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A Study On The Job Of A Security Guard Of The SIS Agency In IIT Kanpur

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Prelude

S.C. Yadav is from Varanasi. He is 26 years old. Not too long back he was in college doing his B.A. in psychology. Then, when he was 20 years old, his father was bitten by a poisonous snake. As a result, he soon passed away. As Yadav was the eldest man of the family, the responsibility of taking care of his it fell on him. He had to forego his education and thus his dream of a successful life. The job search hence began. He tried in several private places like factories without any luck.

Then one day, he met a friend of his (from the village) who worked in SIS as a guard. This man told him about the job in SIS and about how good it was; at least better than sitting unemployed. The friend revealed that the work though tough, pays and feeds you well ("Duty to tight hai, par accha paisa hai aur accha khana ko milta hai"). He said that SIS has a pension policy as well. He told Yadav that he would have to undergo training, which would be easy. But for this training ~~he~~ would have to make an initial deposit of Rs 15, 000. His friend explained, in exchange of this he would be given "double joda" (double pair of uniform, boots) and the SIS would provide a place to stay and food to eat in training. It's not like Mr. Yadav had a world of options. It was either this or unemployment. He gave Rs.15,000 out of whatever savings he had left, to his trusted friend Rs 15,000, who then took him to the SIS recruitment center.

There were five other men with his friend on the train from Varanasi to New Delhi, and they had also paid his friend in order to join SIS. When they reached New Delhi, they went to Gurgaon where SIS has one of its three training center. After they were all introduced at the recruitment center, Yadav's friend took off. All the hopefuls were put through military-like physical tests. There was medical check-up, in which they were stripped and checked for height, chest, vision and overall fitness. After this they were given a written test in which they were asked basic questions like 'name of the PM', and some basic arithmetic. Yadav had no trouble in any of these. Of course at each level of screening people who failed dropped out. In fact, one of the five men who had accompanied him in the train was also asked to leave as he failed the physical test. Once the selected candidates were announced, they were told they had to pay a deposit of Rs. 10, 000. They were explained that Rs. 9, 000 was used for training purposes and Rs. 1, 000 was security deposit. Ofcourse Mr. Yadav did not have to pay as he had already paid his friend.

His training started within a week. He was woken up at 3:45AM. He had to report for P.T. (Physical Training) at 4:00AM. After an hour of P.T. he was asked to do 'mazdoori' (manual labour such as cleaning). At 8:00AM he got a break for 15 minutes. After the break he was asked to dress up in the uniform and undergo a marching drill for forty-five minutes. As part of this he was taught how to salute, marching and other movements of a 'jawan'. After this he got an hour long break for breakfast and rest. In this period, he had to bathe and wash his heavy uniform as he wanted it to dry by the next day. Next he had classes. In these classes, the instructors trained him on Fire fighting, Traffic duty, keeping track of entry in a register and different types of duties a guard in SIS may be faced with. Under soft skills, he was taught how to identify people by looking at their behaviour: he was also taught how to

deal with them appropriately. At 12:00PM he was given a two hour break for lunch and rest. He again had classes from 2:00-4:00PM. After classes he was given a 15 minute break, followed by which he had another two hour session on drills and 'mazdoori'. At 6:00PM they let him go for the day. He then bathed and rested. At 7:00PM they were screening a new Hindi movie for them. He wanted to see it, but was so tired that he fell asleep as soon as he reached the quarters. He got up in time for dinner at 9:00PM. He had dinner with his companions, before turning in for the day. Initially, he found the schedule quite taxing and felt home sick, but gradually he got used to the hectic routine and the other 'jawns'. Although almost half of his colleagues ran away during training, what kept him going was the promise of a job worth Rs 5, 000. "Training to bahut hard thi; Mero dost bola tha ki easy hogi, pur thi to bahut kathin".

Three months passed by and he then became a certified SIS guard. He was transferred to a post in Agra near Fatehpur Sikri. Five guards from his batch were placed in that unit of SIS. Within a month, four of them ran away. He did not like it very much over there. "Wahan bahut akela-akela lagta tha; ekdam man nahin lagta tha". His supervisor must have sensed (or observed) it as he asked him, "Kya baat hai Yadav ji, aap ka yahan man nahin lagta hai?" Mr. Yadav replied honestly. He said he did not like his posting and would like to be transferred. He had heard that SIS is in IIT Kanpur and that IIT Kanpur is a beautiful place. He expressed his desire to go there. The supervisor transferred him within no time.

Yadav was quite happy, especially when he first entered IIT Kanpur. He was over-awed by it, its people and all the stories he had heard about them. The campus, the fresh air, the educated people, it all seemed quite refreshing. Then on the same day, he was summoned by the Control Room of SIS from the barracks. There was some basic instruction and the incoming guards were asked to start their duty from that day itself. He went back to the barracks, dressed up in his uniform and got ready for his first shift. He had learnt from other guards that there is standing duty here (as compared to sitting duty back in Agra). In other words, he could not sit down for even a minute during duty; well he could, but only at the risk of losing 8 hours worth of pay. But then he had thought, 'How tough could it be?' That day he was assigned with a senior guard and sent to man a post. As he did his first ever standing shift in IIT Kanpur, he realized the toughness of the job and it's mental and physical demands.

"Sahab, us din to meri nani mar gayi"; "Woh pehle din duty karne mein, mujhe meri nani yaad aa gayi".

But gradually he got used to the job and the people. These things then became a part of his routine. Then one day on duty in front of Hall 3, he felt nature's call and had to go to the bathroom. Unfortunately for him, at the same time the supervisor seemed to pass by and noticed his post unmanned. The supervisor got angry and told him that nothing should take him away from his post. Yadav was distraught...

"Sahab app hi bataye, yeh ek bhagwan di gayee cheez hai; Aaj tak koi ise rok paaya hai. Main kewal ek pul ke liye aandar pishab karne gaya tha, jab supervisor aa gaya aur meri aath ghante ki duty kaat gaya" (This (nature's call) is God's given to

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mankind. No one has ever been able to stop it. I just went in for a second, when the supervisor came and penalized me eight hours worth of duty).

Another time, he was doing overtime (in other words, he was doing standing duty at one post for eight hours straight) outside Hall 1 when he got tired and took the liberty of sitting down for a while. Just then the supervisor came and said, "Haath me churiyan pehan lo, Paon me payal bandh lo, agar tum kharha nahi reh sakte ho... Present body, absent mind... kaunsi duniya me ghum rahe ho?" The supervisor again cut eight hour worth of shifts from his monthly income. Yadav says, "Sahab itna gussa aata hai, jab ek choti si galti ke liye aath ghante ki tanqawaah kat jaati hai."

Yadav faces other problems. He did not mind being asked to work hard, but he wants to be paid well. None of the things his friend told him were true. His job paid him a meager sum of Rs 2400. There was no component of his salary which contributed to his pension. Also, he disliked the food in the mess here (for which he had to pay Rs. 500). "Sahab itni tough duty hai, kam se kam guard ko accha khaana to milna chahiye". At the same time he consoles himself, looking at the unemployment situation in the country. He thinks no matter how much he is suffering, he is better off than those without jobs. Atleast he is able to send some money back home.

"Mein is naukri ko leke rota hoon; Lekin phir un logon ka sochta hoon kinke paas koi naukri nahin hai aur sochta hoon ki main unse to accha hoon"

There are some things he likes about this place. He likes the campus, its residents, the environment. "Yahan ki hawaa mein woh pradooshan nahin hai". He likes some of the supervisors. He likes talking to other jawans and listening to their stories of their home respective towns. At times during his night-shift, when the atmosphere gets quiet, his mind wanders back home, to when he had taken up his interest in psychology for his BA, to his family and to what could have been.

"Sahab, un sab gareebon mein kuch na kuch icchayen hoti hain, pur gareebi aisi majboori hai, ki veh saari icchaon ko dabaa deto hai" (Everyone, even the poor have dreams and wishes, but being poor adds such a big burden on their heads, that it suppresses all their dreams).

It has now been two years since Mr. Yadav has been working in the IIT Kanpur unit of SIS. He is quite settled here. He may consider leaving SIS if he is made to leave the IIT Kanpur unit. After leaving SIS, he wants to start his own business. Though that is all too far for him to think about now...

1.0 Objective

Our objectives changed as we progressed in our project. Initially, we started off with the aim of studying HR policies, practices and issues in a company like SIS. We wanted to inquire into what motivates these guards to work as hard they do and do the job they do. After some initial interviews some important traits emerged. One was the skill of recognizing people and being able to talk appropriately to them – gentle when needed and rough when needed. We were curious how such an important soft skill was imbibed so well across the whole variety of guards. Also, we wanted to know how and why these guards keep their cool when a student (for instance one who has just lost his bicycle) talks rudely with them. After some initial interviews and many discussions, our focus evolved and expanded. Our objective hence is to attempt to get an insight into understanding what it means to live the life of a security guard in the SIS, to understand his work and then correlate this with HR issues.

2.0 Motivation

In our eyes, SIS is a big part of this campus and our lives. We see them everyday standing on guard outside every hostel gate, in the academic area, in the computer center, at the main gate etc. We have especially been amazed at their level of commitment and on job awareness. Even of hot summer afternoons and chilly winter nights, they are out there – standing and making their rounds. Most of them are very pleasant and we have been friendly with quite a few over many years. All this is one of the roots of our desire to learn more about their life, their motivations and skills. Also we wanted to learn more about HR policies and practices of SIS which brings about this excellent performance of their guards in spite of the nature of the job.

3.0 Methodology

Data was collected using a variety of informal and formal means.

First, a Description and Analysis of the informal means

1. We raised our awareness of the guards presence and noticed them when we moved about in campus. This gave us a good opportunity to notice them when they are off their 'guard'. Subtle points which were noticed and expressed through other means were confirmed using this method.
2. We talked to some of them independently in a very informal way, especially those who we had befriended over the years, and who were quite free with us. These discussions were spontaneous. We generally did not have any set questions and issues in mind. We would have spoken to about ten guards in this fashion. We used this method initially in order to get a preliminary idea of the issues we would be dealing with.
3. We visited the barracks where the SIS guards live and spent some time with them. In retrospect, a tape recorder would have been helpful as the information coming from so many different mouths was difficult to recall later. Though often it was difficult to recollect exact details, this activity was useful as we got an idea of their living conditions, and leisure activities.

These methods, though useful in many ways lacked a certain sense of planning. As we noticed later, many issues are hidden in small dialogues that these guards make. We missed out on some of these as often we did not note down things and could not recall exact dialogues made. These preliminary points helped us prepare an initial questionnaire which was modified as we went along and by the end we could get right down to the concerned issues. Though it may be noted that we spent a tangible portion of our time on things from which we could not get any 'hard' information.

Description & Analysis of Formal Methods

The bulk of the research was through one-on-one personal interviews, of numerous guards, supervisors, one 2IC (Second In- Command) and the Unit Commander. This was supported by times when we 'formally' observed them with them being aware of our presence. Initially when we interviewed them we took notes on paper. We soon switched to a tape recorder to interview the guards. This proved to be very useful as we could focus on the conversation and look at the expressions of the guards. Initially we were concerned that they may become self conscious on looking at the pad, or the recorder. But these fears seem to be unfounded, as their reactions seemed to be independent of our approach, they seemed to express themselves very openly in either case and did not even notice the recorder after a few minutes.

Initially, we were focused on following a set order of questions. Also initially, we did not note down specific dialogues of these guards, which we later discovered were very sometimes quite insightful at second glance. As we later went on to using a tape recorder for our interviews, we also shifted to a less structured interview. Before each interview, we reviewed the past work and noted any particular points which we were keen to get a perspective on, so that we could remember to touch upon them in the interview. We let the interview be governed by the responses of the guard and the (dynamic) questions that arose in our heads after listening to his response. We believe this was very useful, as each interview led to a story in itself. In spite of this many common aspects came out from these interviews (as shall be highlighted). This we believed was the best methodology which we arrived at via some evolution through our experience from the home assignment on job description and various initial interviews.

One very useful question we asked was about the happiest and saddest moment in the guards' life here in IIT Kanpur. Answers to this question gave us a lot of insight into the lives, work and motivations of the guards.

A problem we faced which was expected was our lack of knowledge of our own mother tongue. Many a times we did not know how to express words like 'Motivation' in Hindi. We had to resort to various techniques like drawing analogies, narrating short (upto 2 minute long) to explain a simple word. As a result at times the interviewee (the guard) got lost and was not able to comprehend our question. We realized our deficiency very early on and learned some of the critical words. This helped us in our interviews and by the end of the project our interviews became much more efficient.

Another aspect was formally observing the guards at work by sitting in the control room of SIS for a period of a few hours. We kept the tape recorder on during this process in the hope of some interesting dialogue or event. We observed some of the 'fall-ins' i.e. guards assembly at

the control room at the beginning of a duty shift. It so happened that on one of the day^s we were doing this, the SIS had caught a thief (stealing some kind of pipes, from the construction area of Hall 9) at the exact same time. We witnessed the proceedings first hand and shall correlate with it at relevant places in the report. 7

We do not believe that under our observation they behaved differently, as by this time we had visited the control room often enough, to be roughly aware of their activities at that hour. Also, they did not seem to be faking their activities and/or dialogues. Generally they did not mind our presence and were quite forthcoming.

Additionally, we could have been a pseudo guard for a day or more. This would have given us a much better idea of what it is like to be a guard and given us a much deeper insight into what they go through each day.

4.0 Job Description

Guard

- A guard in the IIT Kanpur unit of SIS is assigned two four hour shifts in a day.
- There are three types of guards on campus. One type of guard performs a stationary duty. The other type of guard performs patrolling duty. The third sits in the control room.
- We shall first cover the stationary guard, who stays at a the same location such as a hostel for the duration of the shift. The guard must ensure campus property is not misused (rooms broken into, things stolen etc.) in his area. He must check that all rooms and vehicles are locked and that all boundary walls and fences are secure. At places his job is to regulate and keep a check on entry, and ensure no unauthorized outsiders are attempting entry. During these shifts, he must remain standing except at places like Computer Centre, CSE building and Library.
- The patrolling guard patrols his area on a cycle. This is done in the faculty residence area and areas which have lot of loopholes (in terms of security i.e. lack a distinct boundary etc.) This guard also keeps a check on other guards in this area but also keeps the area secure.
- The control room guard sits in the control room and helps in the maintenance of duty records which will be compiled monthly to issue salaries. Also, the control room guard is responsible for transferring messages between guards, supervisors, campus residents, Second-In-Command and the Unit Commander. These messages may vary from one guard asking for a wake up call for his shift at 4:00AM to a guard asking for back-up when he reports something suspicious in his area. He also helps to keep the guards alert by periodically calling them on the walkie-talkie or the phone (there is atleast one at every post). The control room guard is also the primary liaison to deal with any student or faculty member who has been robbed.
- All guards must keep an eye out for people who might be a threat to security. In order to do this they are free to ask anyone for his/her identity card or whereabouts, but must do so in a polite manner. They must check all visitors (from outside campus) for permission. In case he sees or suspects any mishap, they must immediately inform the Control room (using the phone at his booth or the walkie-talkie provided to him) and then proceed to take appropriate action. In case of any mishap involving non-campus residents, they must take action against the non-campus resident.

- Another part of their job is to catch thieves (who have stolen from within the campus), extract from them as much information as possible and hand them over to the police.
- Guards are also involved in dealing with emergencies such as car accidents and fires. They coordinate the interaction between the external police and fire officials and the campus.
- The ultimate purpose of a SIS guard in IIT Kanpur is to provide a secure environment for the campus community.

Supervisor

- A supervisor also has two four hour shifts in a day.
- A supervisors' job is to supervise security in the whole campus. In each shift there are two supervisors who decide amongst themselves how to cover the area.
- He must cycle in campus for upto three out of the four hours, keeping a check on guards. He varies his cycling trip route, timing etc. from shift to shift in order to maintain an element of surprise in his checks. This helps him keep the guards alert.
- The basic job is to control, monitor and motivate the guards.
- Also, along with the control room guard, he must maintain the records of the guards and their duties in various shifts. Based on this record the guards are paid at the end of the month. The supervisor has the authority to cut the wages for the shifts of any of his subordinates if he finds them lacking in duty.
- During the day time (i.e. 8:00AM-8:00PM), one supervisor must be stationed at the main gate of the Institute. This is a must given the tough and busy nature of the job at the institute gate. The supervisor at the gate supervises the working of the other two guards and in general allows smooth functioning of that post.

We have talked to people outside of this hierarchy but our focus has been on the job of a guard and hence, we have concentrated on his and his immediate superiors' job.

5.0 Job Specification

The nature of the job at the most basic level does not demand highly extra-ordinary skills. The very non-selective and broad nature of the hiring process also emphasizes that. Perhaps SIS believes all that is relevant can be learnt. A large majority of the work, as one guard put it, involves '*danda putakna*' (banging a stick while on patrol) or '*kalam chalana*' (moving a pen, on entry/exit registers). But the skill set of a 'typical' guard has more elements. We shall state these skills and attitudes here...

1. **Discipline-** Guards need to be disciplined in their jobs. They must be on time for their duty. They must be neatly dressed and clean shaven for their shifts. This discipline helps them through the tough phases on the job. These tough phases could be in the form of scorching heat or an angry and rude student. If a guard is disciplined, he will be able to curb his 'human' instincts, which will lead to him doing the best possible job as a guard. It must be noted here, that such a general quality is a necessity to succeed in any job, but this attribute acquires special significance when it comes to uniform centered jobs like this (and the army etc.).

2. **Patience** - In terms of attitudes, patience is always going to help get over a dull shift in a location with zero activity and no room to even occupy oneself by patrolling, such as the SAC. More generally, in being able to deal with the tough life of being a guard, attitude matters. The job, one of '*majboori*' (necessity) is something no-one likes. But a lot of the guards, especially the promoted ones, were more philosophical about it. "*Abhi yeh hi kismat me hai, to yeh hi achchhi tarah karenge* (if this is what is our destiny, then at least we will do this well)", "*Hamne kaafi kuch koshish kiya tha, par kuch mila nahi to yeh hi kar sakte hain. To humko apni duty achchi karni chahiye* (I tried a lot of places (jobs), but could not get anything, so this is all I can do. So I should do my duty well)".
3. **Stamina and Strength** - These again help you through physically demanding phases in a job. The shift from 12:00PM-4:00PM on the SAC crossing in the month of May would be excruciatingly hot. For a guard to stand there in the center of the crossing and control traffic for four hours would require some level of strength, stamina, commitment and mental strength.
4. **People Skills** - The job of a guard involves a lot of interaction with the people around him. These guards are the face of SIS to their customers. Hence, their presentability is very crucial for SIS's business. Due to his large interaction with people some basic social skills become imperative.
 - a. *Recognizing People*: This is an important part of their job. Their success largely depends upon them being able to distinguish between campus community and the non-campus community. They must be able to recognize people by their demeanour.

This was of note, as we learnt there are numerous events where outsiders are roughed up immediately on being recognized. If a student was ever accidentally in a situation like that, we would definitely have heard about that. But this is not something we have come across. And the guards had a very high confidence in this ability of theirs. The way SIS goes about ensuring their guards to be competent in this skill is by addressing this in their training. Also, all new guards are rotated around various posts, so as to learn the faces and begin making distinctions between people from the campus and those from the outside.

As one guard explained, it is not difficult to tell the difference. He said, an outsider, who is up to no good, would shuffle nervously and keep looking around. His movements would not be unconscious (like those of the students). This would raise the suspicions of the guard. In many cases this skill is quite notable. In others it is very subtle. A guard mentioned that he could spot an IITian at a crowded railway station. We also noticed that at the gate, young men on motorcycles coming for a round of campus from city would be instantly recognized, even though they seemed to be from a middle class background.

We were curious about whether this skill was something learnt in training, something learnt on the job, or something inherent? When we say inherent, we mean a social skill, which is existent in every human by the virtue of the diverse society we live in. This possibility arises, as this is not a skill, which SIS looks for in the Hiring tests. Is this a

skill, which every guard is expected to have (unconscious) and then develop it consciously through training and on job training. What seems to be emerging is that this is something quite inherent, as guards are quite in tune to apparent class distinctions. The skill is something that is addressed in the training, and most guards attributed it to that. But on learning about how it was actually done, we feel that a lot was based on utilization of the inherent potential. Perhaps just beginning to be conscious of doing that started in training, which is why guards attribute accordingly. Though most did agree as we expect that it is basically the experience which refines it, though all admitted that this one aspect of the job is something they are always very nervous about this on the first day at a new post.

- b. *Dealing with different people differently:* Based on their recognition of people they must be able to adapt their talking styles. For example, they must talk with an Auto-Rickshaw driver in a different tone as compared to that of a student or faculty.

- c. Guards also deal with a lot of angry customers. For instance, a student who has lost his bicycle. In such cases, it is of utmost importance for them to not lose their cool even when he is taking his anger out on the guard and SIS. The first job of the guard is to calm him down and take a report of things fact fully. We noticed that across shifts, the control room guards were very friendly and jovial. These are the first people an angry customer would interact with and they need to calm him or her down and people skills are important there.

5. **Area awareness** – We can derive this as a form of spatial ability. This seems to be a subtle skill we have come across, which is specific to this kind of a job (job of a SIS guard in IITK). Also, this skill is very important in promotions (see section on Compensation and Performance). Knowing the area in which SIS provides security is critical to a guards' job. This is very obvious as if he knows the area well; he can potentially do a good job of guarding it. This is especially important for the control room guard, patrolling guard and the supervisor.
6. **Memory** - Recognizing people just by a glance also requires a very good memory. Most guards, who are new at a post, can begin to memorize peoples' faces and begin relating to them. This is again very critical as recognizing people is a very important skill. In the case of the control room guard and the supervisor, this becomes an even more important skill as they are required to know the names and faces of about 180 guards and their exact location on campus at any time (at any time on campus, there are 60 guards posted). This greatly helps the supervisor in supervising and keeping a check on performances.
7. **Aware of in-campus office hierarchy and who to contact in times of different kinds of situations-** This is also a part of the guards' job. This is because, people often stop to ask them for help, directions etc. In such cases they have to be able to answer queries. They are also asked questions like, from whom to get the permission for this activity etc. For such questions they need to know about the hierarchy of the in-campus offices and which office/department is in-charge of what.

8. **Basic Education** - Skills like education are valued. Some basic level (inter pass) is expected as work can often involve 'kalam chalana'. Other skills like knowledge of using a computer are necessary in places where there is digital entrance registry. Most of these are acknowledged through the education allowance component of the salaries.
9. Ability to deal with special emergencies like Fire fighting, riots, shooting etc. This ability is required simply because guards can be faced with similar situations during their job.

In the case of the supervisor, all the above skill-sets are also required. In addition their job demands one more skill. The job requires him to be able to motivate the guards to do their duty well. One must understand that given the nature of the guard's job, this is a very difficult skill to master. A supervisor uses various techniques to motivate the guards. We shall cover these in a later section.

6.0 What it means to be a guard

6.1 General description

We have explained the nature of their job under the heading of Job description. But, there are many finer aspects, which are hidden from that description. We shall try to touch upon them. Our aim is to actually understand what it is like to be a guard in SIS at IIT Kanpur.

SIS guards aim to provide a secure environment for the campus community. This campus has two kinds of people; campus community (students, faculty and employees) and non-campus community. Campus community which, are dominant in this campus are the ones for which SIS is supposed to provide security. The irony of their (SIS's) job is that they are expected to provide security in a place, which is dominated, by a group of people who they cannot raise a finger on. This would have been all right if the source of majority of the trouble would not have been part of the campus-community. We ourselves are the primary source for security problems on campus. Stolen cycles, mobiles etc. are due to our carelessness. And, SIS gets the blame. What makes it worse for SIS, is that they can not raise their voices or complain. If they do, any student or employee may complain against them, which will cost the guard dearly (8 hours worth duty will be cut from his salary). To bolster our point we shall narrate an incident: -

In the afternoon, at the SAC crossing, the guard was standing there guiding the traffic. A professor approached the crossing (in his car) from the VH side. At the same time, another employee approached the crossing (also in his car) from the Hall 2 side. As the employee was traveling at a high speed the guard whistled at him indicating him to reduce his speed. As he did not, the professor and the employee arrived at the crossing nearly simultaneously. An accident could have taken place. The professor stopped his car dead at the crossing and called the SIS guard. He asked him to register a complaint in the name of the employee to SIS with the vehicle number, in addition to sternly speaking to him. The professor also reprimanded him as to why was he not doing his duty properly (because if he was the employee would not be speeding in his car). The SIS guard told the professor, "*Sahab who aapke saamne gaadi rok ke khada hai, app hi bol di jiye; hum nahin bol sakte. (Sir, his car is right in front of you, perhaps you could make the complaint, as I cannot do it)*" The professor then told the guard some other thing regarding his duty and drove off. The employee also drove off, and the guard continued on his duty. When we walked up to the

guard to ask him regarding this situation, he said, "Sahab aap hi bataye, agar mein karamchahi ki complain karoonga, to who mujhse bolega kit um SIS mein hoke humari complain kar rahe ho! Is gusse mein yadi weh humari complain kar diya control room mein, to humari aath ghante ki salary cut jayegi. Aur doosri aur yadi mein uski complain nahin karoonga to ho sakta hai ki professor humari complain kar de, yeh keh ki hum apni duty acche se nahin kar rahe the. Aage khayee peeche kuan. (If I complain against the employee, he'll demand who I am to complain about him. In his anger, he may complain about me and I will loose eight hours salary. But if I do not, then the professor may complain. Its like a cliff in the front and a well at the back)"

There is another ultimate irony in the job of a guard. It lies in when we say a guard or a security company is doing well. A security company is visibly doing well when it is catching lot of thieves on campus. At the same time, it is seemingly doing well if there are no reported thefts or caught thieves. But does 'no caught thieves' imply that there are no thieves and security is really doing their job well or that there are no thieves, which would imply you in-effect do not need a security guard or company. This paradox shows up in paradoxical performance measures also. A guard is praised (given monetary reward) when he catches a thief. A guards' name is also noted if he is regular in his duty, well disciplined, high turnout, no complaints or news of incidents from his area. Although in this case, he is not given monetary benefit (he is at times, but it is very rare; see section on compensation). Both are considered when a guard is up for promotion. We do not know which one is given more weightage. But we do know this that a guards slack in duty is noticed much more than his alertness. Slackness will show in his sitting, reports of thievery and incidents from his area; whereas alertness will show up as no news. No news often goes unnoticed. The SIS Unit Commander here in IIT Kanpur, seemed to agree with us when he said, "Haan, yeh baat app theek keh rahe hain. Hum log kabhi-kabhi negatives pe zyaada focus karte hain. Yeh is liye hai kyonki hum un guards ko tight karna chahte hain, jo loose hain. Jo pehle se tight hain, weh to tight rahenge. Lekin aisi baat nahin hai, ki hum unko shabashi nahin dete. Kuch guards jinka discipline aur kaam bahut accha rahta hai, unko hum reward bhi dete hain. (Yes, this is correct. We do tend to focus more on the negatives. This is to keep the 'loose' guards 'tight'. Those who are already tight, will stay like that... But on the other hand it is not as if we do not reward or commend them. Guards who are disciplined and work well are rewarded"

6.2 Nature of Shifts

In addition to these paradoxes which guards must struggle everyday with two shifts of four hour each. On any given day, they do not get more than 4 hours of rest at a stretch. The maximum number of hours a guard may ever sleep is 5 hours (assuming he is covering two shifts a day). Most guards though indulge in doing overtime in an effort to earn more money (we shall delve into this issue once again from a different angle). In that case the maximum rest that a guard may take is maybe 4 hours.

During our study, we discovered that IIT Kanpur is one of the very few units of SIS which has a four hour standing duty. Most units had an eight hour sitting duty. As many guards complained of the toughness of the job, we started asking them, which one they preferred, a sitting eight hour shift or a standing four hour shift. Most (if not all) seemed to say that for security purposes standing four hour shifts would be better. They said if we were to sit down in a chair and do their duty, they would become lazy and fall asleep. The duty in IIT Kanpur requires them to roam around, check every nook and corner, every room, every bicycle, every house etc. It is unlike

sitting at a factory gate asking people to sign in and sign out. The kind of security duty required by IIT Kanpur, demands a guard to be active and mobile throughout his shift, which would not be possible if he sat down. One would expect the guards to complain about the four-hour duty and the senior management would explain its necessity repeatedly to the guards. Surprisingly, here the guards explained to us why it was best for security to have a four-hour standing shift. They seemed to accept it even though it was much more physically taxing. It is not only physically taxing to stand for four hours (versus sitting down for eight hours), but also prevents them from a decent sleep (7-8 hrs at a stretch) and prevents them from visiting the city for some kind of outing (due to shift timings).

We believe there are two sides to it. Most guards, who are here, have not been here since the unit began in 1998. They have joined an existing system and accepted it as it is (along with the four hour standing duty rule). Most of them don't question the rules. The minority either doesn't know if the rules here can be questioned and if they can how can one go about raising these questions usefully. Also, a dominant factor governing the words of the guards is the 'majboori' that is driving them to do this work. This four-hour standing shift is swallowed because they don't have any other option. But, there is one more factor at work. Some senior guards do understand the necessity of the four-hour shift. This knowledge gets passed on from senior guard to junior guard, from an old guard to a new guard. As he gains experience, he probably realizes its value. There is no formal means of passing information to juniors. As is expected to happen in such kind of a social setup (that of the guards here) this would be very informal. We looked very deeply into this area, as we sensed some kind of *Fair Process*. But as we looked deeper, we realized there are bigger factors at work and the building blocks of *Fair process* were not there. This is not to say, that the guards do not accept the four-hour decision to be *fair* and in the best interest of Security, but that there are other reasons much larger than *Fair process* at play here.

We also wanted to know whether this decision to have four hour standing shifts (as opposed to eight hour sitting shifts) was a decision made by SIS or the IIT Kanpur management. We inquired into this from the Assistant Security In- Charge of IIT Kanpur, Mr. B.R. Yadav, and he said that this is an SIS decision to do their duty like this. He also agreed that this is the best way of doing their duty. The Unit Commander Mr. Anjani Sinha he replied saying that this was the decision of the management of IIT Kanpur! We did not dig deeper into this matter, as we came across this issue very late in the project.

6.3 Nature of Posts

There are certain posts on campus, which are coveted. 'Good' guards (those whose performances are good; see section on Performance measurement to see how they are adjudged) are sent there. Some of the coveted posts and their reasons are stated here:-

1. Hall 1, at this time (April-May) - This is so guards see the chance to get a cheap (or maybe even free) cycle from the passing out students.
2. Computer Center- It is a sitting post in an Air-Conditioned environment.
3. Computer Science Building- It is a sitting post in an Air-Conditioned environment.
4. Library- It is again a sitting post in an Air-Conditioned environment.

Looking at the posts above, one can understand. At the same time there are posts, which demand a lot from a guard (physically). Guards do not like these posts and would rather not have these. At the same time, good performance there can count in their favour when the time for promotion arises. Some duties can be very excruciating. The most abhorred duty is at the SAC crossing round about. The guard has to be at continuous attention standing on the roundabout, and moving his arms every few seconds to guide cars. This is especially hard in the summer heat. A guard at this post cannot really roam around to keep himself occupied or afford to loose concentration for even a second. For here, a loss of concentration may mean a fatal accident (atleast potentially). The guards can sometime be seen in the shade of a tree, on the edge of the road. Though that is technically not allowed, the guards in the control room just across him do not say anything, as they have been there and know how hard it is. This duty is the hardest and even cuts off life otherwise. At the end of a shift, all a guard can do is drag himself back to the barracks and collapse onto bed. For that week, there is no energy to go around anywhere, even to a volleyball game or roaming around campus.

There are some posts to which 'bad' guards are sent (those who are low performers). Such posts are menial with respect to the other posts. An example of such a post is the post near M.T. section, where the guard's primary duty is to ensure the cows and other animals do not go into a particular area. Although all the guards are paid the same, a slight sense of competition exists amongst guards, at least to the extent of not getting that post. This is the last place a guard can be shifted too for low performance. Most do feel the shame, and work harder to get reposted. There is not that much of jealousy in terms of posting but most of them want the good posts and when a guard gets passed over by another guard for a good post, he often ends up doing his duty even better in order to next time get that post.

There are some posts on campus, which are permanent in nature. These posts require a guard to be very experienced and well aware of the place and the people visiting it. Examples of such posts are the Girls Hostel and the Institute gate. Guards here are seldom changed or rotated. For example, the one guard at the gate has been there for a period of five years. He knows the number of each vehicle owned by every faculty. He knows the drivers who drive these cars. He knows when to stop them and when not to. As he so used to normal activity, he will almost immediately sense something out of the ordinary and check it. It is down to the responsible and sensitive nature of these posts that the guards here rarely change. The permanency, responsibility, and the fact that only a few guards man these posts (max. 20 guards out of a total of 180) these posts are coveted. If a guard is posted to one of these posts, it is looked upon as an appreciation of their work and semi-promotion (a promotion, without a change in their salaries and job titles). Guards, who are here, are proud of the work they did to come here and more motivated (than before) in their jobs.

6.4 Uniform

They have two sets of uniform. Their uniforms are heavy and cause a lot of perspiration.. They also need to wash their uniforms in their free time and ensure they are dry and ironed by the next day. The jacket and pullover given by SIS for the winter months is sufficient for the guards. Although not cozy, it keeps them warm. One guard very nicely summarized the difference between their condition the way we see it and the way they do when we asked him, "*Bhaiyya, aapko itni thand mein buri haalat nahi hoti hai, hamein samajh nahi aata aap kaise jhel lete ho* (Don't you feel cold in this chill. I cant understand how u deal with this?)" He replied saying, "*Yeh to theek hi*

hai. Sahab jaise aapko yeh nahin samajh nahin aata, hume ye nahin samajh mein aata ki aap log itni moti-moti kitabein kaise padh lete hain (This is fine. The same way you cant understand how we deal with this, we can't understand how you can deal with such thick books)''.

In terms of symbolizing a life, there are mixed opinions of what a 'wardi ki naukri' (job in uniform) means. For some guard, it feels good to have the sense of responsibility, and one even mentioned that he always wanted to be in the army, and this is the closest he can come to wear that uniform. Others, especially the guards who have been in the position of maximum problems (eg. Gate guards have to deal with lots of city people) have an almost passionate hatred for the uniform. They mentioned that we can notice that not just here, but even police are treated badly and taken for granted just because they wear a uniform.

6.5 What goes on in a guards' head?

A question we wanted to inquire into was the mental state of a guard during a four hour shift? Or what goes on in the mind of a guard during the shift? Our naiveté in the beginning was to place ourselves in their place without really understanding it. We assumed that if we had four hours to 'just walk and look around', it would basically be a time for us to think about anything under the sun. But reality is not that. It was quite poignant to learn how consumed guards can get with 'duty achchi honi chahiye (the duty should be good)'. There is a constant fear that at any moment a supervisor can come and find something lacking. The biggest grievance across guards was that it happens many time that a guard has done hard work for eight hours, and all that gets negated (in monetary terms), for just a five second slip up.

This motivation by fear happens in a variety of ways. In some cases it is very simple and direct. The supervisor will just make a note and inform the guard on the spot that his duty is being 'cut' and leave. Others would involve a more intense scolding. Though guards and supervisors mentioned that scolding is not the only way the supervisors work. Often the supervisor will speak 'pyaar se (with 'love')' and explain gently to the guard why this should not happen, and leave it at a preliminary warning. There is a strong conscious fear, which prevents any other thoughts from coming across. For example, a guard at the gate in a hall of residence cannot rest for a second. He has to check every person entering, each bicycle, and around all visible boundary walls. On top of that he has to keep expecting the supervisor to pounce in at anytime, so he will do the checks again, and again.

As mentioned, S.C.Yadav told about his worst day on the job. 'The supervisor caught me resting sitting, which I had done only for a minute or two and reprimanded me, "Haath me churiyan pehan lo, Paon me payal bandh lo, agar tum kharha nahi reh sakte ho...Present body, absent mind... kaunsi duniya me ghum rahe ho?" (Put bangles on your hands and anklets on your feet, if you cannot remain standing... what world are you on?)' Though the supervisor was not really invoking the fear of losing the job or pay, another aspect is the shame of being reprimanded. As a supervisor put it... 'Jeevan me do chize honi zaroori hai, ek darr or ek laaj (There are two things each man should have in life; one is fear, and one is shame)'.

The constant fear of being caught with a shortcoming in the duty, brings the guard's mind into a continous state of being on edge. 'Jab duty pak hote hain to yeh topi, bori jaise lagne lagti hai – kandhon par itna bojh hota hai (When on duty, this hat starts feeling like a heavy sack – there is so

much weighing down on us)'. Some cannot stand it and these leave immediately. Many guards get used to it, and talk of losing the wage for a shift as being an occasional part of the job. '*Shuruwat me bahut ganda lagta hai, par abh sochte hai ki duty to aise hi hogi, to man se ye nikal lete hain—chalo ho gaya, agli baar aisa nahi hone ki koshish karenge*'.

Through this tension, the same time there are moments of solitary peace on duty, when a guards mind wanders back home, to his family and friends. This thought pleases him and the thought of him being able to send them money eases the pain in this job. But these times are often far and few.

'Aisa khayal ka kya sochna. Ab majboori hai. Aise khayalon ko daba dete hain. Jo gaya so gaya' (Whats the use of thinking about such thoughts... we brush aside such thoughts. Whats gone is gone.)

6.6 Relation with supervisor

In spite of the demanding and brutal nature of the job, it is quite remarkable that none of the guards had any real resentment towards the supervisor (or for that matter SIS). There were no major complaints in general and most were happy with their relationships with the supervisor. They justified that he is also just doing his job in making the guards 'tight' as that is good for everybody. Of course, differences in approach of the supervisor are salient. Coaching is preferred to scolding by all guards to whom we spoke. But inspite of the tight technical control, the situation is not oppressive against the guards. One guard explained this. He said that in a factory, all that matters is production, so the supervisor will do anything to get more output. But in security, the guard will mostly be on his own, and will be interacting with people. A supervisor cannot force good behaviour in such situations by oppressiveness, so he also generally behaves well with the guards. If a guard is found napping, the supervisor will reprimand and tell the guard that his duty has been cut (i.e. money will not be paid). But in a large number of cases, the supervisor does not actually do it, though the anguish during the period till when the guard gets to know of this serves as a substitute to the actual punishment.

There is a sense of mutual understanding between these two sets of people. The supervisors know what it is like to be a guard (as they have graduated from the lower rank) and the guards can understand the position of the supervisor and his job. In fact, couple of guards told us that if the supervisor does not ensure 'tight' duty from all the guards in his shift, Second In-Command and Unit Commander harshly deal him with. An event quoted by a guard as his happiest moment in SIS at IIT Kanpur at describes the nature of relationship they share with their supervisor. On Holi a year back, this guard and a bunch of his colleagues were free, and had gone to their supervisor's house (some of them stay in barracks and some in family quarters). There he had drinks and sweets and celebrated with the supervisor. After that all of them (supervisor including) went to the city to various other SIS units and played Holi with the guards there. It is interesting to note that at this point he said, that "no matter how much I was drunk then, I did not dirty the uniforms of the guards on duty; To them I only applied 'gulaal' (dry colour) on their faces."

Another interesting observation about the relationship of a supervisor and the guard is brought by the following observation that at times guards can earn more than supervisors (through overtime, or seniority). The obvious question is, that how comfortable is a supervisor in handing out an order to a guard who earns more than him and also how comfortable the guard is in taking such an order.

When this was inquired into, the Unit Commander said, "*Wardi waali naukri mein seniority aur respect rank aur tajurbe se aati hai naaki paise se. (In a uniform based job seniority and respect follow due to rank and experience; not money)*"

There is a definite chain of command and no rebellion against that but guards also know that supervisors cannot abuse them. 'They can't force us to work if we do not want to do overtime. Here we can go straight to the unit commander or even management if there are problems. Some supervisors may trouble us – but they can only change our postings. That's the limit of their power. It's happened that a supervisor has changed a guard's post ten places in one week. This will obviously lead to a default somewhere. But the supervisor cannot do anything about our salary or whether we get paid or not. Our salaries come directly from the Head Office.' In fact the commander himself said that on receiving such a complaint, we look into it. If there is any truth to it, we take strict action against the supervisor. In other words, the supervisor is not the ultimate authority on guards, nor is the unit commander. Moreover, in the current status the relationship between a guard and a supervisor is quite healthy.

In addition, in some cases the supervisors are living in the same barracks. Their relations are with the guard are a bit better. Also, the guards feel more motivated to work under those supervisors who stay with them, as they are nicer and seem to understand their problems. Though a supervisor emphasized the need to maintain a distance from the guard, saying that this is necessary to be able to do his job well of keeping them 'tight' and disciplined. When asked whether this was his own way of leading them, or SIS procedure, he replied that this is a technique taught by SIS.

6.7 Long Walks

One point is the fact that most posts and the control room are a very long walk away from the barracks, and so even after a shift is over, there is no immediate respite. Some guards have personal bicycles and can be seen doubling to help out a fellow guard. An aspect of the long walk and the four hour duty a guard raised was the fact that due to this, every four hours, for almost a 30-40 min period there is a large group of guards moving around campus, albeit to and fro barracks. This is like an additional patrol and is an extension to the guards shift and at no additional salary.

6.8 Relation with Campus Community

The guards in the IIT Kanpur unit of SIS feel some sense of bonding with the campus community, inspite of them being the source of most of the security threats (as discussed above). New guards, are over awed by the institute and larger than life image. Many guards say things like, "*Hum bihar mein ek gaon se. Hume lagta hai, ki itne acche logon ke saath rehke humara bhi vikas hoga*". (*I am from a village in Bihar. I will also change for the better, because of living with such good people*). Many students help out the guards by giving them bicycles when they graduate or by telling them about job advertisements in magazines in the reading room. Guards are allowed to use facilities like the reading room. Some of them use it quite regularly. Many of them watch cricket matches after their shift in the T.V. Room of hostels. Moreover, when they interact with students and faculty, they see them very different from the people outside (in their home town). We did not meet a single guard (barring the one of the control room guards) who had even a single bad experience with any student here. The SIS guards cherish the relationship they share with the

students. Every time a known guard runs into us, they ask us if our project is over and if we need any help. To substantiate this- in a recent volleyball tournament conducted by the students of Hall 4 a team from SIS was invited to play. SIS of course came with a lot of enthusiasm and managed to reach till the semifinals of the tournament. Many students cheered the SIS team on. The guards see the campus people as very able and nice people. Many guards (as quoted above) aspire to imbibe some of the qualities they see around them. Because of this guards also feel a sense of responsibility that they should do a good job for these 'nice' people. Of course, we realize that this is quite a minor factor in motivation, but more of a good working condition.

This effect can be very nicely conveyed by the following:- When we asked a guard about his saddest moment here in IIT Kanpur, he narrated an incident- One day a student reported of his wallet and mobile being stolen from inside a ground, where there were only students at that time. To the guard, who was nearby and could verify the story, there seemed like no other possibility but another student walking off with the wallet and mobile. This thought hurt him no end, that one of the students of whom he thinks of so highly could have done something like this. He could understand of a poor villager stealing, but not an educated student. He mentions that the event shocked him so much that over the last few weeks the thought keeps returning to his mind and so does the shock.

6.9 Critical Incident – Catching a thief

Throughout our research, a typical critical incident that kept coming up was '*chor pakadna*' – catching a thief. Any guard who catches a thief is commended, in presence of other guards, often is awarded too and his photo with the thief is put on the notice board. The award for most people is not of as much satisfaction as the public commendation and the photograph which are greater motivating factors. For one person, the best day in his career was when the Director of the institute visited the barracks and awarded all the guards who had caught thieves.

We had the chance to observe the catching of a young thief. Going by all we had heard about the rewards of catching a thief, we half expected naively that this would be an event of some sort of positive emotion, if not celebration, but atleast some satisfaction. It was in fact the opposite. The guards seemed more worked up and stressed than ever. It was as if the thief was someone to whom they could attribute all of their suffering to.

We conjecture here that the guard, who caught the thief, would be thrilled as he would be rewarded in front of his peers and also in monetary terms. At the same time, we attribute the reason for all the anger exhibited in the control room (while dealing with the thief) is the anger of the senior SIS guards who can actually look beyond the system of rewards and see that this is the reason why their job is so tough and a living hell. This person is responsible for all the accusation and blame SIS and its' guards have to deal with. We believe this is the reason for the anger exhibited by the senior guards (control room guard, supervisor, 2IC and Unit Commander) as they dealt with the thief.

This gives us another perspective on what it means to be a guard. This incident shows us the type of people they must deal with and how the same situation is seen from different perspective.

7.0 Formal HR Issues

7.1 Hiring

Guards we met have gone through two routes to get hired in SIS. One route is via an agent or 'dalal' (middleman). The other is via a 'legal' channel of an advertisement. We shall discuss both these routes and the hiring procedures here. It must be noted that this perspective of hiring is from the guards and not from any HR personnel. This perspective would become much more wholesome, if we had the perspective of some senior person who is personally involved in setting hiring policies and practices.

The dalals lied about the firm, the job, promising them a nice job with easy life and good food, and especially the salary, putting it to be around Rs. 5000. These candidates were convinced to pay up front to the dalal amounts varying from Rs. 10,000-Rs. 30,000 (though this includes the registration and training fee) just to get them inducted into the SIS (all this money for a job which in reality will pay them no more than a meager sum of Rs 2400). By the time they were introduced to the SIS, the dalal was gone. The candidates who came through a more formal channel reached this stage themselves. Once introduced, the candidates went through screening procedures (even those who were guaranteed a job by the dalal). It is difficult to comment on the nature of relationship between SIS and such middlemen. But, given the percentage of guards that come through this route, it is not impossible to imagine that SIS does have some kind a partnership with these middlemen.

Hiring Procedures: All guards went through a similar hiring test. The SIS screening test consists of three sections.

1. Physical
2. Medical
3. Knowledge Based

Under the Physical section, these candidates were asked to run a particular distance in a stipulated time and do similar basic physical exercises like push-ups, pull-ups etc. Some of the guards in their interview compared it to the army (which is considered to be very tough physically) whereas some downplayed it saying it was easy to pass. The emphasis of SIS on physical requirements bolsters the physical nature of the job of a guard.

Medical check ups were also conducted. Guards were measured for height, chest, weight, eyesight etc. SIS demands a minimum height, vision and chest width. In fact, as we later found out, guards with extraordinary height and chest (in the physical domain) are given extra allowance in their salaries (see section on Compensation).

In addition to all this there was a written test, they were scrutinized on some basic General Knowledge and their ability to read and write in either English or Hindi. Also, anyone who was not an Inter (12th class) graduate was not allowed to pass. A thing to note is their emphasis on the guard being literate. This shows recognition of the fact that it is these guards who are the face of SIS to the customer. They must be presentable (while being able to do laborious work for such a low pay) and must be able to communicate with the customers.

These tests seem rather broad from where we sit (what we as engineers and MBA's are accustomed to), but we must understand that SIS hires to make these candidates guards, which is basically a laborious, low skill, low mental ability job. A profile of a guard is very broad and fits many people. Thus these screening procedures allow large number of people to be selected. Most of the skills and traits we discussed earlier are not checked at all at this stage.

IITK has its own criteria for allowing a particular security guard (from SIS) on campus. Security In-Charge Capt. Umesh Chandra personally interviews the new recruits before they can join SIS at IITK. If he does not approve of them, they will still continue to be an employee of SIS, but they can not work for SIS in IITK.

7.2 Training

Selected candidates must pay a sum of approximately Rs. 10, 000 (amount varies over time and because of the additional variable of a middle-man) for the purpose of their training in SIS. SIS (as told by the guards) uses this money to buy the new employees uniform, boots and satisfy their overall training needs. We have no reason to doubt their words, except we believe this money has another more subtle purpose. This money is like a guarantee to the SIS that these new employees will join SIS and will not leave atleast till they get some return on their investment.

The recruits are sent to one of four training centers. Training has been described akin to military training with a strictly followed regimented schedule starting at 4 in the morning, with a sequence of physical drills, parades in uniform, work such as cleaning and maintenance. This is followed by classes in the afternoon. Classes are where the basics of the job are taught. Session include detailed study of fire-fighting techniques, with information on kinds of fires and classes of extinguishers, emergency techniques and even a simulated fire where guards practice the techniques. Other points covered include data entry into registers, how to hone senses to pick up security threats, etc. Evening times are generally free for people to relax after a hectic day, and in recent years VCD movies are shown in the main hall.

There are tests, which involve drills (covered during training), which every candidate must pass. If someone fails them, then the instructors explain the drill again. No one is given up on and asked to leave. This is not just policy but their belief (which is based in reality) that almost anyone can do this job.

Almost all guards felt that the instruction was good and well organized. They appreciated that the skills are highly relevant to their work and have even made a difference in real world emergencies. Even the regimented and strictly disciplined drill schedule was praised. Some guards said that the military training like atmosphere was inspiring. Others were more practical and said that it helped tighten the guards and get them prepared for what lies in store. At the same time most guards agree that on job learning (experiential learning) adds more value in terms of aiding job performance. Never the less, it seems that SIS manages to train these guards well for their future jobs.

Many guards also mentioned that they were lied to during their training about their salaries (as a guard). Although all the guards we spoke to did not make this comment, we have no reason to disbelieve those guards who did make such a remark. If these guards were lied to during their

training, it is not difficult to see why. The obvious reason is to prevent them from leaving mid training. Add to this the fact that many guards mentioned that close to 50% of the jawans under training (in their batch) fled within a month of training, after they discovered the hard realities (like salary, nature of job etc.) of being a guard. Given this condition, it is very straightforward to understand why these jawans are lied to, about their salaries as a guard.

The training for a guard is for a variable period. We have met guards who have had three month long training and those who have had a month long training. Senior guards and supervisors do not claim to know the official reason for reducing training period but their educated guess is the demand of guards. It is expected that there will be a difference in the performance of guards who are trained for different periods of time. Although, we have no hard proof of it (in terms of measurement of difference in performance measures amongst guards from different training backgrounds), the senior guards agree with our conjecture. But they also mention that we train them (on job) so well, that within a month, everyone is upto speed.

We shall next relate how guards are trained on job. New guards are sent on duty with experienced guards, so that they can observe and learn. New guards are sent to different posts every day in order to get them acquainted with the area as well as start recognizing who is who (all of which in the case of IITK is very critical to job performance). This practice goes on for a month before new guards are asked to start solo. Then they are not sent to areas for their duty. Their performance is strictly monitored over the next couple of months.

Guards also undergo periodic training for two days or so annually. This is to brush them up on their (acquired) skills. For instance, one guard mentioned that he had just attended some classes in L-7 on traffic duty. Others talked about martial arts camps.

When guards are promoted to a supervisor, they must undergo supervisor training (a month long exercise). Post training, they can be a supervisor in their job. The guard does not need to pay for this training (like he does for the 'guard training'). The nature of this training is different from the training of the guard. Here skills related to being a supervisor are taught. These skills involve different ways to motivate guards to do their duty well, using the element of surprise to keep a check on guards, keeping a mental distance from guards etc. The relevance of each of these skills is visible in the Nature of the job of a supervisor.

7.3 Compensation Management

We shall cover these topics together as they are very closely linked in the system here. SIS guards in IITK are paid about Rs. 2, 400 per month. The break up in salary is as follows:

- Basic: Rs. 525
- Area Allowance: Rs. 1000 (this is for UP region)
- Rest: Rs. 875
- Overtime: Rs 48 per every extra four hour shift a guard does.
- SIS guards are given extra allowances to add on to this salary. The allowances are given on basis of their skill level or qualification in certain areas which are relevant to a guards performance. The areas and amount of allowance given is mentioned below.
- Height: For every centimeter above 170cms they are paid Rs 65 extra

- Education: Rs 85 for Inter pass. Rs 150 for B.A. Pass.
- Karate: Rs 100 for having Karate skills.
- These guards are also given certain incentives for performing well.
- For catching a thief they are given a monetary reward. The magnitude of the reward is dependent on the Unit Commanders recommendation to the Head Office (from where there salaries come). This reward varies between Rs 100 and Rs 150.
- Also, on an average two to three guards are recognized by the Unit Commander for extraordinary discipline on their job. This is measured by them being on time, well dressed and no complaints in the area they were posted. These guards are given a monetary reward on recommendation by the Unit Commander of upto Rs 100.

One obvious question is how these salaries are decided? These salaries are decided based on market surveys from companies in similar business and based on Minimum Wages requirements by the concerned state in which they operate. The Unit Commander assured us that they take of the minimum wage criteria and ensure they always satisfy it.

The Guards though not happy about their salaries are very happy that their salaries are not upto the discretion of the supervisor. Also, unlike other SIS units here their salaries are paid on time (on the 10th of every month, their salaries are given). Their salaries come directly from the Head Office. The unit sends to the head office the information of the number of regular and overtime shifts done by the guard and other attributes like chest, karate skills, thieves caught etc. which help the Head Office compute the final salary. Then this salary gets updated in their banks accounts here in the State Bank of India.

It is interesting to note that most guards do not even know the exact components of their salary. They know their own total salary though. We did not look into the existence of some kind of a check in the system, which compares the actual number of shifts (regular and overtime) done by a guard and the number reported by the unit.

As can be expected all guards are unhappy with their salary. The situation is not nearly like every corporate manager wanting his salary to be more. Many of them feel a lot of anger about being lied to in training about their salary (or by the middleman). Some feel they are stuck as they have made too much of an investment to give up now. Others have not thought it out and are living one day at a time. But many have thought more critically too. A few guards had similar thoughts "I could go to Delhi and do a private job, the salary may be higher say even upto a thousand more than now. But then I will have to spend so much for a quarter, for a gas and stove to cook and so much more. Plus there the work is so much that in the remaining time, having to cook would be more tiring and further cut into any free time. IIT job is very hectic and hard too, but one doesn't have to worry about these things."

It is interesting to note that through overtime a guard can earn more than a supervisor (one level over him in the SIS hierarchy). Through overtime, guards earn upto Rs 3200. As the scope of overtime in a supervisor's job is very little and the transfers are too many and too frequent, guards do not want to become a supervisor. *This raises a very interesting question. Does SIS deliberately under man their units expecting their guards to do overtime? We raise this question, as most guards we spoke seemed to be doing overtime. And, quite frankly they seemed to be happy doing*

overtime as this represented an opportunity to earn extra money. SIS may deliberately be under manning their units in order to save on expenses and also, keep the guards relatively happy (as they would be earning more). We did not look into this area as we realized the existence of this possibility quite late.

7.4 Performance Measurement and Management

As we have mentioned earlier (in section on What it means to be a Guard), performance measurement is quite tricky in the job of a guard. It is very difficult to measure positive or good performances. These will go unnoticed. Bad performances like sleeping on duty, complaints of thievery in an area will be noticed and held against the concerned guard. We shall categorize what SIS calls as bad and good performances and the punishments and rewards that are associated with it.

Good Performance

1. *Discipline-* On time during Fall-Ins; Neatly dressed and clean shaven; Alert during job (as noticed by supervisor); On noticing the slightest of discrepancy or threat, informs the control room of it; There are no complaints in the area that he operates for a sizeable period of time; On changing posts he is able to adapt quickly and shows the same levels of alertness. This tells the Supervisor and SIS that this guard is committed to his duty and SIS. SIS rewards such efforts in monetary terms. A sum of upto Rs. 100 is added to the guards' salary on recommendation by the Unit Commander. The Unit Commander informed us that on average there are two-three guards every month who get this reward.
2. *Catching a thief -* On catching a thief, a guard is given a monetary reward. A sum of Rs 100-Rs 150 is added to his salary on recommendation by the Unit Commander. Also, he is acknowledged at the time of Fall-Ins in front of his peers. Also, the Director rewards these guards on Republic Day here in IIT Kanpur.
3. *Alert on the job and generally working well* – supervisors mention that there are some people who are alert whether they are checked upon or not. And a supervisor can have faith and spend less time on these, and focus on the others, who only perk up when the supervisor is close by. Though this behaviour is judged more in intangible terms

Bad Performance

1. *Complaints of thievery in your area-* The action taken against the guard depends on the number of complaints, their nature and their frequency. If the complaints are less and not very serious the respective guard is either talked to privately, scolded and/or kept agile using the Walkie-Talkie. If things get serious, his post is changed and his performance in other posts strictly monitored. He may be sent to a 'bad' post. In the worst-case scenario, he is taken out of the IIT Kanpur unit and transferred somewhere else but not fired. These cases are extremely rare, almost hypothetical.
2. *Caught sleeping/sitting on duty-* Again here the nature of mistake governs the punishment given. If the guard is caught sitting in a standing duty and it seems as if he would have just sat

down to relax his legs, he will be politely asked by his supervisor to get up and keep moving. But, if for example the guard is sleeping on duty inside his room the supervisor will cut eight hours worth of pay from his salary that month. Although this seems subjective, both the guards and the supervisors seem to suggest that it is very simple to figure out the seriousness and nature of the error.

3. *Being late for Fall-Ins* - If it is the first time such a thing is happening, he will be told politely about this. But, if this is recurring incident and the delay is substantial, he will be publicly scolded at the time of fall-in.
4. *High Absenteeism*- SIS has a simple policy of No Work, No Pay. For every leave a guard takes and for every shift he misses, he is not paid. Hence, high absenteeism will hurt the final salary of the guard. Also, this will hold against him, when there is a chance for promotion or recommendation of a reward.
5. *Interactions* - with the campus community. If the guard is impolite and a complain filed so

7.5 Working Conditions

Analysis of the working conditions for an SIS guard in IIT Kanpur

1. **Barracks provided by SIS** - SIS provides these guards with barracks, where these guards stay. These barracks are just about okay with average facilities. SIS bears the expenses incurred in the barracks. The barracks have a television set for the entertainment of these guards. Also, there are volleyball courts outside the barracks, where many of the guards regularly play. The guards listen to radio, read, play volleyball but mostly relax in their spare time. The barracks provide a good enough arrangement without any responsibility or headache of maintaining facilities like Water and Power supply, Rent etc. These become big heaches when one lives independently.
2. **Messing provided by SIS** - The messing is provided by SIS here. Guards need to pay for this messing. The messing charges come up to around Rs 500 per month. Although some guards are unhappy with the quality of the food, most guards are thankful they don't have to cook and fend for themselves like in other SIS units and in other Security companies. As a result of this the guard can focus on relaxing in his off time, rather than worry about buying vegetables or cooking food etc. Thus, he will be able to do his job better (as he will be well relaxed). Guards are aware that they may leave this job and work in some private firm for a better salary (upto Rs. 1000 more). But they also know, that they will have to work long, non-fixed hours and also have to worry about their accommodation, rent, power supply, water supply, food etc. Hence, most guards say that they prefer to work here than earn the extra thousand bucks for so much extra work and tension.
3. **Campus Culture**- We have commented on this in the earlier section on What it is like to be a guard. This is a strong part of the working condition here in IIT Kanpur.
4. **Relationship with Supervisor, 2IC and Unit Commander**- The relationship that the guards share with their superiors is not very easy to define. We have witnessed supervisors, crack

jokes with the guards at Fall-In time and the guards retorting with their own banter. We also know that some supervisors stay in the barracks and they are closer to the guards than the other supervisors (from the guards perspective). Also, the commander has told us of times when guards have come and talked about some problem (be it personal, work related or any other thing) with him and asked him for help and/or advise. At the same time, we have heard of supervisors cutting eight hours of duty worth salary for the smallest of mistakes. Supervisors using fear as a driver to motivate the guards (at time of Fall-In, on duty etc.). In the case of the relationship of a guard with a supervisor, from the guards perspective the supervisor strikes a healthy balance between a coach and the foreman from the Sanding Booth at Ford.

5. SIS guards are covered for medical insurance. This is another thing, which, in many other security firms is not taken care of.
6. Many guards like the clean and green environment of IIT. In fact, one did not take up the offer to become a supervisor, as he would then have to leave for a place of more pollution.

All these factors put together help distinguish this unit of SIS from others. And, these factors coupled with some other factors make this job better than jobs in other security agencies also.

7.6 HR Planning

The deployment of guards across units is something quite interesting. If a new unit is being started, the best and experienced guards will be sent there, to start it well and more importantly make a good impression on the customer. In the case of the IIT unit, the good impression was used as a means to get inroads into the Kanpur market, and now SIS has many stations deployed in the city. Consequently, the good guards are shifted to the new units, and later on the ratio of fresh recruits at the pre-existing unit increases quite a bit.

As SIS services are expanding, the demand for guards is increasing. One way to rapidly respond to this has been to cut down the training period. Most of the old guards we met had been trained for three months. Current recruits are only being trained for one month. The old guards are neutral about this. They say that there is a noticeable difference in the discipline and general manner of the one month trained people, but the performance is not that much under par. The senior guards (Supervisors and Unit Commander) say that On Job Training is sufficient to bring the (under) trained guard upto par with the trained guards. As many aspects and skills are job specific and can't be taught in training. These are best taught and learnt on job. Thus, the senior members of SIS believe that SIS's system of On job Training covers up for many deficiencies which are there as a result of the shortened training program. Though the IITK internal security liaison disagrees and says that the change in training has made an impact on performance.

Supervisor promotions also depend upon the general company direction. Since the number of supervisors is much lesser than the guards, they are in quite a bit of demand. Their postings are much shorter than that of a guard, and they can be sent at short notice to say a new unit being set up. A promotion may be involved, for example in a small 10-20 guard unit, the supervisor would also be in charge of the whole unit. At the original unit, the vacancy is often filled by promoting one of the current guards to the position of supervisor.

Another aspect of planning is a supposed rule that says that guards will be rotated to other units every two years. The reason is that a guard should have a minimal involvement and interaction with the local community. This is crucial for security. SIS believes (and to a large extent it is common sense) that a large amount of time spent in one place can lead to a number of local contacts and social ties. A security guard may abuse his powers as a result of these social ties. This will definitely reduce the quality of security provided by the guard. This is not followed strictly. We know this as we met many guards who have been in campus for more than three years now. Even the Unit Commander said, that this is rule of thumb, which is not strictly followed. There are many other parameters, which govern transfers. This though is used as a way to get rid of an unwanted guard if the need arises.

In recent years, SIS has also begun hiring ex-army personnel to fill some of its senior positions, for example, the second in command of the IIT Kanpur unit is retired 'Subedar' from the Indian Army.

The number of guards at a unit and other policies (such as standing duty) is decided along with the customer.

7.7 Work as Identity

We have discussed in class how work is an integral part of a person's identity. We were curious about how this aspect shows up in our subjects of study. The job is something, which is quite tedious and repetitive. There are about a hundred guards each doing a faceless job, protecting people they do not know. There is no real scope for any mental work, creativity or initiative. In such a situation it is possible that these guards identify themselves with their jobs. We believe that there are some factors, which at least to some extent, address this need for identity.

1. Through interactions with peers superiors and administration, and also at many fall-ins, the naam and izzat (name and respect) of the SIS is repeatedly emphasized. Things like do your duty well or people will point fingers at the SIS and hence at you. We have also noticed that this does spread out to the guards, as they do use this point at places. For instance, they might mention that a particular measure was taken, as if it hadn't, there might have been security consequences and then people SIS *'ke bare me kya sochenge (what would people speak about SIS)'*. Guards speak with some pride about SIS and how it is the best security agency in India. Perhaps it's a function of the above being repeatedly imbibed, or other facts like that guards feel SIS treats its guards much better than all other agencies do. One guard did mention though that, 'Of course, I'll think highly of SIS, after all I owe my employment to it'. Though it may not be close to the belonging Iacocca felt towards Ford, some amount of it was noticed at points.
2. It was pointed out that across units, IIT is amongst the most favoured postings. In addition to the clean environment, a lot of guards attributed it to the fact that it feels good to interact with such educated and *'badha sochney waley (high thinking)'* professors and students at IIT. They did speak about the feeling that their job has perhaps some more value as they are some part of this setup of learning. We have noted that the guards value their

relationships with the students, for more than just a chance to get bicycles. One guard did mention that 'hamare IIT ke students' in context of being able to spot them anywhere, even in a crowd of students from other colleges. The way they relate to the campus community and identify with it, shows a sense of belongingness to this place and this unit of SIS.

3. Military culture- There is an embedded military like culture of discipline, chain of command and other things such as uniforms, terms like 'jawans', 'barracks' etc. being used. Some of the guards like this as a major factor though most of the others also appreciate that this brings up an environment in which it feels that each is part of some operation, which makes sense. This culture is greatly responsible for the element of respect amongst guards towards the supervisors (seniors). Because, like in the army, in SIS, rank makes one superior, not the salary.

7.8 Some final thoughts on Motivation

One technique used by SIS to motivate these guards is by fear, we have seen this above in the description of what goes on in a guards mind. Often supervisors will reprimand 'performance is bad' in the fall-ins, even when they do not actually feel so, just to keep the guards on their toes.

Even though their salary is so less, it is very interesting to see that to some guards, the amount of the reward they get on catching a thief (performing well) is not of utmost importance, instead the fact that they are rewarded is. One guard recalled his happiest moment being when the Director (Prof. Dhande) came to the SIS barracks and personally lauded them for their efforts in keeping this institute a secure place. Recognition from seniors i.e. Supervisor, Second In-Command, Commander, Capt. Umesh Chandra, Prof. Dhande etc. is of great importance to these guards and highly appreciated. What is interesting is that the photo of a guard with the thief is put up. For the guard, this is recognition and he likes it quite a bit. The other perspective is that of the senior, for whom it's equally important as a notification for the other guards, and informing them about the thief so that they can recognize him if he returns to campus.

Our first aims were to try to understand what motivates the guard. This was a good exercise in appreciating the depth of what '*majboori*' means. At times especially early on we may have try to attribute to something more intrinsic especially in the cases of the control room guards who had a lot of control on what they did, or to the commonly recurring theme of liking to interact with IITians. Later on we realized that this all this is perhaps just a minor hygiene factor, or say a small part of working conditions. The extent to which the only factor of '*majboori*' dominates makes all others quite irrelevant. Hence we would also not like to force some of the theoretical frameworks on this, and try to appreciate motivation more in terms of what really it means to work on a day to day basis.

8.0 Acknowledgement

We would like to gratefully acknowledge Dr. Rahul Varman for teaching a very interesting course and giving us a lot of food for thought in a variety of areas. We would also like to acknowledge all the guards, other employees of SIS and the Institute security who spoke with us and all those others who have protected us over the years.

Epilogue

When asked of what hurts Mr. Yadav most, we find its not his supervisor punishing him or asking him to do this inhuman job, but some third person commenting on how he his doing his job....

"Sahab yeh Kutte-Billi ki to naukri hai. Koi sajjan aake bolega ki 'yahan kutte bili ghum rahen hain, tumhari naukri khatre mein hai'. Kutta billi to charon oar ghumte hain. Arre kutte-billi bhagaane ka kaam thodi hai mera; Humara kaam hai aap logon ki suraksha karna; Humara Security ka kaam hai. Koi teesra banda aake agar humare kaam ke bare mein suna jaye to bahut khalta hai"

You have captured many
interesting aspects of an SSS job.
But - I wish you had kept
the report smaller and focussed.

$$10 + 4 + 5 + 3 + 2 = 24.$$

Shuf

24