

off campus

World's first club for IITians

Photos: A Raja Chidambaram



Set in a quiet corner, off TTK Road, in Chennai's upmarket Alwarpet, is the world's first alumni club for IITians. Spread over 5,000 sq ft, the club is a "labour of love", as Chand Das, chief executive, ITC-education and stationery products and business, describes it. "In 2008, IIT-Madras held the pan-IIT conference. It was an opportunity for the alumni to bond. The event established a natural momentum for setting-up an alumni club," he explains. Though the club is in Chennai, it is for the over 2 lakh IITians.

It opened last October and boasts of

a restaurant, gym, conference room, library and a card room where you can play Scrabble, chess and other indoor games. Credit must go to Mani Iyer, renowned architect and an alumnus of IIT-Roorkee for creating an aesthetic building in the minimalist style. "The idea behind the club is to bring the faculty and industry members together in an informal setting where they can discuss ideas," says Deepak Mirza, co-founder, DAX Networks. "Of course, it's also a place for us to relive old memories." Mirza is an alumnus of IIT-Kanpur and is the club's president. The project cost

nearly ₹1.5 crore and it was completely borne by the alumni. As of now, the club has 300 members.

Das hopes that other cities will follow suit and there will be a chain of IIT alumni clubs all over the world. IIT-Bangalore has already announced plans for a similar club.

Membership costs between ₹1-20 lakh. The club is offering an associate membership for IIM grads at an annual charge of ₹20,000. The members hope to soon open a bigger club that offers boarding facilities among others. Log onto www.iitalumniclub.org to apply ■

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