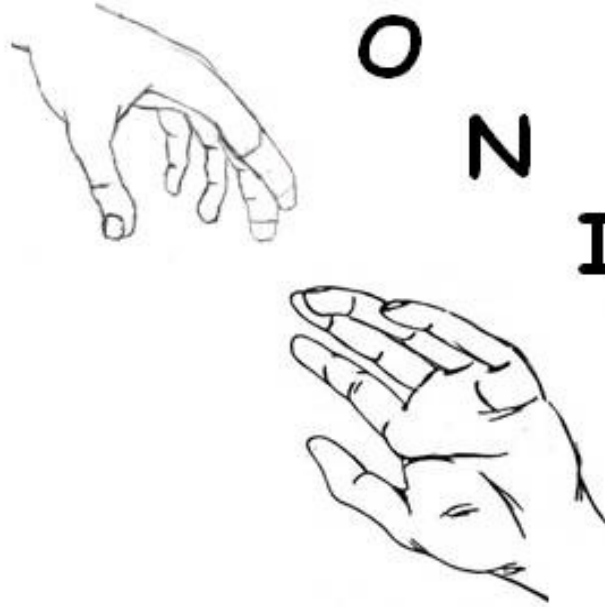




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Annual Magazine
Calcutta University Alumni Association, Washington DC
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2009

PRAKTONI

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2009, Vol. 1

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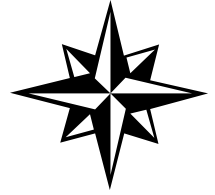
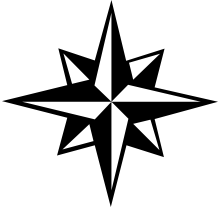
From the Editor's Desk

As the cold wind from the north sweeps and swirls the dry leaves through the roads and meadows, as woods expose themselves bare with brown trees getting ready for their brazen struggle against the onslaught of the impending cold, as ponds are beginning to be covered with a frozen layer, and as days are getting shorter and shorter as you drive to and from your work in the darkness - all of them announcing the onset of the old-man winter - we gather here to have our annual social to meet and greet each other and talk about our days at Calcutta University on the other side of the world and remember our youthful days of fun and anxiety, coffee house and exams, our friends and professors, with whom we are integrated as one in a beloved memory. We, the members of the Working Committee, are proud to bring to you the first issue of the mini-magazine of CUAU, *Praktoni*, to commemorate the occasion and make it a memorable one. The magazine started with a milestone article on the history and metamorphosis of this organization from CUSCAA to CUAU and continues with poems you wrote, translations from Tagore, your (nay, our) memories of Calcutta University, jokes, fun in mathematics, and what not, all from us, by us, and for us to enjoy and to add to this memorable evening.

We feel proud to get the opportunity to serve you and bring the first issue of your magazine to you, which we expect to continue as an annual magazine. If this mini-magazine proved to be fun and exciting to you, something to remember for years to come, the credit goes to *you*, as you have written in this mini-magazine for yourself. We made many mistakes in putting together this mini-magazine. The responsibility is ours. We had big dreams but little resources. So, a lot of things we wanted to do, we could not, and we beg your forgiveness for that and look forward to the days when the seed we sowed now will grow to become a beautiful publication within the next few years.

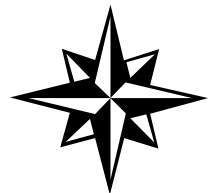
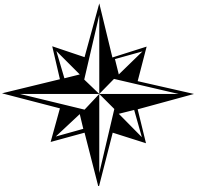
Until then,.....





**Best Wishes to all Calcutta
University Alumni Brethren
from Sinha Family**

Jhumur & Bimal



From CUAA Working Committee...

I'm delighted to have this opportunity to speak to you on behalf of the Interim Working Committee. It has been a long time since CUAA has had a newsletter. We put forward our effort to have a mini-magazine, *Praktoni*, with contributions from you. This will not only help to share your thoughts but also help our budget through advertisements. Our voluntary group's effort is committed to bring you the best ever CUAA Annual Reunion this year. The success of the summer picnic, which by some account was the best attended ever, is a testimony of our endeavors.

Furthermore, following the vision of the senior CUAA members, who previously led this organization, we will continue our efforts to help the economically challenged meritorious students from CU. As the first step, I visited CU and had a meeting with VC, Pro-VC, Inspector of Colleges and Estate and Trust Officer in VC's office to discuss the mechanism. We will continue to explore such ideas to shape the association into something dynamic and functional. Even though there is a working committee, it is extremely important that you, as CUAA members, enrich us with your ideas and play an active role in the activities of CUAA-DC. Working together, we can ensure the brightest future for this organization. We welcome your thoughts and suggestions.

Thank you,
Bidhan C. Bandyopadhyay,
Coordinator.

Laugh a Little

- Trypti K. Mookherji

What is the height of Flirting?

When your love letter starts with "TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN".

Love Vs Exam

LOVE—lots of thoughts in mind but no guts to express.

EXAMS—lots of guts to express but no thoughts in mind.

The Penitent

- Original by Rabindranath Tagore
- Translated by Prasun K. Kundu

On to the hallowed ground under Thy feet
 Make me bow my head down.
In the pool of my own tears, O Lord,
 Let all my arrogance drown.
In glorifying my own self
 All the time, I demean myself.
In vain do I get worn out,
 As myself I keep circling around.
In the pool of my own tears, O Lord,
 Let all my arrogance drown.

Let me not blow my own horn
 Through what I manage to accomplish.
It is through my life, O Lord,
 That You fulfill Your own wish.
I yearn, O Lord, for Thy ultimate calm,
 My soul is filled by Thy supreme charm.
In the lotus petals of Your heart,
 My presence You surround.
In the pool of my own tears, O Lord,
 Let all my arrogance drown.

Gender of Non-livings:

- * Ziploc Bags are Male, because they hold everything in, but you can see right through them.
- * Copiers are Female, because once turned off; it takes a while to warm them up again. It's an effective reproductive device if the right buttons are pushed, but can wreak havoc if the wrong buttons are pushed.
- * A Tire is Male, because it goes bald and it's often over-inflated.
- * An Hourglass is Female, because over time, the weight shifts to the bottom.
- * A Remote Control is Female. - it gives a man pleasure, he'd be lost without it, and while he doesn't always know the right buttons to push, he keeps trying!



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 - Force Protection/Vulnerability Assessment & Security System Design
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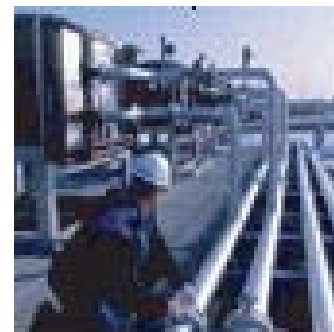
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*Calcutta University
Alumni Association - DC:
A Historical Perspective*

- Tarak Bhar

CUSA started off as Science College Alumni Association (SCAA) in 1996. At the very first meeting which was held at Pilgrim Hill Recreation Center in Silver Spring on 5th May 1996, SCAA was renamed as CUSCAA (Calcutta University Science College Alumni Association). The objectives of CUSCAA include: establishing communications with all the departments in the Science College and provide support (books, publications, financial awards, assistance to students coming to US).

Activities that took place since inauguration include:

- Established links with various departments of Science College,
- Donated (by a CUSCAA alumni) four Pentium Computers to the Computer Center,
- Donated numerous technical books,
- Donated Linux version of Mathematica computer program,
- Gave five awards (\$100 ea): one each to the departments of Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology and Psychology.

Starting 1997 three Newsletters were published: Nov.97 vol.1; Nov.98 vol. 2; Nov.99, vol.3.

CUSCAA had an article of incorporation in Maryland. In 1997 CUSCAA had a meet and greet session at the Bango Sanmelan at King of Prussia near Philadelphia.

In the same year, CUSCAA organized a fund drive in memory of Ranjit Dasgupta (CUSCAA alumni) among members & community friends. Money (around \$2500) raised was used to donate books to the Physics department in Calcutta University.

The work of CUSCAA drew the attention of the media. PRATIDIN, a Bengali daily, ran an article in their May 3, 1998 edition about CUSCAA. Smt. Purabi Chakraborty in her weekly column covered the activities of CUSCAA, and mentioned that CUSCAA in its first year itself has been able to establish an emotional bond with those currently at the helm of affairs at the institution.

(continued to the bottom of the next column)

The Broken Nest

- Anjali Bhattacharyya

The broken nest
How do I look at it?
How should I?
From the point of sophisticated logic?
From the justification of clinical detachment?
From the collective response of mind and body?
From the angle of shattered psychic?

Huge surge of feelings unknown
Cascading wave after wave
Invade every moment of my waking hours
And the dreams of early dawn
Drowns happiness and pleasure in the abyss.

Waiting moments, losing meaning and destination
Continues like an exhausted pen
Dragging drying ink
Over the last word fading away.

I watch
Spell bound, hopeless.
I watch the broken pieces
Slowly moving away
In ever expanding wave of the ether.

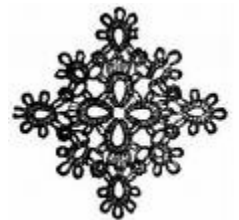
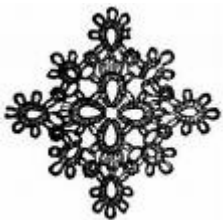
Is there anyone?
Just waiting, may be outreaching
And trying to gather bits and pieces
That was once a complete whole?

A Metamorphosis

Calcutta University Science College Alumni Association (CUSCAA) in a meeting on Aug 28, 2004 announced that CUSCAA would open its membership to all Alumni of Calcutta University (not just Science College) and it's going to be known as CUSA (Calcutta University Alumni Association). On June 3rd 2007, CUSA is changed to CUSA-DC.



*Best Wishes to all CUAA
members—Complements of
a Well Wisher Family*



Our Heritage

-Nitya Nath

The following poem, "Bharat-Tirtha (The Holy India)," by the Nobel Laureate poet philosopher Rabindranath Tagore, depicts a vital heritage that we all possess--a heritage of tolerance and assimilation of all religions, races, and culture into one, something that is uniquely Indian. The same message resounds through utterances of many others, notably of Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda, and the Dalai Lama. It is with pride and determination of purpose that we wish to uphold this tradition, for us and for all future generations.

Awake, my mind, rise to the spirit of this holy
land
At the shore of the sea of great souls that is
India.
Here, with outstretched arms, I bow to the God in
man
In full voice and great joy hailing His presence.
This meditative expanse, this land cradled in
river garlands
Manifests forever the pure, nurturing Earth.
At the shore of the sea of great souls that is
India.

Who knows, at whose call these innumerable
races
Came - from where - into this vast expanse that
is India!
Here Aryans, non-Aryans, Dravidians and
Chinese
Sakas, Huns, Pathans and Moghuls, all merged in
one body.
Now the doors of the west have opened, gifts
flow from there
They will give, they will take, unite and mingle,
all unbarred
From the shore of the sea of great souls that is
India.

Solve

$$E/c^2 \cdot \sqrt{-1} \cdot PV/R = ?$$

1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, ?

Carrying war banners, chanting songs of
victory
Through deserts, hills and mountains, they
came.
They all live within me, none, not one, is
forgotten--
Through my blood stream, and in my voice,
resound their many songs.
Mighty Veena, sing, sing to those who stayed
away
The barriers will fall, and they will stand by the
others
At the shore of the sea of great souls that is
India.

Come Aryan, come non-Aryan, Hindu and
Moslem
Come today, European, come Christian.
Come Brahmin, with purified soul, hold hands
of all others--
Come you fallen, lay down the burden of your
Past humiliation.
Come swiftly to the Mother's coronation -
the cup is yet to be filled
With water sanctified by the touch of all.
At the shore of the sea of great souls that is
India.

Absolutely Amazing Math

$$\begin{aligned}1 \times 8 + 1 &= 9 \\12 \times 8 + 2 &= 98 \\123 \times 8 + 3 &= 987 \\1234 \times 8 + 4 &= 9876 \\12345 \times 8 + 5 &= 98765 \\123456 \times 8 + 6 &= 987654 \\1234567 \times 8 + 7 &= 9876543 \\12345678 \times 8 + 8 &= 98765432 \\123456789 \times 8 + 9 &= 987654321\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}1 \times 9 + 2 &= 11 \\12 \times 9 + 3 &= 111 \\123 \times 9 + 4 &= 1111 \\1234 \times 9 + 5 &= 11111 \\12345 \times 9 + 6 &= 111111 \\123456 \times 9 + 7 &= 1111111 \\1234567 \times 9 + 8 &= 11111111\end{aligned}$$

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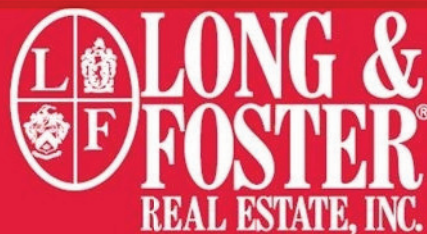
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A memorable experience or is it?

- Bimal Sinha

That was 1962. After passing the pre-university exam from Asutosh College (AC), my twin brother Bikas and I were quite undecided about choosing a major for the B.Sc. program. We did not like any subject but mathematics, which even in those days had a dim prospect, we were told! AC had two uncommon majors to offer: Geology and Statistics. Since we never heard about the latter, we wondered if it was a serious spelling mistake for Statics, and how it could be a major topic for further study! When we found out that it was indeed a separate discipline which had something to do with number-crunching, we approached Dr. Chaudhuri (SBC), Head of Statistics at AC, for further information about the subject. His brief response in a typical grave voice: 'Aagay bharti hou, poray janbay' did not help us at all. Nonetheless, we ventured into this alien subject!

On day one, period one of statistics honors class, SBC entered to teach us probability. Surrounded by all new classmates, we were quite excited about the prospect of learning something completely new and it happened quite unexpectedly. In all our previous classes, Bikas and I were used to taking turns in one of us listening to the lectures while the other would take down the notes. Little did we know that this most effective learning tactics would prove to be so disgraceful to us on that day!! Seated on row one, it was my turn to listen to SBC while Bikas was copying down the notes from the board. After about ten minutes, SBC suddenly turned around and immediately saw me in full view with no trace of paper in front of me, a clear sign that I was not taking down his notes. In sheer disbelief, he asked: 'Tumi likhchho naa?' 'Sir, bhai likhchhay' was my prompt response, pointing my finger to Bikas. Down came his thunderous voice: 'Gadha, bhai likhlay toor hobay? bair kor khata'. All I could say then 'Dhoroni - dwidha hou'.

Rest is history. Years later, after Bikas and I earned our B.Sc. (stat honors), M.Sc and Ph.D. in statistics from Calcutta University and chose teaching and research as our profession, it turned out that we were SBC's most-liked students ever! So much so that SBC's entire family became a significant part of our families. During one of my numerous conversations with
(continued to the bottom of the next column)

Coming Home

- Jayashree Basu

The stars have not yet come out
The sky is covered in clouds
The stars have not yet come out
The smell of jasmine flowers
Fills the darkness of the lane
The stars have not yet come out
Perhaps I'll not make it home.

Clouds play in the sky
The wind sways the flowers
My friends walk ahead of me
I walk slowly behind
The river's calls
The sky's intoxication
I push these away
Through a small lane
Crossing the darkness
I look for the door to my home

The moon peaks out
From the corner of the clouds
The evening thickens
Fireflies light the way
I find my home.

SBC, when I reminded him about his 1962 admonition, hoping that he would be either in denial or completely taken aback, neither happened. To my utter surprise, SBC simply smiled and insisted that I was still a 'gadha' due to my lack of life's skills!

Certain notions in life never change.

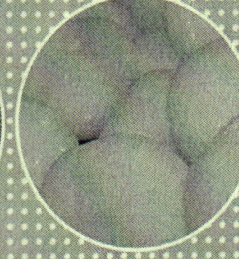
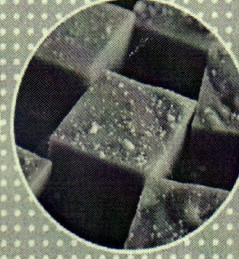
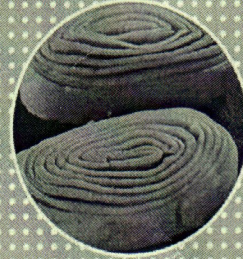
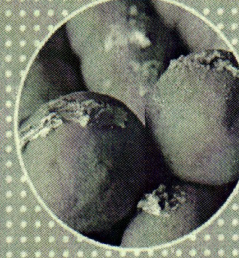
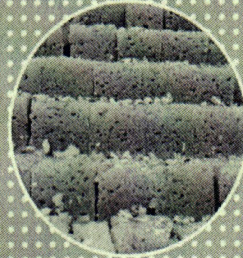
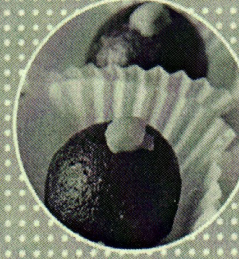
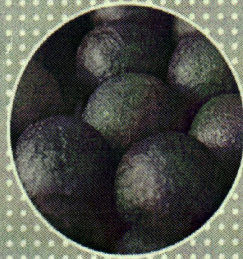
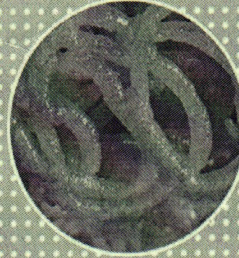
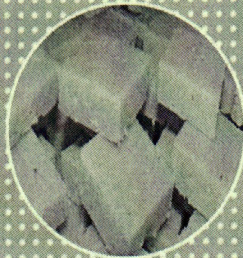
The life and legacy of Professor Sailesh Bhusan Chaudhuri, himself a product of CU and a mentor of several generations of statistics students, ended abruptly in a tragic car accident four years ago. I became an orphan the second time!

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Missions Unfulfilled

- Original by Rabindranath Tagore
- Translated by Prasun K. Kundu

All the prayers in life that remain
Unfinished, - are yet not in vain.
The flower that was doomed
 Before it could bloom,
The river that lost its course in a desert terrain,
They are still, to be sure, not in vain.

All the life's work that trails the rest,
Even so, they have not gone to waste.
The songs that elude me still,
 Tunes within me that I cannot feel,
On Thy harp their voice they gain,
They are still, to be sure, not in vain.

It's Stimulus Folks

- Trypti K. Mookherji

An Economic Stimulus payment is a very exciting program. I'll explain it using the Q and A format:

- Q. What is an Economic Stimulus payment?
A. It is money that the federal government will send to taxpayers.
- Q. Where will the government get this money?
A. From taxpayers.
- Q. So the government is giving me back my own money?
A. Only a smidgen.
- Q. What is the purpose of this payment?
A. The plan is for you to use the money to purchase a high-definition TV set, thus stimulating the economy.
- Q. But isn't that stimulating the economy of China ?
A. Shut up.

Looking Behind

- Ranjana Khan

I was coming back from the US embassy and one of my close friends, Ruma, who accompanied me to the interview of the US immigration, took the bus to Jadavpur University. I was carrying the big yellow sealed envelope and did not feel like going back home all the way to VIP Road and Bangur Avenue.

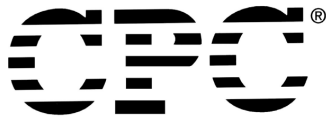
It was a cold misty day of Kolkata. I was going through a stage of revelation, a pleasant taste of future, a comforting sort of warmth in my heart. Dropped off from minibus at the front of the Presidency College, I thought about seeing my professor who was about to leave for UK, as he earned the prestigious Commonwealth Scholarship. But, as I saw some of my known faces under the portico and on the lawn across from the Baker's Lab, I started mingling with them and could not go to the second floor to see him.

Finally, when I made to the second floor and visited Dr. Roy, he looked at me and said, "So, you enrolled yourself to the graduate program and leaving for US, I see the immigration envelope in your hand". I saw Prof. Nihar Ranjan De from the University of Calcutta, sitting across the table and attentively listening to our conversation. Prof. De said, "That's fine. Go and do not waste any time. You will get plenty of opportunities to learn and grow in your own way. Only one thing—do not run after money. Please do not run after money. Many students of mine went to the US and somehow majority of them got into money earning race".

I never could forget that line. During this tough recession, as things got pleasantly oozy, I started thinking about that line carefully. Crisis comes in disguise and exposes us to many opportunities. Growing in a developing country, standing across the Baker's Lab we modeled the US growth structure; we dreamed about the US universities and corporate life. But being in the race, often I try to analyze different versions of that line of the Professor of Calcutta University, "Do not run after money". It brings a soothing breeze on my mind when famous intellectuals are looking for solutions of economic meltdown. Shall we not appreciate the concept of creative destruction?

Best Wishes to All CUAA Members

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*Economics Department,
Calcutta University:
Some Memories, Some Lessons*

The Second Question

- Nandita Dasgupta

My migration from the undergraduate days at Jadavpur University to the graduate school at the Economics Department in Calcutta University was no coincidence. The event was deeply influenced by some of my friends and teachers who relentlessly allured me to the amazing professors at Calcutta University and of the great discourses in economic theory that they imparted. On joining the Economics department in the January of 1980 I immediately realized that perhaps this was one of my best decisions in life.

The department created a sense of deep bonding and was much like the extension of a large family where I came from. The faculty was indeed a constellation of stars. Apart from the senior professors like Amlan Dutta, Santosh Bhattacharya, Asim Dasgupta and Arup Mallik we also had the privilege of being inspired by the budding stars -- Sarmila Banerjee and Anindya Sen. We also had teachers who came from ISI and IIM Calcutta to teach us Econometrics and Advanced Economic Theory. The professors had one thing in common. No matter how they might have been, with their own research and career, they never hesitated to deliver us their best product—perfect in content, quality, presentation and style and neatly laced with sincerity, affection and devotion.

Even to this day I cherish my association with the MA Economics Department of Calcutta University. It is not only because we received exceptional teaching from some of the best teachers at that time but also because it shaped my own philosophy and attitude towards becoming an effective teacher. It was there that I had learnt from the practice of my teachers that the foremost responsibility and commitment of a teacher is to impart knowledge to the best of one's ability; that the teacher's success lies not in reaching the best but also to be able to inspire the most disenchanted student. My teachers taught me that the greatest achievement of a teacher would be to create an Einstein. Now a teacher myself, I longingly wait for the glorious day to arrive when a pupil of mine would indeed become an Einstein. That would be my greatest achievement as a teacher. It could also possibly be my best homage to my professors at Calcutta University.

A man toiled to the remotest part of the Himalayas where a Maharshi lived in a cave, who achieved *Siddha* through meditation and acquired all knowledge of the past, the present and the future. Maharshi comforted him with milk, honey, and fruits. When the man settled down, Maharshi asked, "Why did you toil so much to come me, son? What good can I do to you?"

With his hands folded, the man asked, "Revered Maharshi, I hear that you know everything that is to be known. I have come here to ask you two questions."

"You toiled so hard just to ask me two questions! Ask my son, what you want to ask."

"My first question, Maharshi" the man asked, "what is the meaning of life?"

"And your second?" the Maharshi asked

"What lies ahead of Redskins?"

Suddenly, the Maharshi looked pale and distressed, and he started sweating and moaning. Afraid the man asked, "Maharshi, is the meaning of life so complex?"

"No, my son," Maharshi said in a feeble voice. "By His blessing, it is clear to me. It is your second question that made me nervous. Even God does not know the answer."

Beauty of Mathematics

$$\begin{aligned}9 \times 9 + 7 &= 88 \\98 \times 9 + 6 &= 888 \\987 \times 9 + 5 &= 8888 \\9876 \times 9 + 4 &= 88888 \\98765 \times 9 + 3 &= 888888 \\987654 \times 9 + 2 &= 8888888 \\9876543 \times 9 + 1 &= 88888888 \\98765432 \times 9 + 0 &= 888888888\end{aligned}$$

Activities of CUA A: 2006 - 2009

- Dilip K. Som

Tapas Pradhan, one of the founders of CUSCAA (parent organization of CUA A) took charge of CUA A sometime in 2006 at a time when it was difficult to find anyone who was willing to lead CUA A.

On February 4, 2006 at a meeting during the Saraswati Puja, we created a committee headed by Tapas Pradhan. He organized 2006, 2007 and part of 2008 CUA A picnics and Annual meetings single handedly. Of course, there were other people who helped him, but without his dedication, CUA A probably would not have survived. This year we introduced activities for the children of CUA A members. A record number of people attended the 2008 annual meeting and the 2009 summer picnic.

Since 2006, the following members served on the board: Ashoke Ganguli, Mihir Ghosh, Pramita Chatterjee, Luna Basak Ranjan Gupta, Bhabadeb Choudhury, Bidhan Bandyopadhyay and Dilip Som. Some of our seniors like Nitya Nath, Tarak Bhar and Bratin Saha remained as "member-at-large". We thank everyone including the large number of people outside the board for their support and the time they spent to make the events successful.

For several years the senior committee members of CUA A had been asking new members to take a leading role in CUA A's activities. Answering to this call, an interim committee was formed at the CUA A picnic in the summer of 2009. The interim committee included the following members: Bidhan Bandyopadhyay, Lokesh Bhattacharyya, Roopa Biswas, Sruti Chatteraj, Ranjan Gupta, Ranjan Pati, Dilip K. Som. This committee will continue to conducting CUA A operations till a new committee is elected at the Annual Meeting in Fall 2009.

Wow! Look at the Symmetry!!

1 x 1 = 1
11 x 11 = 121
111 x 111 = 12321
1111 x 1111 = 1234321
11111 x 11111 = 123454321
111111 x 111111 = 12345654321
1111111 x 1111111 = 1234567654321
11111111 x 11111111 = 123456787654321
111111111 x 111111111 = 12345678987654321

You

-Lokesh Bhattacharyya

I smell your love in the morning
I taste your love in the night,
My heart melts down in love
When you come to my sight.
In my work I spend all day
Longing to see your face
When I return home as the evening sets
It shines in heavenly grace
The wind comes from the East,
And the sunflower sways,
The thorny roses move apart
To make room for our ways.

Standing you are in front of me
With a beautiful loving face
And the sun's showering upon you
Its abundant golden rays.
Oh, how I lose myself in joy
When you smile at me like this.
I forget the world around us
And long to give you a kiss.
How strange do I feel, I know,
When in love you hold me tight
And, I see your face in my arms
Glittering in the golden light.

Like the setting sun in the sky
I lose myself in you.
The beauty of your pure heart
Brings me love that's true.
The flowing meadow behind us
Is dotted with white flowers
And the white clouds floating afar
Past the distant towers.
Here we two float in love
That brings me heavenly bliss
And your lips, red and plum,
Crave to have my kiss.





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