

## After a Gap of 3 Decades Proud to be BITSian Alam Ali Khan Completes his Degree at BITS Pilani Rajasthan

Date: 01.12.2009 - 11:57

Category: [Science & Education](#)

Press release from: [BITS Pilani Rajasthan](#)



Proud to be BITSian Alam Ali firmly believes that When a Mission is taken up with Passion, there are no dreams too large, no innovation unimaginable and no frontiers beyond reach.

In mid 2007, 95 year old Nola Ochs completed her degree in General Studies with history focus from Fort Hays State University Kansas USA to break the Guinness record held by Mozelle Richardson, who at age 90 in 2004 had received a journalism degree from the University of Oklahoma.

The US universities have the academic regulations and flexibilities such as modular approach, credit based curriculum, continuous internal evaluation, choice of electives, interdisciplinary approach, substitution as well as withdrawal from courses combined with well maintained easily retrievable student records etc built in the system to facilitate such things to happen.

Reading the above, one might conclude that such things happening in India and Indian University is unthinkable. All that is possible in India is a Bollywood potboiler such as Main Hoon Na with Shahrukh Khan going to college after many years as

undercover agent stuff and making box office history.

For those who know about Birla Institute of Technology and Science popularly known as BITS Pilani will say that well such a thing is possible in India also. For those who think the other side is green for sure have not seen the grass at Pilani and the college Fest aptly known as OASIS which is a jewel in the crown among such Festivals in India. Students of this Institute take pride in stating that they came here by taking the road not taken by others and that has made all the difference – lines from the inspirational poem Road Not taken by Robert Frost.

Alam Ali Kayam Khan a topper from Rajasthan Board joined BITS Pilani in 1977 to do his B.E. (Hons) Electrical & Electronics (EEE) which was of five year duration then. Due to personal and pressing family problems, he took the decision to discontinue from the degree and went into oblivion.

His batch mates who had joined with him graduated in 1982 and ended up being dreamers, performers and achievers in many walks of life. Year 2007 being the silver jubilee year of graduation, for the reunion to be held in October 2007 at Pilani organized by the BITS Alumni Association – BITSAA, Alam Ali's friends located him in Ranasar village in Churu district teaching in a school science and mathematics to kids and brought him to join the reunion.

Pushed by his batch mates and his own burning desire to complete the degree from BITS Pilani, in November 2007, Alam Ali applied for readmission and appealed to reinstate him. BITS Pilani brought back his records, worked out the balance of curriculum to be completed in four semesters to enable Alam Ali become eligible for the award of the degree.

From January 2008 for the next two years, Alam Ali stayed in the hostel with students who were close to the age of his eldest daughter, ate in the mess, attended classes, wrote examinations, spent night outs in the All Night Canteen (ANC) and the famous Sarath Babu FoodKing restaurant etc. First day when he entered the class, other students thought that the faculty had come to deliver the lecture and were pleasantly shocked when they found him sitting along with them. He was referred as Sir by his class mates even though he was one among them.

On November 24, 2009, in the farewell tea party for graduating students, Alam Ali broke his long silence and gave an emotional and inspirational speech. He profusely thanked the Vice Chancellor and all officers of the Institute for enabling him to achieve his burning desire. He had words of praise for Dr RK Mittal Deputy Director Administration – Dean Academic Registration and Counselling Division and Dr BR Natarajan Dean Work Integrated Learning Programmes Division who had mentored him all through.

He made it a point to thank Dr V K Chaubey Group Leader EEE who guided his final semester thesis. He got a loud round of applause when he thanked the young fellows with whom he attended classes for respecting him and helping him to catch up with difficult subjects and new technologies. Alam Ali became emotional while thanking his batch mates for standing by him all along to ensure that he accomplished his dream to complete the degree from BITS Pilani.

Alam Ali was emphatic in stating that BITSians are destined to achieve the impossible and he was proud in joining the worldwide community of BITS Alumni.

Those who know Alam Ali close enough will vouch for the fact about his intimate knowledge of Vishnu Purana, Upanishads and believe it or not Vedas as well as Buddhism.

If any one thought that after all these years, Alam Ali must have come out of BITS Pilani as Five Point Someone, you will be surprised to know that he has cleared his B.E. (Hons) EEE with a First Division and he is for sure not one among 3 Idiots who may be found here and there.

For Alam Ali, this Id-ul-Zuha (Bakrid) festival on November 28, 2009 turned out to be very special and his entire Ranasar village in Churu district geared up to welcome him. Who knows Alam Ali may be destined to achieve his next dream of doing his masters from King Abdullah University of Science and Technology – KAUST Jeddah Saudi Arabia.

About BITS Pilani: The Birla Institute of Technology and Science - BITS Pilani is a Deemed to be University established vide Sec.3 of the UGC Act, 1956 under notification No. F.12-23/63.U-2 of June 18, 1964. NAAC - National Assessment and Accreditation Council reaccruited BITS with 3.71 CGPA out of 4 and awarded "A" grade "Very Good" status. It is indeed a matter of pride that for the year 2009, BITS Pilani has been ranked among the top ranking universities along with IITs in

various Magazine surveys such as India Today, Outlook, LiveMint etc. BITS offers degrees in various disciplines presently at Pilani, Dubai, Goa and Hyderabad campuses. BITS Pilani has done pioneering work in industry university collaborations in terms of Practice School and Work Integrated Learning Programmes. Alumni of the Institute who are Proud to be BITSians and ambassadors for Brand BITS Pilani are spread across all continents from Australia to America.

Dr BR Natarajan  
Professor & Voce President BITS Alumni Association (BITSAA)  
BITS Pilani Rajasthan 333031 India  
Phone 91-1596-242210  
Fax 91-1596-244183  
Email: brnt(at)[bits-pilani.ac.in](mailto:brnt@bits-pilani.ac.in)  
Website: [www.bits-pilani.ac.in](http://www.bits-pilani.ac.in)

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