

Manifesto



Priyank Jaini

Contesting for the post of

President, Students' Gymkhana, 2013-14

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Introduction & Vision

I am Priyank Jaini (10538) and I am contesting for the post of President, Students' Gymkhana (2013-14).

IIT Kanpur is one of the premier institutes of education in Science and Technology of our country: We have among the best faculty, very competent students and world class facilities. Yet, for the past few years, we seem to be lagging behind in various avenues. It is my hope that we can reclaim the glory we once had and reach new heights of greatness.

It is my belief that the Students' Gymkhana is a major component of what makes us unique. It has been a point of pride for us.. It serves two purposes: to foster the potential and extracurricular talent of the students, and to serve as a forum for us to air our views and grievances. If elected, my mission and vision shall be to fulfil these purposes to the best of my ability.

Credentials & Experience

In my time on campus, I have held the following positions of responsibility:

1. Senator, UG '10 (2011-12)
2. Assistant Coordinator, Counselling Service (2012-13)
3. Coordinator, Literary Society, Cultural Council (2012-13)
4. Member, Finance Committee, Students' Gymkhana (2011-12)
5. Member of various Students' Senate subcommittees, notably the Committee to formulate student requirements in an automated Academic Portal and Alumni Relations Cell .
6. Junior Editor, Vox Populi, Films and Media Council (2011-12)
7. Student Guide, Counselling Service (2011-12)
8. Secretary, English Literary Events, Antaragni'11

Barring these posts, I have also been an active debater (Our team won the Debate competition in Galaxy'11), I have actively participated in Hall activities, and I have been involved in the English Literary Society and the Business Club since my first year.

The positions of Senator, UG Y10 and Assistant Coordinator, Counselling Service have been enriching positions for me, and have given me a lot of insight into the problems faced by the general Student body. They have given me perspective on the responsibilities of the Students' representatives to the student junta and helped me learn how to give voice to student opinion in various forums of the Institute. The



experience and understanding gained from these positions will hold me in good stead to work in the capacity of the President, Students' Gymkhana.

Mission

If elected, I shall try to achieve the following during my tenure, and shall base my work along these lines:

Transparency

Transparency has been a major issue in the working of the Students' Gymkhana in the past few years. Several students are unaware about the various happenings in the campus, and so I will take steps to ensure a dissemination of knowledge. For this, I will:

- Hold "**President Hour**" once a week, wherein any student with any grievance or difficulty whatsoever can approach me so that I can address them.
- Send a monthly or fortnightly "**Gymkhana Newsletter**" in an electronic format to make the junta aware about developments. This will also help reduce email spam by Executives.
- Any decision or view forwarded by me to the administration shall be done in consultation with the Senate.

Stipends and Grants

I intend to raise the following issues relating to stipends/grants:

Until recently, **Travel Grants** for students to academic conferences were up to Rs. 50,000 per trip, for maximum two trips. However, recently it has since been reduced to a number that might not prove to be sufficient. Also, now the grant is only for one trip, since most students did not take more than one trip. This amount, however, is still insufficient for foreign trips which often cost more than Rs. 1 Lakh. I shall try to get the grant revised again to keep up with costs.

The **Contingency Grant** was provided (by the MHRD) in the past to M.Tech., M.Des. and PhD students who get financial assistantship by the Institute for buying books, subscription of journals and other academic resources. Until 2010, IIT Kanpur only provided one-fifth of the stated amount. In 2010, the grant was dissolved by the MHRD. Despite this, other IITs have continued to provide this grant to students; IIT Kanpur however has discontinued it. I will get to the root of the issue and try to get the grant reinstated.

Degree extended students do not get a stipend while M. Tech and Dual Degree students get a lower stipend than that which is released by the MHRD for disbursement. I will find out more details so that a solution to these problems may be obtained. Also, I would try to ensure that the degree extended students get accommodation in the



hostel in which they are residing. If this is not possible, I would look for alternate ways such that they can get comfortable accommodation.

Implementation of the ARC for UGs

The recommendations of the Academic Review Committee for the undergraduate academic programmes have been, in principle approved. Despite this, the actual implementation of these recommendations, not least of which include Minors, Double Majors, and new Dual Degrees are either completely unworkable, or completely unclear. I believe that the situation will only worsen and degrade to the point where it may even become impossible for some things to be implemented for the Y11 batch, despite the promises made by the Institute during counselling and orientation. I feel that this issue needs to be addressed with great certainty and great speed, and I will push to my utmost by talking to various departments and getting their views and taking the concerns to the administration to get the changes implemented.

Transport

To improve the situation of transport on campus, I propose:

- An internal eco-friendly bus system (modelled on those at IIT-B and IIT-M)
- Increased rickshaws for Halls 7, 8, 9 and 10 by creating a small rickshaw stand, perhaps with increased rates to account for fewer travellers.
- A “Dial-a-rick” service to help people transport themselves off campus.

Extension of the Golden Jubilee Project

In the past year, tremendous work has been done by the Golden Jubilee team for the celebrations of this landmark. However, a great deal of infrastructure building work is still left undone, and a lot of money that had been allocated may end up going unused. I will try to extend the period of the Golden Jubilee project by another year so that it can be utilized properly.

PG-UG Interaction

The lack of PG-UG Interaction has been a problem since time immemorial. This is very unfortunate as undergraduate students can learn a lot from their postgraduate counterparts in terms of experience, research, job opportunities, while PGs could then get better involved in what are normally just UG activities. For this I propose the following:

- PG Mentors to UG Students. This can be started department wise for students interested in higher studies or research during a semester.



- Inter-department PG-UG Competitions, which can be done in collaboration with the various department student associations.

I would try to have at least one PG Mentor in the Presidential Council, who shall help raise PG concerns and publicise Gymkhana activities in PG students.

Students' Placement Office

Students' Placement Office has been worked really hard and successfully in placement scenario. However, a lot of work and improvement can still be achieved. With the cooperation of the Students' Placement Office, I would propose the following :

- Ensure placements start on the same day across all IITs. As per the recommendations of IIT council, perhaps, a couple of IITs broke this rule which affected us. I will ensure IITK behaves competitively in the next placement season
- Branding of IITK amongst top companies by sending newsletters about the cutting edge work and activities happening at IIT Kanpur
- Explore the possibility of using Noida campus for a few companies
- Try to schedule the end-semester exams in such a way that they end by 26th-27th November for final year students so that they have enough time to prepare for placements.
- Try to have tie-ups with all companies which come for placements to also offer internship programs to IITK students
- I will try to implement the Deferred placement program which was passed by the Senate

Amenities and Services

I shall propose the following:

- Continuous follow-up on the progress of construction of Hall 12.
- Internal websites to be available via LAN for first years to do coursework.
- Construction of new guest rooms in halls with fewer ones.
- Faster work on mini-libraries in different hostels.
- Proper sanitation of the area in front of Hall 3. Recently, steps have been taken in this regard. I will pursue the steps taken and see that they are implemented effectively at the earliest.
- Food outlet spot checks and quality maintenance.



Empowerment of Women on Campus

Awareness workshops and lectures aimed at sensitizing people and empowering women through motivational speakers shall be carried out, and I shall contact NGOs to help in these endeavours. I would also strive to make the Women Cell more visible by having its own website and putting its link on the IIT-Kanpur page.

Medical Facilities

A committee was constituted which had suggested certain recommendations on medical facilities available in the institute. I would try to ensure that the recommendations are properly implemented. I shall try to implement the following:

- I shall continuously work at improving the Health Centre by making the Administration to hold more frequent HCUC meetings to discuss issues.
- I will try to open clinics modelled on that in Hall 10 at 2-3 key locations, including one Girls' hostel.
- I shall push for better availability of medicines in the HC dispensary.
- I shall try for tie-ups with medicine shops at the Gate and at Shop C so that the hassle of reimbursement is removed. A similar tie-up with hospitals will be looked for.

Students' Gymkhana Corpus

A large amount of unspent money has accumulated over many, many years, which is lying stagnant or forgotten. I will try to push and continuously oversee the set-up of a Gymkhana Corpus which will be used for student benefit such as scholarships, Gymkhana activities and to decrease the dependency of the Gymkhana on Institute grants.

Welfare of Workers

The number of deaths caused due to accidents at workplaces has been on the rise. I shall try to push for measures to overcome the deficiency causing such accidents.

Furthermore, other workers in the institute also face a number of problems. There are a number of active groups in the campus working for the workers' welfare and with their help I would try to sensitise the people about their issues.



Presidential Council

Vivekanand Samiti: This club actually does a very good job and their activities are such that all of us can benefit from them. Unfortunately, there is a pre-conceived notion that the Samiti is just religious or spiritual in some way. Thus, I will try and rebrand Vivekanand Samiti so all can benefit from it. Also, I would try to increase the publicity of the activities pursued so that their actual work is known and hence the participation increases.

Book Club: For the book club I will try to get the proposed automation process up and running as soon as possible. Door-to-door delivery system (perhaps with some extra charge) can be looked at as well.

GLDC: Though it is a lecture and discussion group, the discussion part is barely active. In consultation with the new coordinators, I'll try and promote some discussion groups on campus to fuel an intellectual and lively atmosphere on campus. I would encourage the establishment of a variety of discussion groups.

GE-3: I will push forward the proposal to increase the weightage of Green Opus in the General Championship. I will also try to introduce some interactive activities for the junta to involve more people.

Prayas: Prayas is something that has made us all proud with the amount of work and with the selfless spirit in which it is done. I will ensure all the support that they need be provided to them. Also, I will look to have tie-ups with NGO's if possible to bring in more professional outlook to the group.

