

# Year of ups and downs at university

Karamchari Union (DUCKU), a newsy, if negative, "first". The Delhi University Teachers Association (DUTA) decided against an examination boycott by a single vote (43 to 47), the narrowest-ever decision by the dons, thereby keeping DU from going the Lucknow, Patna and Gujarat way of ultimate zero-year declarations.

After a series of violent incidents in which a student was murdered, a campaigner stabbed, a college leader injured and another disappeared after scuffles and all hell broke loose at high noon in the Delhi University Students Union (DUSU) office three times and Janata Vidyarthi Morcha (JVM) boys occupied the Vice-Chancellor's chair twice, the first Committee of Inquiry into DUSU violence was appointed with Justice G. D. Khosla as the one-man commission.

With 14 riots in the walled city and DUSU indiscipline at its peak a 30-member Peace Committee was formed which, if nurtured understandingly over three terms, can prove a pioneer. The peace personnel moved from one sensitive point to another through day and night and ensured an incident-free DUSU election day (another "first").

JVM made a big come-back to DUSU polity, sweeping all the four posts, with the Congress-I backed Pragatisheel Chhatra Morcha (PCM) running a close second and successfully keeping the budget at bay for three months. DUSU, in fact, broke its vows and sought police protection on the campus.

Arising out of the DUCKU demand, the Executive Council (EC) formed a unique Committee of Appeals for non-teaching staff, which would vet victimisation cases and make suitable recommendations on individual cases.

The first explicit confrontation between the university and a minority institution ended up in the structure of scales, the Supreme Court. St. Stephen's College refused to accept the University Central Admissions Committee directives on dates and on percentage based admissions.

On another front, justice was deemed at the professionals' level when the suspension of three Tibbia College teachers by the earlier administration was unilaterally lifted by Lt-Governor Jagmohan and the three pedagogues were reinstated.

There was also another innovation. The hitherto political party cells on college governing bodies were given a welcome academic-cultural temper with the acceptance in toto of the Prem Kirpal Committee report on the Delhi Administration Colleges' governing bodies.

As a result, the 15 colleges now boast of eminent persons like Sonal Jan Singh, Melville de Mellow, Dr Prem Kirpal, Justice G. I. Khosla, Mr A. L. Rallia Ram, Dr S. K. Mitra, Mr B. S. Bedi, Dr Lokesh Chandra and Prof. T. S. Grewal on their boards.

While Dr V. N. Singh took over as the Rajasthan University Vice-Chancellor, the only two academicians in the Indian delegation to the UN General Assembly were from Delhi: Dr P. L. Malhotra, a pioneer in vocational education and the youngest dean of colleges, and Mr M. C. Parasher.

Seven-year-old South Delhi Campus (SDC) under a Harvard-educated management expert Prof. Abad Ahmed, finally cut the umbilical chord when it conducted its own post-graduate admissions. A firm offered half a crore of rupees to set up a management complex and the UGC took off its fiscal blinkers and allotted the SDC an additional crore of rupees for books and buildings, labs and lights (property and pedagogues).

Meanwhile, the university paid

almost Rs 3 lakh on rent for its five buildings in South Extension. And then, there was the maiden protest against the DTC in August by the Lakshmbai College girls when they held up several buses to protest against poor services.

The politiquette witnessed a new co-ordination between DUTA and DUCKU, both led by leftists. While DUTA supported the DUCKU agitation in April, DUCKU repaid the unionist debt when DUTA went on a protest strike in December.

At the fag (ged out) end of the year, the controversial appointment as lecturer of second-class M.A. and DUTA hony treasurer P. M. S. Grewal in preference to Ipper K. T. S. Sarao created an obvious rift in the teachers' movement, the latest move being a requisitioned DUTA executive meeting called by non-leftist elements.

The UGC, after years of tortuous talk, decided to take over Kirori Mal in its silver jubilee year. The Rao Tula Ram staff conducted a record five-month dharna outside the VC's office and were paid once a quarter, the Dyal Singh staff and students took on the chairman, principal and VC by turns, Bhagat Singh Morning flexed its unionist muscles and got the offices of vice-principal and bursar rotated and Shyam Lal students had their traditional clash with the police replete with ransacking, rumbustiousness and the inevitable tear-gas.

Simultaneously, Indraprastha formed a committee to help renovate a historic hall and Zakir Hussain Morning felicitated its super-scientist Dr K. B. Bhatnagar for his role in Rohini.

Jesus and Mary and Lady Shri Ram continued to conduct academic and cultural camps of a high order, Kamla Nehru presented a beautiful ballet, thereby proving that isolation can be splendid after all.

Approximately Rs 7 lakh were expended by students on societies and union activities, nine cultural festivals were held with about Rs 12 lakh spent on DUSU elections.

St. Stephen's registered its centenary precisely 42 years before the university will record its.

Under socially-committed co-ordinator Dr S. C. Bhatia, the Delhi University Adult Education and Continuing Education Cell (DUAE-CEC) notched up a few medals. DU was the first to prepare and implement projects for the education of the blind and, of 46 universities officially involved in social welfare work in "disability" areas, DU according to the Government's Social Welfare Secretary, is the only one to have shown positive results in an integrated system of education for the physically handicapped.

The pathos of financial handicap was projected in the HC Ganguli report on the School of Correspondence Courses. The chairman reported during the year that, from a surplus of Rs 30 lakh, the school now ran at a loss and at 40 per cent of its educational capacity.

The year gave rise to five significant pragmatic projects, all at the initiative of teachers.

The Delhi School of Social Work

held a seminar on women's rights and a monograph has reportedly been prepared for use by Government.

The Deshbandhu College Morning Teachers' Association held a workshop on Staffing Pattern and Promotional Avenues.

The DUAECE Cell held a symposium on examination reform with special reference to reevaluation and invited specialists from the Association of Indian Universities, the staff selection commission, the UPSC and JNU. Several startling facts and some concrete proposals have been assembled in the dossier to assist the AC when it takes up this significant subject.

The University Social Brigade was formed by a band of young lecturers after one of them, Ms Rita Maini created social history by fighting the dowry evil and entering her in-laws' house under police protection. The Brigade worked quietly but effectively against eve-teasing, student indiscipline and drug addiction which, according to a senior hostel warden, has gone up by 7 to 10 per cent.

For the first time in its 57-year history, DU witnessed an increment bar against lecturers who had not completed M. Phil or M. Litt. within five years of being appointed. With 250 lecturers affected in DU alone and about 2,000 all over the country, the Forum Against Increment created of its unfeasibility and its academic non-viability at the UGC.

Happily for hundreds of young lecturers, the UGC postponed in October the implementation of the bar by another three years, raising the period from five to eight years.

The campus assumed a royal air when Prince Charles stooped to conquer the campus in November. He visited the bedroom of grand-uncle Lord Mountbatten, examined anthropological artefacts, chatted up the Deans and Adlibbed ardently at St. Stephen's, where he delivered a once-in-a-centenary address.

With a lakh and a half rupees invested in the Sports Council and another similar amount spent by the colleges, DU managed to retain the Maulana Azad Trophy for University Sport, but failed to produce a single national or international champion. Its only consolation was former Olympian Ranjit Bhatia's nomination to the Asian Games Steering Committee.

After a gap of four years, the campus bore a crowded look as the university crossed the (coveted?) six-figure mark in admissions.

There was a final tally of 107,000 students, 5,700 teachers and 4,800 karamchairs. There were 63 colleges with one, Rao Tula Ram, enjoying the dubious distinction of being virtually classless throughout the year. Of 36 departments, five were said to be non-functional.

In the past 50 years, DU has come a long way.

But with a massive budget and a lakh-plus population and a huge infrastructure of faculty and fanfare, the university did not produce a single international giant of academe in 355 days.

Will 1981 do so....?

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ches and speeches by leaders, quasi-leaders and would-be leaders. Factionalism flourished and cliques, counter-cliques, caucuses and cocoons continued to be spun — at year-end there were at random count 4 Congress, 4 Janata, 3 leftist and several independent 'lines'.

The calendar, however, recorded several "firsts", some futile, others fruitful. The University got its first Sikh Vice-Chancellor, Professor Gunbakhsh Singh, a Harvard chemist with a clean record of straightforwardness and common-sense. As welcome, he received four memoranda on the day he joined, April 3, and a "strike" notice from the Delhi University and College