



THE EDMUNDIAN TIMES

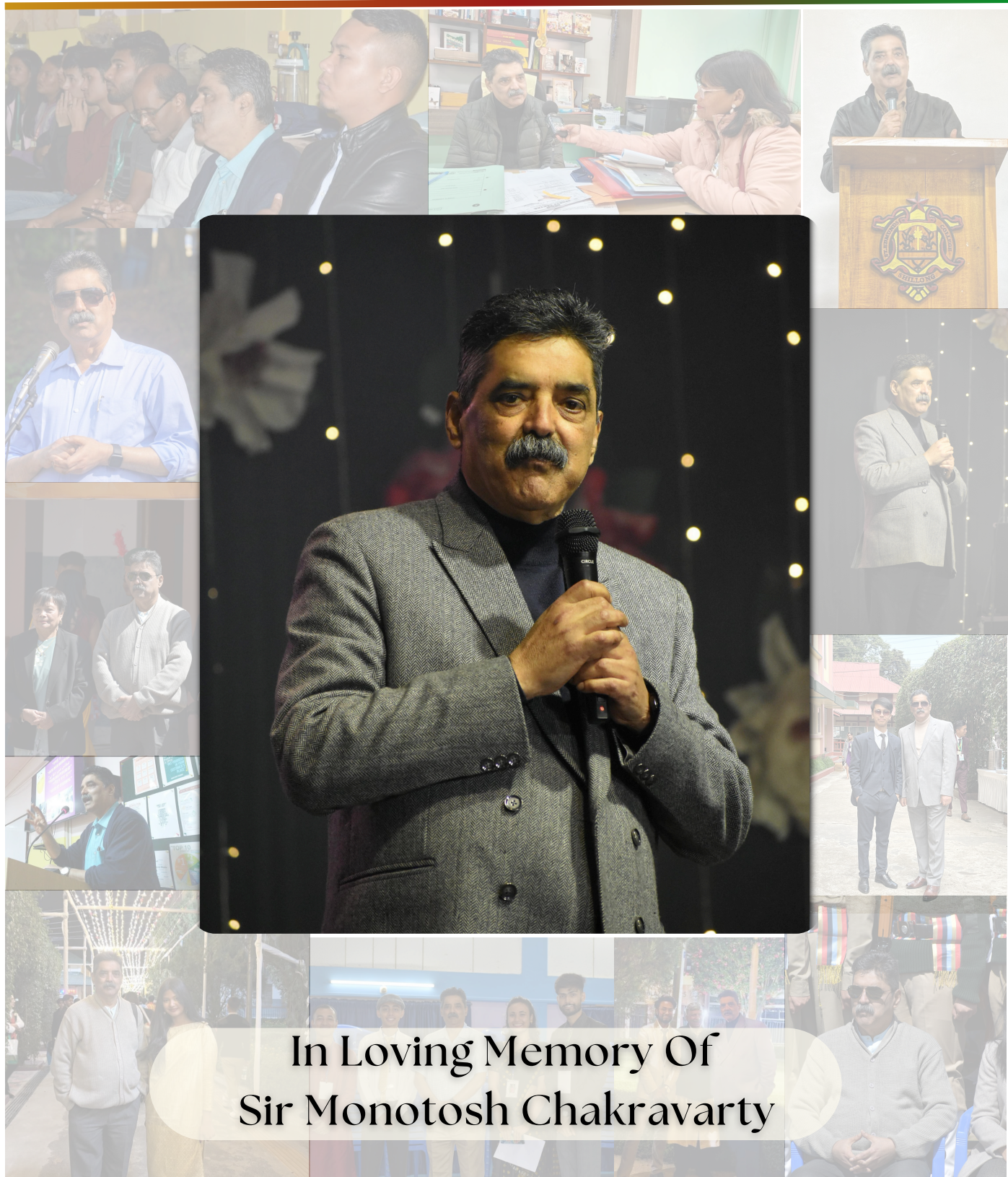
FACTA NON VERBA



Dec of 2025

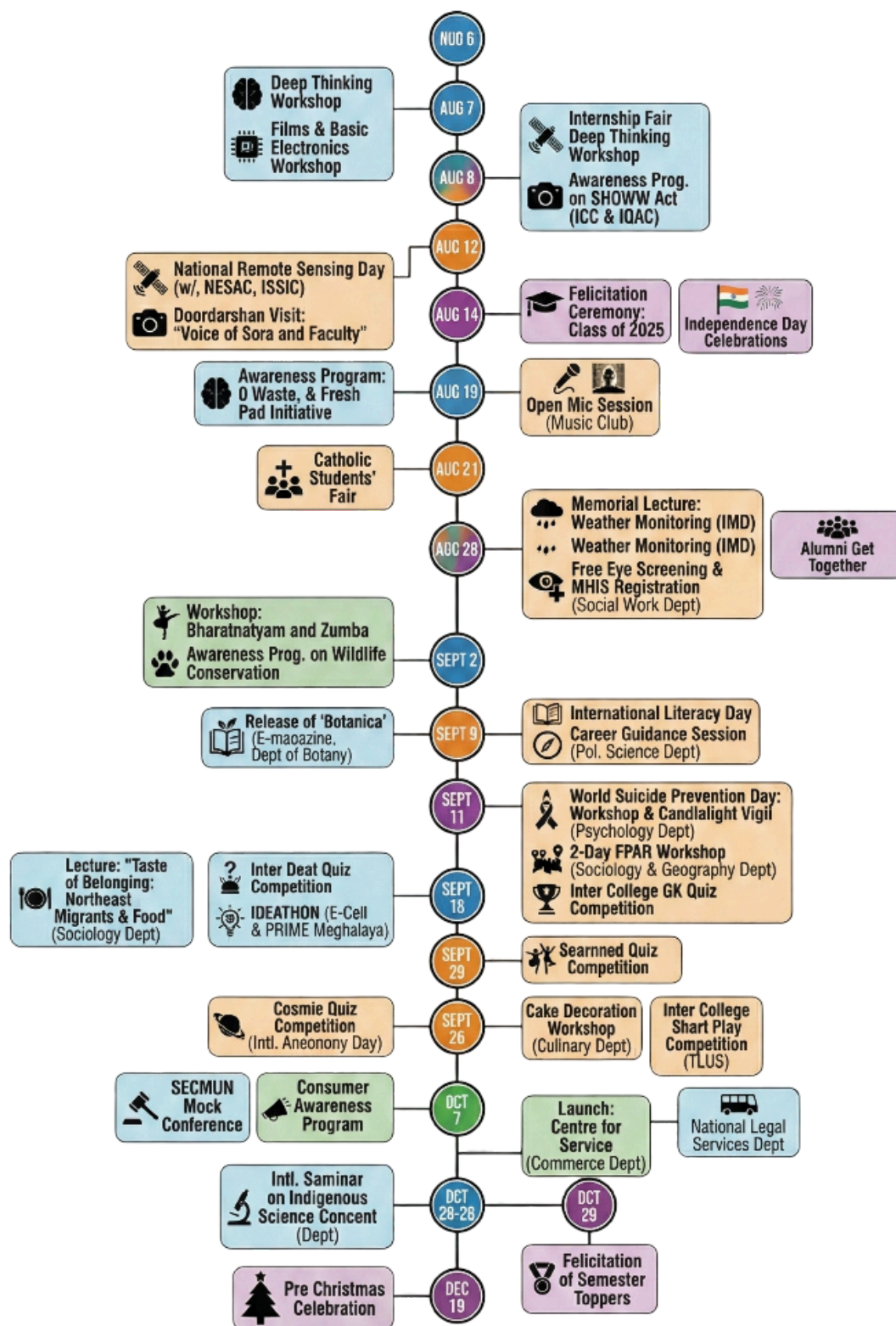
ST. EDMUND'S COLLEGE,
SHILLONG, MEGHALAYA

Issue 2



In Loving Memory Of
Sir Monotosh Chakravarty

Timeline of Events in St. Edmund's College (August - December)2025



A Final Lesson: Celebrating the Legacy of Our Departing Mentors

The end of an academic year is always a time of transition. For students, it marks a step closer to the future. But this year, we also say a fond and grateful farewell to three pillars of our institution who are retiring after decades of dedicated service. They are not just leaving jobs; they are closing chapters of a legacy that has shaped thousands of minds. We sat down with Miss Reema from the Computer Science department, Sir Graham from the Zoology department and Miss Sara from the Sociology department to reflect on their journeys and the lessons they carry with them.

Miss Reema Joshi: The Coder with a Heart



In the hushed, blue-light glow of the computer lab, Miss Reema has been a constant, calm presence. She has witnessed the dawn of the internet, the rise of AI, and the smartphone revolution, constantly adapting her curriculum to an ever-changing digital landscape.

But for Miss Reema, it was never just about code. "Anyone can teach syntax," she says, her eyes crinkling with a warm smile. "The real magic is teaching logic, patience, and resilience. A program will fail ninety-nine times, but that hundredth time, when it runs... that's a feeling of triumph I loved sharing. I told my students: You are not just programmers; you are problem-solvers for humanity."

Her greatest pride? Seeing her alumni use their skills for social good—developing apps for healthcare, streamlining charity operations, and making technology accessible. "The machine is cold, but the hands that program it must be warm," she imparts as her final lesson. "Use your code to build a better world."

Sir Graham b. Ranee: The Keeper of Curiosity



Step into Sir Graham's office in the Zoology department, and you step into a natural history museum. Fossils, specimen jars, and well-worn field guides line the shelves. He has been our institution's own David Attenborough, his passion for the animal kingdom as infectious as it is genuine.

His pedagogy was always hands-on. "You can't learn about life from a textbook alone," he booms in his characteristic, enthusiastic tone. "You need to get mud on your boots, feel the bark of a tree, and observe the intricate web of an orb-weaver spider. I hope I taught students to see, to truly see, the world outside their screens."

Sir Graham leaves with a final piece of wisdom, more urgent now than when he started: "We are not separate from nature; we are a part of it. Understanding and protecting biodiversity isn't a career path for a few; it is a responsibility for all. Stay curious, stay respectful, and never stop exploring."

Lamneithem Haokip: The Weaver of Social Culture



In her classroom, Miss Sara from the Sociology department fostered a sanctuary for difficult conversations. She transformed abstract theories about society, culture, and power into mirrors for students to hold up to their own lives. "Sociology is the art of asking 'why?'" she explains softly. "Why are things the way they are? And more importantly, how can we make them better?"

Her seminars were famous for their lively, often passionate debates. "I didn't want to create echo chambers," she reflects. "I wanted to create arenas of respectful discourse. My greatest joy was watching a student have a 'lightbulb moment,' when a complex social theory suddenly made perfect sense of their own experience."

Her parting wish for students is characteristically profound: "Carry with you the ability to question, to empathise, and to understand the structures that shape lives. Be critical thinkers and compassionate actors. The degree you earn is not just a ticket to a job; it is a tool for citizenship."

Though their disciplines could not be more different—silicon chips, animal tracks, and social structures—a common thread binds these three educators. It is a profound love for the spark of understanding in a student's eyes. It is the belief that education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.

As they pack their offices, filled with memories in the form of old project reports, faded field trip photos, and thank-you notes from students now grown, they leave behind a void. But more importantly, they leave behind a foundation.

To Miss Reema, Sir Graham, and Miss Sara: thank you for the code compiled, the species identified, and the societies analysed. Thank you for your patience, your passion, and your profound impact. The campus may feel a little quieter without you, but your lessons will continue to run, grow, and resonate within us all.

Your final assignment to us is to carry your wisdom forward. And we accept.

~ Anushka Gogoi for The Edmundian Times

A FiTeacher to the Nations: The Story of Edmund Rice

Many a time, when we think of heroes, we think of warriors, explorers, and leaders. But sometimes, the greatest heroes are the ones who take a piece of chalk, enter a classroom, and decide to change the world one child at a time.

There was one such hero: Edmund Rice (1762–1844), an Irishman whose concept of education for the poor has reverberated from century to century across continents.



The story of Edmund Rice unfolded in 18th-century Ireland, a land of despondency, oppression, and strangulating laws against Catholic families. Young Edmund grew up bright and ambitious. Eventually, he flourished in commerce and was blessed with wealth, status, and security by his late twenties, a rare gift for a Catholic in those times.

But fate had a cruel trick up its sleeve. Life took an abrupt turn when his wife passed away young, leaving Edmund a widower and a single parent. This tragedy left a profound impact on his mind and forced him to ask: What should my life really be about?

His answer came in the form of serving others, especially those who were poor and of a young age.

In 1802, Edmund started his first school in Waterford, Ireland. It was no ordinary school; its doors stood open for boys who had nothing. These were street-working children unlikely to ever rise above poverty, so society seldom paid any attention to them.

Edmund gave them lessons not only in reading, writing, and arithmetic but also in dignity, hope, and the notion of self-worth.

Soon, other men, who were of the same mind, joined with him, and they came to be known as the Christian Brothers. Later, a second group was founded as the Presentation Brothers. Both communities today continue to reflect Edmund's vision of education as liberation.

What one man dreamed of from a small Irish city stretched far away from Ireland's shores. Thus, the Christian Brothers and the Presentation Brothers began to open and staff schools right into the far reaches of Australia, India, Africa, and North America.

Millions of youths have been offered an opportunity through his vision, many coming from disadvantaged situations. For many students and alumni, the name "Edmund Rice" is not just history; he is a part of their own story. Edmund Rice's life reminds us of a few things—true greatness does not always depend on power and fame; sometimes, it depends on offering kindness and comfort, letting service take precedence over self, and choosing hope over despair.

Pope John Paul II declared him "Blessed" in 1996, moving him one step nearer sainthood. Today, his example continues to powerfully remind us that education is a human right and not a privilege.

That some acts of a single man can echo forever through the ages.

And even if tragedy lays waste, a life can be rebuilt into something extraordinary.

Harsh for The Edmundian Times

Learning to Serve Beyond Borders

I have always been drawn to a lifestyle and career path that allows me to give back to society, one that extends beyond personal ambition. Working with international organizations has long represented that aspiration for me. Therefore, when I came across the Service Learning Student Fellowship program, I knew this opportunity was not merely something I wanted, but something I needed at this stage of my academic and professional journey.

After a rigorous application process and interview, I was fortunate to be selected as one of the only two fellows. While the achievement itself was overwhelming, the journey that followed was far from smooth. My passport was delayed until the very last moment, pushing the possibility of my participation into uncertainty. Those days were filled with anxiety and distress, as the chance to attend the fellowship in Cebu, Philippines, seemed to slip away repeatedly. When everything finally fell into place, the relief was immeasurable.



The fellowship also marked my first journey outside India and my first experience travelling internationally with minimal support. Fear and excitement co-existed from the very first day. I had a chance encounter with a young professor from IIT, who was on his way to Australia for a conference. He offered to take videos of the view from the window seat for me which reminded me how kindness often appears when least expected. We had a meaningful conversation about countries around the world and career prospects in India.



Cebu welcomed us with heat and warmth. At the University of San Carlos, we were divided into interdisciplinary groups. I found myself placed in the Business and Enterprise group which was an unexpected assignment for a sociology student. I, and Celine who is from Indonesia were the only foreign persons in the group. We were a group of eight people and we called ourselves the Passion girls. Initially, the difference in personalities and communication styles was intimidating, but the group's openness and energy soon dissolved my hesitation. Each group was assigned mentors, and when I questioned my placement in a business focused group, I was reminded that sociology was not a limitation but an asset. The mentors were both sociology professors in the best universities in the Philippines, and conversations with them deepened my appreciation for the subject.

The most transformative part of the fellowship was the community immersion in Bankal. Each fellow was assigned a foster family, and through my foster mother who was also a community leader, I gained first hand insight into the everyday realities of the residents. Despite being a well organized community with its own systems of livelihood, education, and resource sharing, Bankal struggled with serious issues such as poor waste management, conflicts within the system, drug abuse, fraternity groups and lack of government support. The immersion was especially revealing. It also became clear how hierarchy and exclusion exists even among marginalized groups, shaping who is allowed to belong and under what conditions.



Besides all of the problems faced by the community, I was given so much love from the residents. The food my foster family prepared for me reminded me of home as their chicken broth soup with chayote resembled what we Khasi call 'syrwa'. I enjoyed talking to them about Meghalaya and the North eastern region in particular destroying their image of what India is. The children in the community displayed so much love and appreciation for me, to the point that our mentor asked me to return to the Philippines for the children.



Well, the insights I received through the immersion played a crucial role in the making of our Action Plan. Drawing from community needs, we designed a cooperative based project aimed at empowering residents economically and collectively. It was fulfilling to see how one conversation could influence an entire project direction. Unfortunately, illness struck me just as I began to feel fully comfortable and confident within my group. Despite high fever and weakness, my group mates showed immense care and solidarity, constantly checking on me and ensuring I remain included. Their humility, cooperation and wisdom challenged my preconceived notions of leadership. There were no ego clashes, no competition, but only shared responsibility and mutual respect.

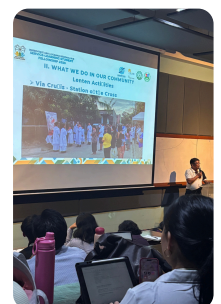
As the fellowship came to an end, the final reflection sessions were filled with emotion. In just a week, we had built bonds that felt enduring. Saying goodbye to people from different countries, universities and walks of life was unexpectedly painful. This experience reshaped my understanding of service, leadership and learning. I finally got to witness true leadership that I have always believed in through my friends- Chloe, Hart, Chea, Johanna, Celine, Margaret and Keith- where leadership is not about dominance or visibility, but about listening and service. Service Learning was not simply an academic exercise, but it was a lived experience that allowed me to use my knowledge to create impact. Actually, every person I met in this program, be it students, mentors or the organisers exhibited true leadership in every way.

I learned a great deal about the culture and traditions of the Philippines, such as pagmamano, the gesture of placing an elder's hand on one's forehead as a sign of respect, as well as the use of 'po' when addressing others politely. One thing that is certain is that the Filipinos have a deep love for karaoke and never miss an opportunity to sing and dance, always creating an atmosphere of celebration. What stood out for me the most however was how open and comfortable people were with themselves. Everyone I met during this program seemed confident in their own skin, largely because the culture encourages people rather than bringing them down. This supportiveness reflects why people are so self assured, yet at the same time humble and graceful.

The Service Learning fellowship was my first step, but certainly not my last. It gave me a renewed sense of purpose and a clearer vision of the path I wish to walk which is rooted in service, empathy, understanding and lifelong learning. For that, I remain truly grateful.



GLIMPSES



~ Naphibansabet Byrsat

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