren't we reminded of the Three Musketeers - Athos, Porthos and Aramis? **The Three Musketeers** is a novel by Alexandre Dumas, first published in 1844. Set in the 17th century, it recounts the adventures of a young man named d'Artagnan after he leaves home to become a guard of the Musketeers. D'Artagnan is not one of the musketeers of the title; those are his friends Athos, Porthos and Aramis, inseparable friends who live by the motto "all for one, one for all".

I'm sure the MERIT warriors will show great vigor, courage, and aggressiveness in the upcoming 3-day sports extravaganza, and bring glory to their name-sakes in history!

**History does repeat itself,
The battle field is open,
Let the best team win!!**



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Women in the Hospitality Industry

Prerna Ghadge
III B.Sc-HM & CS

A stand-up comedian once said that the basic difference between men and women is their attitude towards shelter. "Men," she said, "are essentially bears with furniture." She added that women exhibit more exacting standards. Men thought nothing was really going to change with the hotel rooms. Basically, that's what women's choices were, too, until more women started traveling on business and talking to one another, and realizing that they could be heard. They could get salads on the menu. They could walk into a room that looks more like their bedroom at home than a flat bed with flat pillows and ugly furniture.

Women view work as another household chore in the Hospitality industry; like a housekeeper would clean a bedside table the minute she finds it dirty because she doesn't like dirt even at her own house. I'd like to recount a few real life examples from the hotel industry in India.

Ms. Jyoti Narang

Chief Operating Officer - Luxury Division, *Taj Hotels Resorts & Palaces*



Ms. Jyoti Narang began her career with the Taj group in 1982 and has since handled a variety of portfolios across the chain, from sales and marketing to operations. She is currently the Chief Operating Officer of the Luxury Division of Taj Hotels Resorts & Palaces and is in charge of the overall performance and expansion of the division.

She served as the Chief Operating Officer of Taj Business Hotels for India and abroad in 2003. She then moved on to manage the operations of Taj Leisure Hotels in 2006.

As the Chief Operating officer of this division, she was instrumental in pioneering the launch of *Taj Safaris* a unique concept which offers adventure enthusiasts a distinctive, interpretive wildlife experience. In 2008, Ms. Narang was appointed as the Chief Operating Officer of *The Gateway Hotels*, the new upscale brand of the Taj.

Ms. Jyotsna Suri

Chairperson & Managing Director, *The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group*



Highly respected and widely regarded for her astute leadership by her peers and the corporate community alike, Mrs Jyotsna Suri took on the mantle of Chairperson & Managing Director of Bharat Hotels Ltd in 2006 - prior to which she was the Joint Managing Director of the company. She has carved a unique niche for herself, ben applauded not only for her skilful leadership of the company but also for her commitment towards enhancing and promoting the Indian tourism product and championing the cause of the Industry, both within the country as well as overseas.

On November 19, 2008 she charted a path-breaking and highly successful brand change for the company. The erstwhile Bharat Hotels Ltd was rebranded as The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group, with all its luxury hotels being operated under 'THE LALIT' banner. This move was a tribute to the company's Founder Chairman Mr. Lalit Suri.

I am reminded of a Spanish proverb, "To tell a woman everything she *may not do*, is to tell her what she *can do*."

Ms. Jyoti Narang and Ms. Jyotsna Suri have put this proverb into practice.

Wildlife Wonders!



Greg Goveas
II B.Sc-HM & CS