

Pleasant Memories about Principal V.G. Garde

Er. A. C. Mehta

Professor V.G. Garde joined M.B.M. Engineering College in 1952 as Principal of the College and during his tenure the college rose to eminence and was considered as one of the best engineering colleges in India.

Principal Garde was strict disciplinarian, a good teacher, hard taskmaster, kind hearted and well-wisher of the students, He was a strict administrator. In those days admissions used to be purely on merit basis. No favoritism was granted.

The college hours were from 8 AM to 12 Noon and then from 2 PM to 5 PM. There used to be regular prayers before the starting of the teaching. In winter season. Prof. Garde used to be at the main gate of the college and no student was allowed to come after 7.50 AM. He used to teach us Public Health Engineering and Town Planning and he used to come to the class in time. Sometimes he used to stand outside the class when reached early. He used to take round of the college to know whether the teachers were in the classes and were teaching the subject.

He was very strict in action. In 1954 one the old boys induced ragging in the hostel. The matter was reported to him the next day by the father of one of the students. The father was asked to recognize the raggers & when he did so all the four students were rusticated for three days from the classes.

His own son Shri Anand was our classmate but he never brought him to the college in his car and one day when he (his son) was not present in the class Prof. V.G. Garde marked him (his son) absent and asked the class representative to ask Shri Anand to report to him when he came.

During his tenure eminent Professors such as Prof. Junnarker, Prof. S.C. Goel, Prof. Advani, Shri Kanti Chand and Prof. Dube were on the teaching staff. The staff was required to be present in the college during the college hours so that any student could approach him for any difficulty. The students were not allowed to roam around the college in those days. No teacher was allowed to leave the class before time. If some one was on leave or out on journey due to unavoidable reasons the alternative arrangements were made for teaching the students the same subject.

Prof. Garde used to call eminent Engineers/Professors of national fame as external examiners. In those days, only thirty students were admitted in the college and Prof. Garde knew every student personally and he gave top priority to the welfare of the student community.

In 1954 one student lost his fees money somehow and was unable to deposit the fees in time. On knowing this Prof. Garde asked one of the teachers to deposit the fees & thus saved the career of that student though the money was returned afterwards. Once at the time of annual examination (1957) two students of college took the car of their relative for drive without informing him. The petrol got finished and these students were caught by the police. The police phoned Prof. Garde in the mid night. He went to the police station got the students freed so that they could appear for the examination the next day. Later he himself took disciplinary action against these two students. That showed his kindheartedness along with strictness.

Once at college annual function the Chief Guest could not reach in time but the function was started exactly at the same time with some other appropriate person present there as Chief Guest.

The college students were afraid of him and never dared to approach him for announcing holiday. One Such occasion arose when the college students wanted to see the shooting of film "Railway Platform" (1954) at Osian, 70 kms away from Jodhpur. The permission from the shooting authority was received only for one day and that too on working day as such the students approached him in front of his wife for granting permission for seeing the shooting and got it with the assistance of Mrs. Garde.

During those days, attendance in each period was compulsory, we used to sit in the class room enrolment wise and if some one was absent, his chair used to lie vacant and the teachers used to mark him absent by the vacant chair.

Prof. Garde was never seen laughing. He used to drive his own car but very slowly. His shoes used to be well polished. Professor Garde inspired awe and admiration in his students. He was a remarkable man who left his imprint on every student.

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