

Sem Ex and the City



Introduction

Dearest Gentle Reader,

Welcome to IIT Bombay - one of India's most prestigious institutions, standing tall since 1958, with thousands of students graduating across various domains of engineering, science, design, and management. Some follow conventional paths, while others pursue their passions. With the campus located right next to the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Powai Lake, and Vihar Lake, you'll never find yourself in an area free of

overwhelming greenery and an equally intriguing variety of fauna. You can catch a glimpse of monkeys, frogs, snakes and if you are (un)lucky, even leopards and crocodiles. We are a world apart from the chaos of Mumbai. Glorious and majestic as it sounds, to us residents, Insti (you'll hear this around a lot here, it's short for "institute") is not a place, it's an emotion.

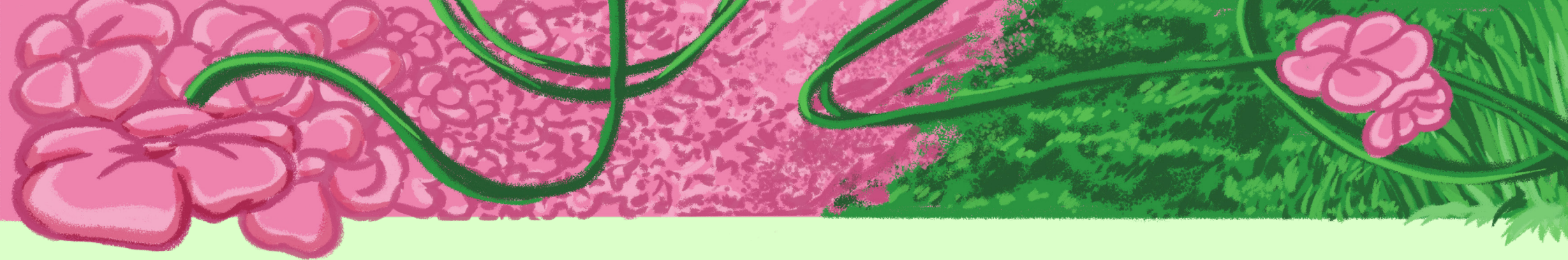
The Instizenship™ Starter Pack

With so much diversity around us, it's easy to feel lost, even as an Indian, sometimes. However, transcending all language and cultural barriers, there's a unique set of customs ardently followed by Instizens (residents of the honourable Insti, which you are now :D). The Reading Hall bubbling with activity at 2 AM because there's a certain population having a quiz at 8:30 in the morning, an eatery open at 4 AM with its 3-5 workers providing for its sleep-deprived customers, and animals running about confused as to why that yellow and black three-wheeler (auto rickshaw if you were wondering), thrice their size keeps going in circles, and humans step in and step out of it - there's just too much happening around you, never giving you the chance to run that one classic monologue the protagonists play in their mind while they stare away into the oblivion, in all coming-of-age movies. Check out the "**Insti 101**" section later in this guide to learn everything, everywhere, all at once about insti!

The Pursuit of Happyness

Coming from multitudes of different backgrounds, different tongues, and different traumas, we're all new to this life with a singular dream, and that is... drumroll, please... to be happy :D (if you were thinking a perfect GPA and Valedictorian, puh-lease we just want to have fun after years of lost dreams and receding hairlines). Of course, the aim is to graduate in an honourable manner into a stable future. But the greater aim is a happening college life - one we can recollect and smile about, as the coffee machine keeps loading decoction into the already overflowing cup, in our future workspace. From short walks between lectures by the immaculate Lakeside to incredible cultural fests like Mood Indigo and Techfest, and all the glorious celebrations, competitions and workshops organised by the cultural(ICC), technical(ITC), and sports(ISC) councils - every day at Insti is worth looking forward to! Surely, such extracurriculars in IITB deserve to be explored deeper, so read "**Solving for X-tracurriculars at IITB**" to unpack the much-happening side of the insti.





Here's my ID, so mail me maybe

Always make sure to check your webmail and WhatsApp(your go-to messenger in place of iMessage whilst you're here) regularly, as any and every update relevant to your time here will pile up mercilessly when you check on a random Tuesday. It is not necessary to talk to your professors as soon as you are here, but if you have any concerns regarding your academics or research, it is a good idea to address them early on. Help will always be given at IIT Bombay to those who ask for it, who cold-mail relentlessly for it, and who, while doing a project on 'sleep and cognition', would sacrifice their sleep for it. While you might have to seek external help for the physical health concerns that may arise from this lifestyle (kindly note that the IITB Hospital services do not apply to international students currently), you don't have to carry the burden of your mental health concerns, all by yourself. With dedicated counselors, student councils for academic help and mental health outreach, and the IR buddies who have been assigned to you, your voice will never go unheard. More on this is covered under "**Support Systems at IIT Bombay**".

Nah, Imma Stay (now say that fast)

Finally, once you have started getting the hang of insti life, you might want to explore "Aamchi Mumbai" (Our Mumbai) and learn how to navigate life as a Mumbaikar (citizen of Mumbai). The most significant archetype of Mumbai is its eternally confusing monsoon patterns. That being said, there is no stopping the instizens from storming out of the campus to refresh themselves in the numerous malls, beautiful cafes, quiet(not quite) beaches, and so on. Sometimes, just walking about the pretty roads of Hiranandani, followed by a spam-on-the-gram, will serve as your much-needed mini escapade. Still, you must know more about the city to enjoy it to the fullest. The "**Guide to Mumbai**" section will be your friendly neighbourhood guide for this, so come back here every time you want to plan the next free slot you have, free of any pending deadlines and impending disasters.

As you go on to read this guide to campus survival, made from our experiences and of those before you, rest assured that this leaflet is about to make the transition easier for you. And once you've gone through every one of these lovingly curated articles, you'll find answers to frequently asked questions once you turn the book over.

Now, let's get down to business.



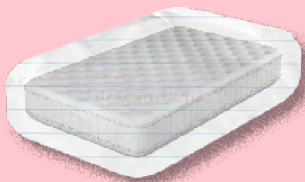
INSTI-101



The idea of going international for your studies has finally led you to IIT Bombay, and if there's one interesting thing about getting accustomed to the adventures and shenanigans of this great Indian institute, it is that- It's simply not easy! Staying a thousand miles away from your homeland in search of new possibilities might make you enthralled or even overwhelmed about what's on your plate while you

spend your time here, but no worries! In this voyage, all you need is a compass- someone to guide you along so you don't get lost in a cyclone. This compass is your IR buddy, the one who's going to help you navigate the directions correctly. Meanwhile, we would like to act as a guiding map covering your hostel setup, your daily amenities, and a life to look forward to in the upcoming section.

We hope you have/had settled into your rooms in your allotted hostel. There are hall managers allocated to each hostel, who are your point of contact for any assistance or complaint relating to your accommodation or hostel utilities. You can find them in their office inside the hostel premises. Meanwhile, here is a checklist of a few essentials, and where you can find them for your better stay:



Mattress

You can ask the hall managers for help in finding a mattress.



Chair and tables

This should ideally be in your room; if not, contact the hall manager



Bedsheets

Bedsheets aren't provided by the hostels themselves, but you can purchase one from any convenience store if you don't own one already.



Laundry

Washing machines on the floor are available for use. However, the laundry services, along with ironing, can also be taken for help just in case.



Wifi facility setup/router for seamless internet

You can find them in hostel shops across the institute



Daily essentials

This can be your grocery items or stuff as small as a body wash, but you get it all! There are numerous shops located around the campus to help you (refer to the map).



Stationery

The small shop is sandwiched between the SOM building and confusing lanes for you to get it handy. A laptop repair shop is available at the YP gate (Gate 1).

In case there is something you need to buy, you can also always order on instant grocery delivery apps such as Blinkit or Zepto, which are available till 11 PM at night. Now, before you get confused with these apps, here's a list of them, which might come in handy:

Amazon and Flipkart are leading e-commerce platforms where you can order everything from groceries and packaged foods to electronics and household goods.

Apart from Blinkit or Zepto, Swiggy Instamart provides ultra-fast grocery and essentials deliveries, promising to bring whatever you are craving-snacks, beverages (or even an iPhone) to your doorstep within just 10 minutes.

BookMyShow is the best website to check out and book tickets for movies or any upcoming events like concerts, stand-up shows, cricket matches, etc in the city.

Swiggy, Zomato and EatClub are the city's most popular food delivery apps, allowing you to order meals from a wide variety of restaurants, ranging from local street food to international chains. It can come to the rescue when you'd like to treat yourself or are too lazy to go to the dining mess

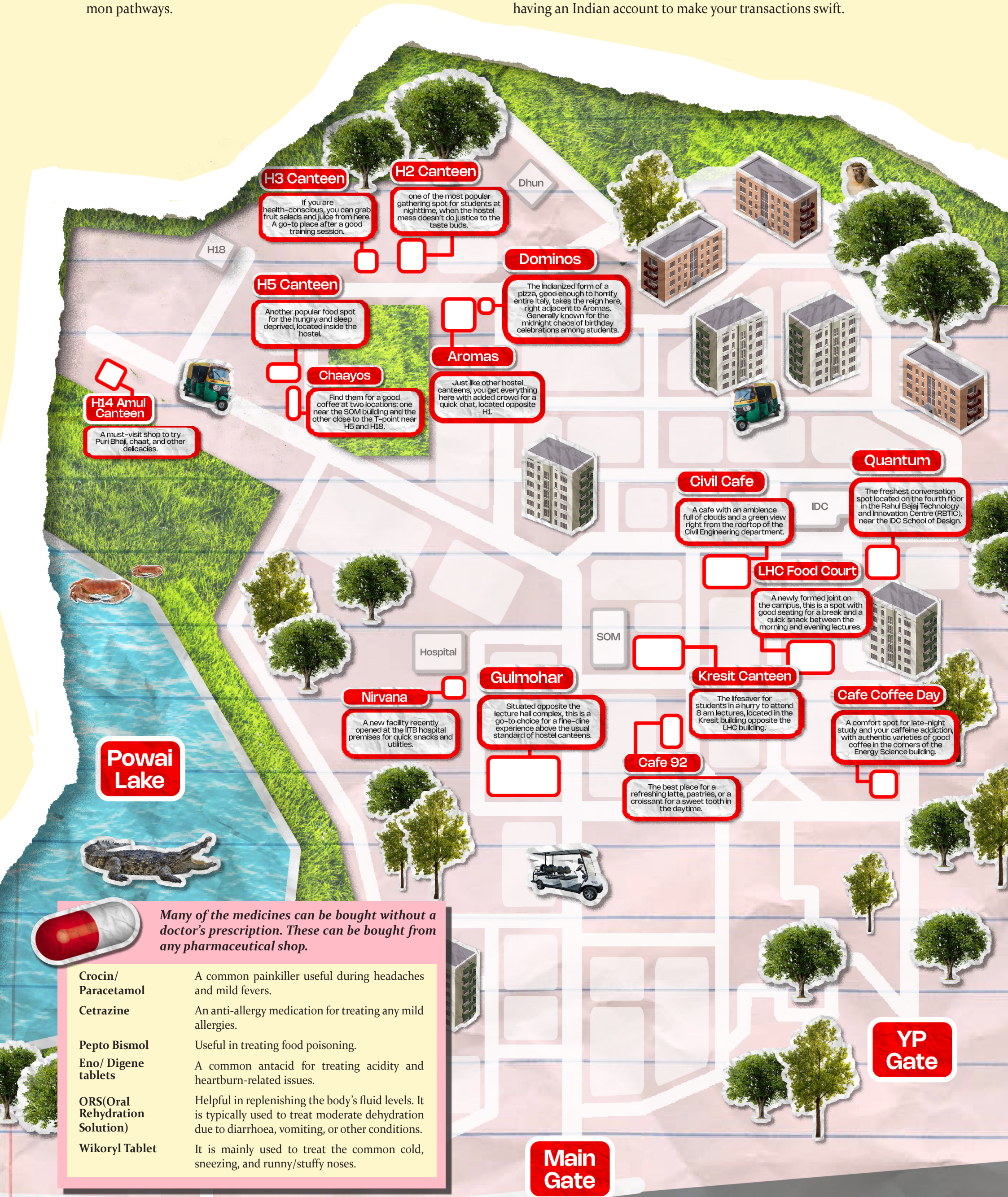
For all these platforms, you can pay online through UPI. You might hear it quite often during your time here. It is a real-time payment system in India that lets you send or receive money instantly using just a QR code, mobile number or UPI ID. All these apps and platforms would help you gain essentials even on rainy days.

Talking about the rain splatters during the odd (autumn) semester, there's no escaping the hot and humid conditions or the rain. During the peak monsoons from June to September, nobody knows how the weather will be in the next hour. It is advised to never keep your umbrella away, so as not to curse the unpredictability of rain later. Also, give your white sneakers a rest and instead opt for more comfortable and water-resistant footwear such as Crocs or floaters. Getting a nice pair of all-weather shoes might be a good idea too, as it might get you through the rain and the labs that would otherwise deny entry without shoes.

We are usually accustomed to having no air conditioners in our rooms, adjusting to the weather conditions. You would be tempted to keep your door open, but there may be mosquitoes waiting for the door to be open, allowing them to harmonise their "bzzzz" around you. You must buy a mosquito repellent cream, also known as Odomos in India. Or you could buy an electric mosquito racket, as you will encounter a lot more insects too in your room. You can also keep a spray (called HIT) to keep bugs or roaches away. A piece of general advice: keep the doors closed, mainly during dusk when they are most active.

As you navigate the roads surrounded by green forests and swamps spread across 550 acres, you realise that the transportation facilities play a big role in making sure you cross the steep hills on the roads to attend lectures and labs. Taking a walk is not a bad idea, but you might be running late, having overslept, and in a rush to reach the class on time. The most common mode of transport would be the bicycles, which you might have seen in huge numbers, crossing pedestrians along the common pathways.

If you're lazy and a last-minute person, an 'auto rickshaw' is a quick option to save your time. Moreover, the EV shuttles with planned stops at several points might be a better option to consider, with prices as cheap as 10 INR for a single ride. It is quite important to note that how these small payments (and almost everything else) have now shifted to online payments in India rapidly; thus, it is highly recommended that you do not forget to keep small cash with you lest you'd want to get sad over not having an Indian account to make your transactions swift.



First things first: Registration & Academics

Another important task for you would be the registration for the courses you'd like to take while being here. The IITB administration requires the semester exchange students to complete the registration formalities of the desired courses in pen-and-paper mode, which requires communication with the respective department.

The system ensures that the semester exchange students get around two weeks following the course registration to allow them to understand the flexibility, competency, and challenges of the courses and prevent any academic erosion later.

As the academic session starts, it's important to stay connected with your course instructors and the teaching assistants (TAs). It helps you become accustomed to the academic culture, which may differ from your home institution. Professors might seem intimidating at first, but don't hesitate to reach out via email or make a visit during their office hours for any assistance.

Talking about the online platforms crucial for your academics, the first and foremost thing you will receive is an LDAP ID, which serves as your universal login ID. The Moodle system at IITB, which keeps you updated about course resources and any notifications made by the professor, is designed to be accessed with this ID. It will also grant you access to your university emails by welcoming you into the webmail platform of IITB.

Pro tip: Every event or detail related to the institute will be posted on Webmail. Make sure to never miss any emails.

Additionally, join WhatsApp groups created for students as it's a great opportunity to connect with your batchmates. Don't hesitate to ask questions; resources are shared on these groups as well. There are several other platforms developed by student-run clubs, like Resobin, which has resources from previous years as well as course information, and the Insti App, which can be an alternative during mealtime if you forget your ID card. The app also provides updates about upcoming events if you grow tired of checking your webmail.

A lecture for the lectures: While it is evident that attendance requirements may vary depending on the professors, the institute policy officially requires 80% of your presence in the classes. The SAFE App comes in use in usual scenarios to mark your attendance by tracing your location with a single click. Be mindful of the courses and their nature, as you might not be used to taking an unprompted quiz or an extra class scheduled on weekends, whose intimation usually arrives only a few days prior.



A note from your well-wishers: A real deal hanging further for you is to not overestimate yourself by committing to an unreasonable count of credits to get accustomed to a new curriculum with ease and avoid academic hardships later.

The Social Dish in India

If the connections you build with people here are a dish, it is you who decides the ratio of spices to make the best out of it. During your stay, it is evident that you may come across a variety of personalities, which may feel overwhelming or even exciting at times. However, try to interact with as many people as possible, come with an open mind, try new things, and meet new people by putting yourself out there.

While a wave of cultural shocks awaits you, you can always rely on a simple Hello in your verbal pocket to make things easier. IITB Campus may hardly make you linguistically tied since the campus is overall very comfortable with the usage of English, but don't be surprised by some day-to-day hard encounters, whether it be with the local shopkeepers/commute providers or the Indian accent in English. It is important to note that you never know what's in store for you in a country with not one but 22 official languages. It is thus advised for you to help yourself out with day-to-day words in Hindi and English, for these two being the most common ones encountered here, and even if not, it's okay! Aren't we all learning? With time, you are sure to find the best combination of spices for this dish.



A small yet significant thing to keep in mind is to ensure that you take off your footwear when entering someone's room; it's a common norm not to wear shoes inside. Keeping a few of these things in mind can help you avoid disapproving looks in some places and gain appreciation for understanding the little things.

The Actual Dish in India



There is a common saying in Hindi, "Pehle pett puja, phir kaam dujaa", which means food is the first and foremost thing to preach before your work. The food of India isn't uncommon to make people go gaga over its taste and spices; having food here can be tricky, whether it's your spice tolerance or the dining etiquette. There are times when you simply avoid eating with your hands by using a spoon; however, you have no choice left when it comes to Chapati (A kind of Indian bread you'd plate with anything). A typical meal at any hostel dining (the mess) would consist of this chapati served along with rice, dal (lentils), and a vegetable prepared.

PSA! There is bad news for lactose-intolerant individuals: the diet is mainly based on dairy products. Chances are, the curry contains paneer. You might also get buttermilk or lassi (a sweet-curd-based drink) once or twice a week. It's possible that other common allergens like nuts, mushrooms, which may go unnoticed as they might be crushed in food. You should ask the mess staff about the contents of dishes for common allergens, as they aren't very familiar with the concept of food allergies.

You may struggle with the food being served due to the differences in eating habits and hygiene; thus, there's a help button to go for, the mess opt-out system, where you withdraw from the dining facilities. If you are feeling adventurous and want to have a small excursion outside campus, the best location to explore food and enjoy a hangout is Hiranandani, Powai, which won't disappoint you with the numerous food joints and shopping complexes that it has.

Apart from the mess facility, the hostel canteens spread across the campus are available to satisfy students' cravings late at night.

It's the most wonderful time of the year

The brightest colours of India come with the festivities that you may catch a glimpse of (If your luck permits!) while being here. The community of IITB won't disappoint in leaving you awestruck, baby, by their warmth of celebration, so make sure to hang around the populace when festivals knock on your door.

Ganpati: One of the most celebrated festivals in Mumbai. It is the birth anniversary of Ganpati Bappa. If and only if you get a chance to tag along with someone, have a look at various locations in Mumbai to see the celebrations, decorations, and devotion of Mumbaikars (people from Mumbai).

Diwali: Considered as one of the biggest festivals in India, it's known as the festival of lights. When calendars hit October/November, the buildings and surroundings are graced with fairy lights and full of energy. The fireworks and celebration are a common sight everywhere; however, it is advised to take precautionary measures to stay safe due to rising pollution at this time. Most people pack their bags for a quick meet & greet with their families and friends.

Holi: The festival of colours, which comes in March, gives you a chance to make a clown out of your friends' faces with colours.

Few might come knocking on your door to ambush you with colours, raging a war with water buckets/balloons in the corridors; it is full of excitement and joy. Though it's better to be on the safer side and make sure that the colours you use cause no harm to your skin, so that you do not invite a skin allergy in any indulgence to yourself.

Navratri: In the IITB culture, a garba night is the way to celebrate the festival known as Navratri, which originates from two words, 'nav' and 'ratri', which means nine nights. Make sure to groove to the best possible music when you decide to attend yourself during Navratri in Sept/October.

National Holidays:

The parades and the march past, along with cultural programs held on Independence Day (August 15) and Republic Day (January 26), convey a strong sense of pride and harmony among the community. Make sure not to miss these special occasions to witness the pride and joy in the air.

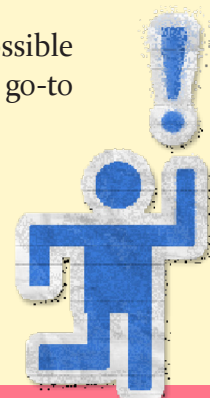
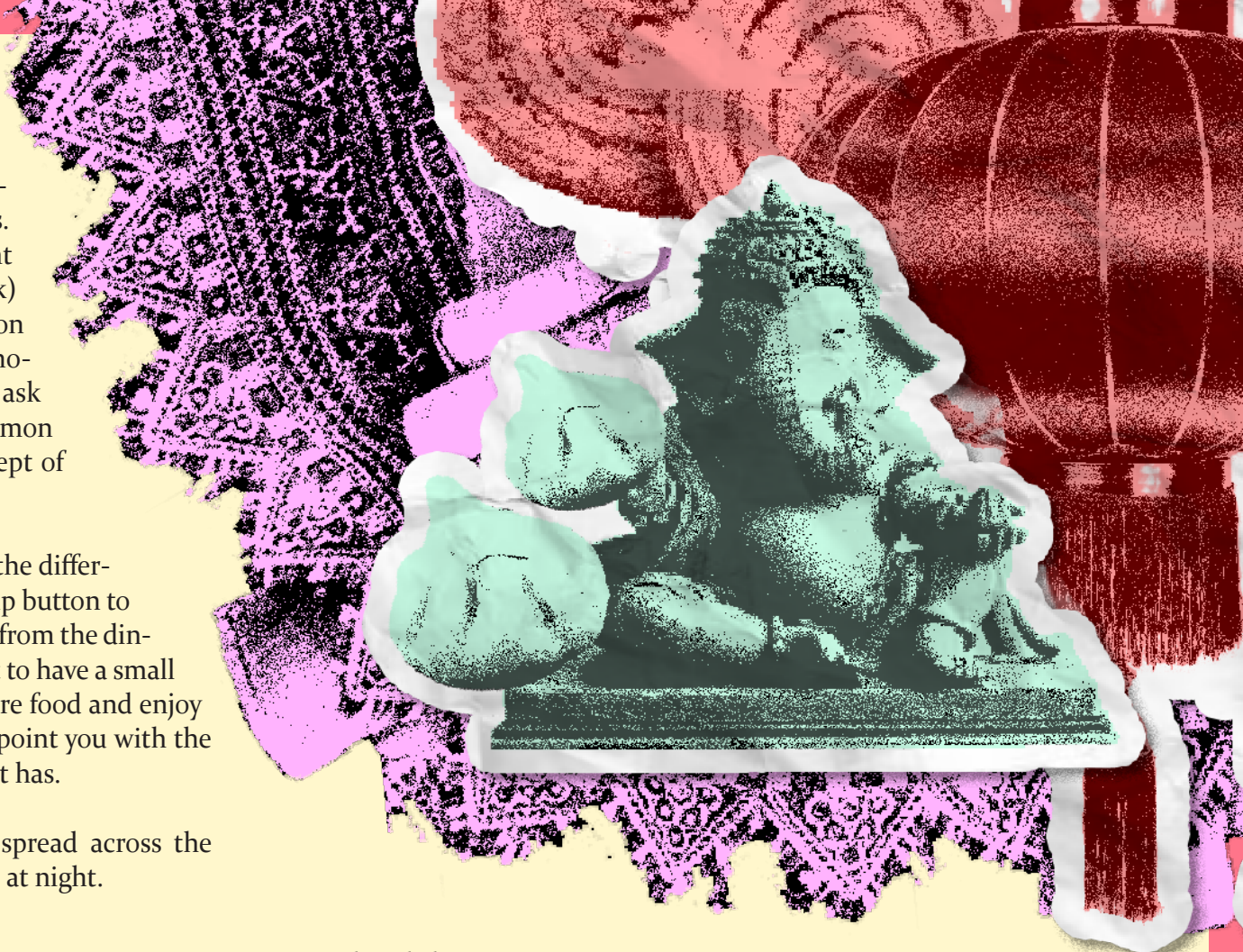
There are numerous other Indian festivals that sometimes even go unnoticed, but the bigger ones mentioned surely won't pass by without a spark of joy in your heart. Some other festivals which you could look forward to are Janmaashtami, Eid. Additionally, the cultural events to bring people together, whether it be the Salsa Nite in September, or the 'Trad Day' of your department to commemorate Indian attire and tradition, will always be a delight to your memory while being here. Make sure you do not miss out on these events by keeping a check on your webmail as well as posters placed almost everywhere around the campus for your eyes to notice.

You are Different(?)

The campus and its ways may seem very different from what you might be used to, just like any other new place we go to. While most people are open and helpful, you might often feel stressed among your peers or colleagues in adjusting to an entirely new place with different people. This feeling of settling in and keeping up with your own expectations may be hard at times and cause mental distress for some. But it is worth knowing that some inconveniences might just be inflated in our minds. It gets easier as time passes and you learn to be rooted in India and its people.

Getting accustomed to a city having a crowd, maybe twice as big as your entire country, might be one of the primary surprises that you must have encountered, and it's even harder when you decide to be among the ones you do not share a common background with, in terms of culture, ethnicity, habits and so forth. Guess what? You are not alone. The best way to smoothen your stay here is to ask for help and be open to taking help from others. Along with accepting assistance, be sure to also help others in areas you may be proficient in. Eventually, many of these differences balance out, but it is important to create a healthy environment for it to happen.

Watch out for the upcoming sections, which might cover possible experiences you will encounter at the institute, serving as your go-to resource for planning your activities here in advance :)



Solving for X-tracurriculars at IITB



The academic boredom boiling in your head can be best extinguished by immersing yourself in the welcoming culture of the Institute; be it any sport, tech society, or a cultural club, these avenues act as the best source of camaraderie to students and help them acquire new skills. Jamming sessions and workshops lined up, along with marathons and sports camps, await you to broaden your trajectory of exploring things while being here. The annual inter-hostel competitions, Hostel GCs (General Championship), as you call them, are a great way to get yourself involved in friendly banter involving cultural, sports, or tech-related contests. Any kind of information related to events/contests by the respective clubs is usually disseminated through their handles, mostly on Instagram, as well as WhatsApp groups. The club coordinators can be your point of contact for any information you'd want to gather.

The Rhetorical Fancies of Clubs and Events in IITB

The institute has a plethora of cultural clubs, which conduct events and competitions throughout the year, including workshops at regular intervals and the flagship events (towards the spring semester) to commemorate the cultural fancies.

Whether a melody lover or a hip-hop influenced Shakespeare, you wouldn't want to miss the gallery of events happening here by finding out what resonates with you. **Symphony**, known for its common jamming sessions to attract the enthusiasts with their music setups and the annual music showcase - "Surbahaar" (tr: springtime of notes) stands to give your ears a delight.

Roots, the Indian folk arts club holds "Dharohar" (tr: heritage), which is your chance to get intoxicated in numerous Indian forms of dances and music. **StyleUp**, the fashion club, conducts Showstopper as their annual tradition of acing the ramp.

If you like to be opinionated and a fan of spars, the debating culture of IITB through the **WeSpeak** community is here to serve the purpose. Wish to groove on some euphoric hits? The dance club, **InSync**, is here to match the vibe through their frequent jamming sessions and the very famous Annual Salsa Night in September. Their Annual Insync Dance Show is a showcase of the institute's dance fever, while **Rang & Pixels**, the avenue for fine arts and photography, conducts Kaladarshan (tr: the vision of art), the annual flagship event to bring the Instizens together for a shared admiration towards photography and fine arts.

Here comes the venture to celebrate the art of designing through Vision (The Design Exhibition) held annually to bring all the creative heads together by the **Design Club**, while the board game nights and cross-words organised by the **Literati** to honour the literary arts, followed by the Literarium (Annual Literary Arts showcase), are worth your leisure. The flagship events go up in a queue as soon as February starts, till the end of March, while other events are spread across the calendar to foster engagement and enthusiasm.



The Tech Clubs are renowned for building an enthusiastic community by hosting events and competitions throughout the year. The RC Plane and XLR8 competitions put the mechatronics of your mind to work, while the MnP workshops and talks satiate your inner research-o-philic spirit (yes, everyone has that, in some proportion). You may end up discovering your love for astronomy through Kritika's star gazing sessions and their trips to observatories. AI, Quant, and other communities have WhatsApp groups, where you can find like-minded people to brainstorm ideas. Other interesting avenues include the BioX Club, Chemistry Club, ChemETL, Energy Club, and WnCC (Web and Coding Club).

The geeks do not fail to take advantage of facilities like the Tinkerer's Lab: A 24/7 self-operational facility. The lab is equipped with 3D printers, laser cutters, DSOs, etc., to help students pursue their endeavours in electronics, hardware, and robotics.

Make sure to look out for what interests you, for there's a lot to explore in the basket!



The Sportfolio of IITB

The SAC (Student Activity Centre) buildings and the Gymkhana complex hold the sports spirit in their walls, with a number of activities lined up for your recreation. You can test the waters at the swimming pool right beside the old SAC. (You have to visit the IITB Hospital with your medical records and get a written confirmation regarding your health and fitness from the doctor. Then, the swimming pool office will issue you a swimming card, which grants access to the pool.) The huge sports ground surrounded by the student residential area has a running track, a football turf, a cricket pitch, and a hockey ground. (These outdoor facilities may remain closed during the monsoon season in the autumn semester.)

The new SAC building, consisting of dedicated spaces for indoor sports like squash, table tennis, and dance routine workouts etc., is also a go-to place for fitness enthusiasts and bodybuilders for the well-equipped and spacious gymnasium. The Yoga and meditation rooms are specialised for their purpose of catering to the well-being of residents and students.

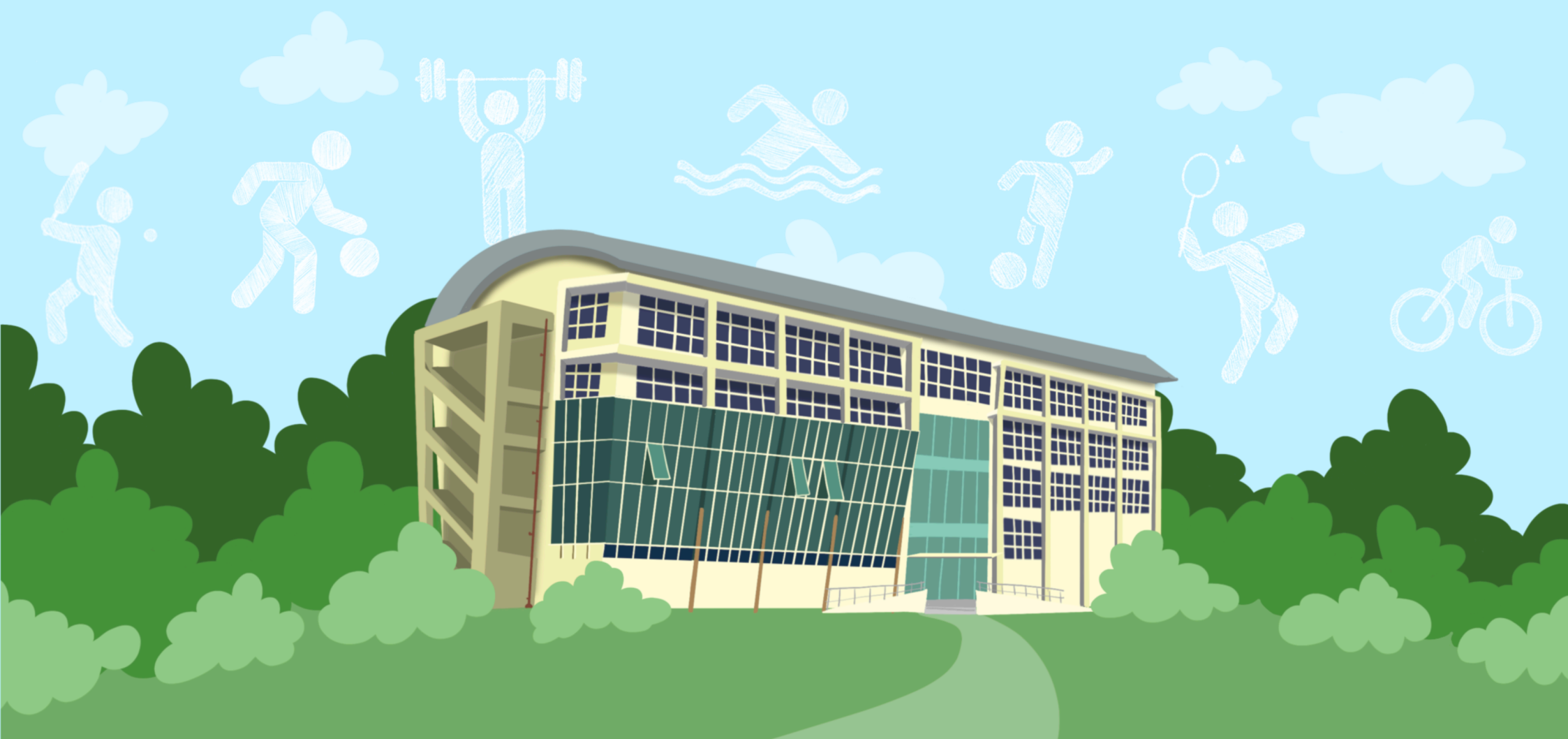
The Gymkhana complex adjacent to the grounds serves as the indoor arena for Badminton, Volleyball, Basketball, and provides a very exciting opportunity for you to explore Indian games, like Kho-Kho and Kabaddi, which will pump up your muscles and challenge your agility in novel ways. The tennis courts spread near the convocation hall account for a good space for its enthusiasts as well.

Even if you are not an experienced player but wish to learn a sport, there are beginner camps and institute-level tournaments to help instil the spirit of sportsmanship in you. You can always approach the coaches and learn from scratch as well. The sports council also organizes adventures like daunting treks, rock climbing, etc, for all the adrenaline junkies.

The H12 shop, located towards the end of the main road in the H12, 13, 14 premises, is a go-to place for any need of sports equipment, or gum-sole shoes, which are mandated to step onto indoor courts. The sports equipment, like tennis racquets and cricket bats, can be temporarily issued in your name from the hostel inventory, free of any charges.

If the labyrinths of cultural, sports, or tech leave you stranded for your interests, there are social activities that you can try to engage in. The NSS (National Social Services) association and Asia's largest student-run social body, Abhyuday, born out of IITB, conduct clean-up drives, lake visits, river clean-up, cloth collection drives, guest lectures, etc., independently at certain time intervals to make us feel like a thriving community which we belong to.

Mood Indigo, the Cultural Fest and Techfest, The Science & Technology fest of IIT Bombay, come with their own fancies and delight towards the end of December, while E-summit (the business conclave) by the Entrepreneurship Cell of IITB invites brainstorming startups and innovations.



Support Systems at IITB

Help will always be given at IITB to those who ask for it!

Navigating through college life, especially in a completely new environment, comes with its own set of challenges. It takes some time for anyone to physically and emotionally adjust to the new geography, social construct, culture and food. In the process, you may end up experiencing health problems, stress, anxiety, loneliness and friction in your tasks, academically or otherwise. Here are some of the key support systems, which will help you navigate better through insti life. You may scan the QR codes to access the relevant websites.

I. Medical Facilities

In case of medical problems, it is recommended that you visit a doctor at Hiranandani Hospital in Powai, as the IITB hospital does not extend its facilities to semester-exchange students. The Hiranandani hospital is approximately 1 km away from the institute's main gate and is well-equipped with medical facilities. You may book an appointment through the website. The concomitant expenses may be accounted for under your insurance policy.



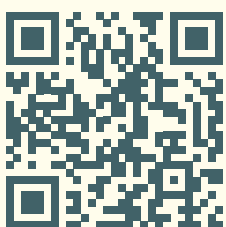
Access the Hiranandani
Hospital's website here:
<https://www.hiranandanihospital.org/>

II. IR Office

The International Relations office of IITB plays a key role in assisting you with the formal procedures and providing access to basic amenities. If you are a semester-exchange student, the office also assigns you a buddy, who guides you through the institute and helps you adapt to the new environment and norms. There can be times when you may require more support than that provided by your IR buddy. It is advised not to hold yourself back in this situation and rather approach your acquaintances or other IR buddies assigned to your peers. The insti junta is always there to help! The professors are also friendly and approachable in most scenarios.

III. Student Wellness Centre (SWC)

If you are feeling depressed, overwhelmed or anxious, you can consult the counsellors at the Student Wellness Centre. They ensure that confidentiality is maintained in both online and offline services. The SWC office, situated on the third floor of the Main building, is operational from Monday to Friday between 10 am to 5:30 pm. It is recommended to book your appointment, when needed, on the web portal of SWC. However, a walk-in appointment can also be availed in the case of an emergency. For the online counselling services, the details are available on the SWC website. In addition to SWC, there are several other online and offline counselling services available in Bombay; they may offer student discounts.



IV. Gender Cell (GC)

The Gender Cell addresses complaints related to sexual harassment through its Internal Complaints Committee (ICC). The office is on the 3rd Floor in the main building. We encourage you to read IIT Bombay's policy on sexual harassment, which can be found on the website. When in need, you can file a complaint by sending an email to gendercell@iitb.ac.in, followed by a planned meeting, which may be held with the respected authorities in the Gender Cell if needed. Consequently, a well-maintained procedure is followed if the complainant agrees to move forward with their concern/ grievance.



V. PwD Cell

The PwD Student Cell promotes inclusion and accessibility for persons with disabilities. Screen readers and Braille printers are available in the library. Students facing difficulty in locomotion, vision, hearing, learning or accessibility can contact the PwD cell using the contact form in the 'Contact' section of their website or by sending an email to them at pwdstudentcell@iitb.ac.in. They can also register for an appointment online on the cell's website, or they can visit the cell's office on the 3rd



Floor, Main Building. The website has resources in the form of video tutorials and a list of software related to ease of access to help PwD students navigate through the campus and sensitise the general populace on empathy and inclusivity. The QR code links to Insight's article, which outlines the facilities provided by the PwD cell.

VI. Saathi

Saathi is IIT Bombay's LGBTQ+ resource group. Working as an independent body, it advocates for the rights of gender and sexual minorities to foster a more inclusive campus. It manages to invite engagement around the year through movie screenings, LGBTea (meet and greet workshops), and publication of writings from the student community. The body organises its annual pride fest 'Rangavali', which entails panel discussions and events like Queerosity (a quiz on queer knowledge). Saathi engages in community building, executes outreach events and embarks on awareness campaigns to extend solidarity and support to the community members. You can reach out to them through their Instagram handle, and can join their WhatsApp community to stay connected and engaged.



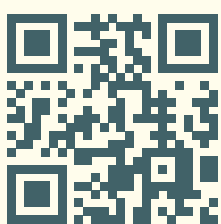
QRT (Security Section IITB):
+919167398598, +919833337979,
+919833338989
Female QRT Incharge: +91916739859

VII. Quick Response Team (QRT)

As the name suggests, QRT deals with emergencies requiring immediate action, such as accidents, cases of harassment, animal attacks, etc. Its team operates from the main gate and can be reached 24/7 by calling the unique QRT helpline numbers given above:

VIII. IT Systems

You can access the internet services, webmail, essential platforms like Moodle and MS Teams and licensed software, including MATLAB, SolidWorks, etc., through your LDAP ID. The LDAP ID is a unique expression of your identity in the IITB technical channel. The corresponding email ID has the following format: ldapid@iitb.ac.in, through which an account is created on the webmail and all the aforementioned platforms. Webmail can be integrated with the Gmail interface. All the academic services, like course registration, display of grades and course feedback, are implemented through the internal and external



ASC portals, which can again be accessed through the LDAP credentials.

Internet facilities - The LDAP ID is used to access the internet services through the Wi-Fi network or the LAN cable. Some institute-specific websites and software may work only if your device is connected to the IITB Internet network. For such scenarios, the CC offers a VPN connection to access the internal sites.

You can find the guide for setting up your LDAP ID and the internet connection on the website of the Computer Centre, IITB.



MUMBAI (or BOMBAY- its old name that you might hear just as often) isn't just a place, it's a mood. A city that moves fast, speaks loud, and dreams big. From the glitz of Bollywood to the buzz of local trains, from towering skyscrapers to vibrant restaurants and stalls serving food that's bursting with flavour, Mumbai is a beautiful contrast.

People come here from all over India chasing careers, creativity, or just a better life, and somehow, the city makes space for everyone. That's why it's called the *City of Dreams*. It might test your patience with its traffic or monsoons, but it'll win you over with its spirit, warmth, and endless stories.

Mumbai Monsoons

Mumbai during monsoons is beautiful, chaotic and sometimes annoying. The rains can be extremely erratic, so between June and September, please do not trust the sky or forecast and always carry an umbrella or raincoat with you.

Mumbai's roads and its rains have a sort of toxic relationship. You will often encounter muddy roads, potholes and puddles. The institute generally never floods, but the outside city might, so travel with caution. Transport might be affected during rains, with local trains being delayed and/or vehicles experiencing more traffic. Autos and taxis might even deny rides if there is a heavy downpour.

Don't Get Duped

Keep these general guidelines in mind while roaming in Mumbai so that you have a nice and comfortable experience:

When you're travelling by autos or taxis, make sure that they turn on the meter. Don't feel awkward about insisting on it, since it is pretty normal here. The minimum fare for autos is ₹26, and that for taxis is ₹31 (night rates from 12 AM to 5 AM may vary).

A lot of items will have an 'MRP' (maximum retail price) written on them, especially if the item is packaged. This price is inclusive of all taxes, so you should never have to pay more than this amount.

If you ever get haggled by a beggar, always remember you are under no obligation to give them anything. Try to politely refuse them, and if they still don't budge, try asking a local for help. Also, avoid "friendly strangers" offering special deals or shopping tours, especially near tourist hotspots like the Gateway of India or Marine Drive.

Be cautious with your phone in hand near open auto rickshaws or train doors. A snatch-and-run is not that hard, especially when it is crowded.

Beware of pickpockets, especially in crowded areas like religious places and crowded railway stations.

GUIDE TO MUMBAI

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FOOD <3

For a true taste of Mumbai's diverse food culture, don't miss out on iconic street eats like vada pav at Ashok Vada Pav and pav bhaji at Achiya or Chaayos.

In Ghatkopar Khau Gully, you'll find popular street foods like pani puri, dosa, etc.

Bademiyan is a must for Mughlai delicacies.

For more non-vegetarian delights, head to Sarvi for kebabs and biryani, and for shawarmas, visit Carter's Blue on Carter Road.

Ramashray is renowned for authentic South Indian cuisine.

Chaitanya is a must-visit to try out traditional Malavni Coastal Cuisine. Satisfy your sweet tooth with a unique ice cream sandwich at K. Rustom's on Marine Drive.

Experience Irani café nostalgia at Kyani.

Linking Road, Bandra
You can find a lot of famous brands' stores here

Mount Mary Church
Hilltop basilica with stunning views

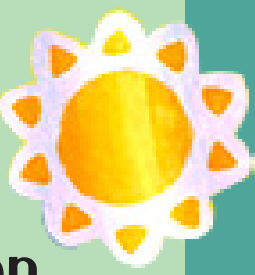
Siddhivinayak Temple
Sacred Hindu temple worshipping Lord Ganesha

Haji Ali Dargah
Iconic mosque and tomb on an islet

Chhatrapati Shri Maharaj Terminus (CSMT)

Marine drive
Scenic seaside promenade, perfect for sunsets

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To Do or Not To Do, that is the question

Do's -

Stay alert to your belongings, especially in crowded places.

Carry a mask with you, just in case you have difficulty breathing due to the pollution.

Dress modestly when going to a place of worship (shorts might also not be allowed at some places). Also, when going to these places, try going early in the morning to avoid long lines.

When trying street food, look for reputable places with good hygiene (yes, they exist), especially for non-vegetarian food.

Only consume bottled water. Try to avoid tap water as far as possible.

Keep small change (not your regular coins, but Rs 10,20 and 50 notes) handy for fares.

'M-indicator' and 'Chalo' are two apps you definitely want to have on your phone. M-indicator helps with the train schedules, routes, and fares, while Chalo helps with the same for local buses.

Don'ts -

Avoid peak hours while travelling by public transport for a more comfortable experience.

Don't hesitate to ask locals for directions—Mumbaikars are usually helpful to newcomers.

PDA is considered taboo, so try not to engage in it, especially outside the institute.

Avoid using public toilets as far as possible since they are generally dirty. Instead, opt for toilets in restaurants or malls (you are generally allowed to use a restaurant toilet even if you aren't a customer, so try asking).

Public drinking of alcohol is taboo and illegal in many public places in India, so avoid consuming alcohol openly in public areas.

Mid-Night Cycling

Experiencing SoBo under the night sky is a unique adventure. Guided Midnight Cycling Tours offer a unique way to explore the city's iconic landmarks while enjoying the serene atmosphere after dark, away from the morning crowds. Starting near Colaba Causeway around 10:30–11:00 PM, these tours cover a coastal route of 22–25 km over 5–6 hours, which includes notable sites such as Marine Drive, Haji Ali Dargah, CSMT, the Gateway of India, and the Taj Hotel. Booking for this can be done online on BookMyShow.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Centralised Helpline	: 112
Police	: 100
Fire Brigade	: 101
Ambulance	: 102
Women's Helpline	: 103
Suicide Helpline	: 91529 87821

●● TRANSPORT ●●

Although Mumbai's public transport network is vast and connected, we would recommend you to use cabs and autos to get around the city, since the public transport can get very crowded.

We would recommend you take a local train and bus ride just for the experience, and not as a mode of transport.

Treat Google Maps as your best friend while travelling.

Local Trains.

Mumbai's local trains are the city's main transport backbone, connecting almost every neighbourhood via three main lines: Western, Central, and Harbour. Use the M-indicator app for routes, train timings, and platform details. Tickets can be purchased at station counters, ATVM machines, or through the UTS mobile app. There are first-class and second-class coaches, as well as dedicated compartments for women. Trains are fast and affordable, but can get extremely crowded during rush hours (typically 7:30–10:30 AM and 5:30–8:30 PM), so it's best to avoid these times if possible. For a more comfortable ride, opt for first-class or travel during off-peak hours.

Kanjurmarg is the closest station to the campus and it lies on the Central Line.

Cab Booking Services.

App-based ride-hailing services like Uber, Ola and Rapido are popular for their convenience, safety features, and transparent pricing. If you are unable to catch any autos, you can also book an auto from these apps. Use these during rush hours when public transport becomes crowded.

Auto Rickshaws.

Auto rickshaws, or "autos," are three-wheeled vehicles ideal for short distances, especially in the suburbs. They are metered and relatively inexpensive, with a minimum fare of ₹26. Autos are not allowed in South Mumbai (areas south of Bandra/Sion), but are widely available in the suburbs and at both domestic and international airport terminals. Always insist on using the meter and carry small change. Autos are open-air, so be prepared for exposure to weather and traffic fumes. Drivers may refuse certain routes during heavy rains or late hours.

Buses.

Mumbai's iconic red BEST buses cover an extensive network across the city, reaching areas not always accessible by train or metro. There are ordinary and AC buses, and tickets are bought directly from conductors on board. Similar to trains, avoid buses during peak hours. Buses are a budget-friendly way to get around and are great for sightseeing, as many routes pass by major landmarks. For real-time tracking and route planning, the BEST Chalo App is very helpful.

The nearest bus stop to the IIT Bombay campus is the IIT Main Gate.

Taxis (Kaali Peelis).

Mumbai's traditional black-and-yellow "kaali peeli" taxis are a city icon and operate throughout the city, including South Mumbai where autos are not allowed. These taxis are metered, with a minimum fare of ₹31, and are generally considered safe and reliable. You can hail them on the street, find them at taxi stands, or book through certain apps and helpline numbers. While most drivers use the meter, it's good practice to confirm before starting your journey.

Metro.

Mumbai's metro system is a modern, efficient, and air-conditioned way to travel across the city. Tickets can be bought at station counters or via digital payment apps. The metro is generally less crowded than local trains, especially during peak hours. While the closest metro station to the IIT Bombay campus is Aarey JVLR Metro Station, we would recommend you go to the Seepz Metro Station on Aqua Line (line 3).

For route planning, station information, and real-time updates, you can use the official Mumbai Metro app or online maps like Google Maps.





FAQ'S

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who is a teaching assistant, and role of TAs in simplifying your academic hardships here at IITB?

The teaching assistants (TAs) are students, just like us, possibly working under a professor for their thesis, or helping them with the managerial work of a certain course that a professor might be taking. The TAs are responsible for catering to the needs of students, if needed, as well as being involved in the evaluation work as a representative of the professor.

You are advised to approach a TA in cases that you find yourself stuck in such as finding a certain difficulty in the material, or tackling some situations in the lab to make things easier.

How do I maintain proper communication with professors and authorities - Mails & Office Hours

While it is a foremost priority to stay away from any misinformation or lack of it, it is important to note that the most sincere approach to a professor or any authority that you'd like to communicate with is via email.

There are dedicated office hours for such discussions, forums, or student issues that they would like to attend, and thus, it can be communicated through your email by asking for their time.

Where do I study? - Library Facilities & Much More

In case you missed this by any chance, there is ample space for you to devote your time towards studies and reading! The Library offers sophisticated seating facilities in its main area for students to work. The treasure of thousands of books and availing them for your reading can be quite a task; however, it is always free and easy to take a stroll through the book sections and take a book for a quick read. If, in case, you need to issue a book in your name for a longer time, it is done through a systematic system. You can gather more info by contacting the librarians and visiting the website.

Need a break? The library cafeteria awaits you for beverages and meals.

Reading Room: This is where the herd of students is spotted and grazed by their academic content when exams and evaluations are near. This is a 24/7 open facility situated near the library to make sure you can panic at any point in time (even after midnight) for the upcoming quiz.

Grooming: Where to get your haircuts from?

Think you need a new haircut? We see you! The YP Gate (i.e., Gate No. 1) Market has some small, maintained salons to help you out. However, take this advice with a pinch of salt, for you'd like it better to go to a proper salon for adding glamour to your face with a facial or a dashing haircut in the grooming salons available outside of the campus near Hiranandani, Powai.

How exactly do you set up a wifi connection?

To set up a Wi-Fi connection (IITB Wireless / eduroam), you have to use your LDAP login credentials, and for a LAN connection, for which a port is in every room, can be accessed by logging into internet.iitb.ac.in after connecting to the Ethernet. For more information, you can check out the computer centre website of IITB, or visit this site <https://www.cc.iitb.ac.in/page/n-wireless>.

Is there a part of the culture I need to know? IITB and the Cultural Shocks

While it is clear that as much as you spend your time here, you get used to certain events which may come as "cultural shocks" to you, there are some peculiar things to know. For instance, you won't find addressing a faculty by their name. Instead, it is very usual to use "Sir/ Madam" in usage to address any such authority.

Another such shock would be how students associate their living spaces close to their hearts. Hostel culture, as we call it, might be something new to discover than the 'dorm' form of living.

Is tap water on campus safe to consume?

No, the tap water here is generally not safe to consume. We would strongly recommend that you only consume bottled water; however, if that is not possible, consume water only from the dedicated water filters that you will find all around campus.

About Us

Hey, folks!

We're excited to bring to you Insight's first-ever newsletter for International Students! This is a collaboration with the International Relations Office at IIT Bombay. It comes with tips about insti life and cultural differences, a guide to Mumbai and much more. We hope it can serve as a measured starting point to know more about IIT Bombay and India as a whole.

If you're wondering what we're up to aside from creating newsletters like these, we act as the official student media body of IIT Bombay. Insight connects you to and keeps you informed of things that matter in our large and fast-paced campus. We also act as a voice for students, taking up any issues affecting the student population, examining institute policies & gauging their overall impact on students. We welcome ideas and submissions from the institute populace—feel free to approach us via email or social media if you would like us to cover a topic.

This is the first newsletter catered to international students. Hence, we would really appreciate it if our readers could give us feedback. We would love to hear from you on the links mentioned below.

We publish articles and multimedia content online on the website and over our Instagram page (@insight.iitb). Follow us on social media to stay updated with our latest coverage about the institute.

We thank the IR office for their support as well as sponsorship of these newsletters.

Enjoy your time here at IIT Bombay, and so long!

Adarsh & Shivam,
Chief Editors,
Insight 2025-26
✉ insight@iitb.ac.in



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insightiitb.org

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