

IIT Kanpur - Lucknow visit 2015

[Anil K Rajvanshi](#)

anilrajvanshi@gmail.com

1. I was invited by Dean of Resources and Alumni (DORA), Dr. Prabhat Munshi in June 2015 to [give a lecture to students at IITK](#) as a part of Project Saraswati. Prabhat relinquished his deanship in August and Dr. Phani the new Dean renewed the offer.
2. Consequently on 26th September 2015 my lecture was organized by DORA in lecture hall L16 at 5 p.m.
3. A Mechanical Engineering Ph.D. student Anand Dwivedi undertook the task of organizing it and providing all the necessary logistics for my attendance.



4. Anand was inspired by what we have done at NARI and so he and his team did extensive publicity for my lecture. This included [huge posters](#) put out in all halls and prominently displayed on the road in front of Hall I facing the entrance of Faculty building and email to the IITK community telling them about our work.

5. I reached IITK guest house on 25th September evening and met my dear friend Dr. P. Balaram (former Director of IISC, Bangalore) in the lobby. He said that he was expecting me since my posters are plastered all over the campus ! I thought he was pulling my leg but during my early morning walk on the campus I saw these posters.

6. The IITK campus at September end looked very green and quite beautiful. Though there have been scanty rains in Kanpur during this monsoon, yet the campus gave a pleasant look with lawns watered and neatly mowed.
7. I saw lots of students on the fields, playing or jogging and there seemed to be quite a lot of sports activity. Probably it was not the exam season and hence students felt free to indulge in these activities.
8. There have been good number of buildings and special research centers constructed since my last visit almost 4 years ago. IIT Kanpur now resembles a U.S. university except for the presence of a University tower with the bells!
9. I also saw the transformation of dining rooms in different halls. They are all spruced up and provide very tasty food. Some of the worst food that I ever ate was during my [IITK student days](#). With the dining facilities and excellent infrastructure I feel like becoming a student again!
10. Being a campus with almost 1200 acres area there are still a large number of open spaces between the buildings and since most buildings are few stories each, it gives a good ambience to the campus.
11. Because of good publicity the lecture was well attended. According to the organizers about 250 + students and faculty attended the talk. The talk lasted for nearly 2 hours with lively question/answer session. [A nice blog on the talk was written by some students.](#)



12. The students wanted the discussions to continue and hence after dinner they took me to Hall II (my former residence Hall) and we continued the discussion till 11 p.m.
13. I was impressed with the desire of the students to be involved in social entrepreneurship and was also thrilled to know that quite a few start-ups by undergraduate students have been started while they are still students. So a lot of students are bitten by a bug of entrepreneurship.
14. There was quite a good interest among the students to be involved in agriculture. This is something that I have been propagating for many years now and so it was heartening to see their desire to do something about it. I advised them to start kitchen gardens in the hostels so that almost all aspects of agriculture can be learnt.
15. I also got a feeling that students want to do something meaningful in their lives instead of only looking for high paying jobs. Hence I had a pleasant one hour talk with the Student Gymkhana President and others who came to my room and wanted my advice on their social entrepreneurship work that he and others want to do after their graduation.
16. Quite a number of students expressed their desire to do internship with NARI. Some of them would like to help us in designing systems while being at IITK while others would like to come to NARI for 2-3 months.
17. I see a general shift in the thinking of these smart kids who want to contribute to the betterment of rural areas. This is also the feeling I had gotten when I was the chief guest at [IIT Bombay MEGRES](#) in March 2015. This augurs well for the country and I do hope that this thinking multiplies and spreads to other engineering colleges also.
18. Since I came to IIT Kanpur some of my friends from Lucknow invited me to give a talk at Lucknow Management Association. I gave a talk entitled [“Be Sustainable; be happy”](#) which was well received.

19. I also considered my journey to IITK fruitful since on my return flight from Lucknow to Delhi I was fortunate to see the huge Himalayan mountain range. Generally after rains when the skies are clear one can see these ranges. Nevertheless quite a number of peaks were bare and the snow on them seemed less. The deficient monsoon may have something to do with it.

Photos



N. Vyas, ME professor and Chairman Technology Mission, Ministry of Railways presenting the memento to AKR



Hostel II lawns



Signs of time. A small mandir in the lawns of one of the halls.



Hall I dining area



Hall II courtyard



Poster in front of Hall I



IITK nursery

October 2015