

ADVERTORIAL

AMRITA KAUR

Setting his sights on the future

Omkar Salokhe aspires to set up his own company that will focus on research and development in greener fuels

WHILE toddlers used to play with toy cars without thinking too much, four-year-old Omkar Salokhe was keener in opening them and finding out how they worked.

When he was seven, he told his father that a particular car on the road had a good “drag co-efficient” (resistance of an object in a fluid environment, such as air or water).

“It surprised my father that I used a technical term that only grown-ups in the engineering line knew. He was very happy and always mentioned it to his friends,” said Mr Omkar, who attributed his early knowledge in automobiles and engineering to extensive reading.

The 21-year-old also credits his interest in engineering to his family.

“My uncles, father and his friends are engineers and I used to listen to them speak about their experiences in their jobs. It’s not just math and science, there is creativity involved as well,” said Mr Omkar.

So it seemed like a natural decision for him to pursue engineering when he thought about his plans for tertiary education.

His family moved to Singapore from Mumbai in 2014 when his father got a job as a solutions engineer at Schneider Electric.

Mr Omkar came across many private institutions here as he did his research on where to enroll for a diploma.

He went through the modules and their descriptions and “really liked the curriculum” at the Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS).

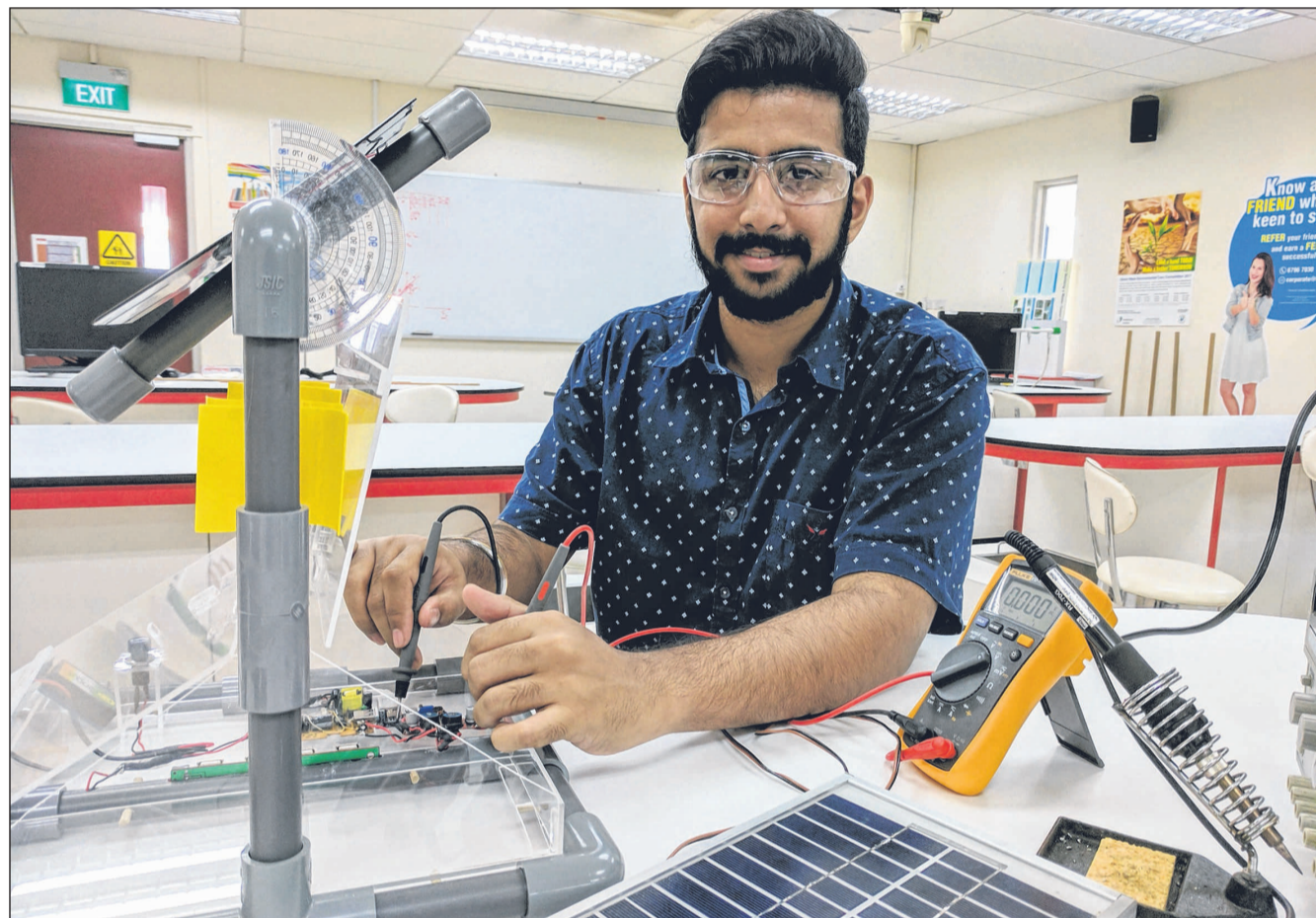
He enrolled in the nine-month diploma in engineering course awarded by MDIS before progressing to a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering (Honours) by the University of Bradford.

“The diploma delved into many different types of engineering — civil, chemical, electronics — and helped me to find my strengths. I decided to pursue mechanical engineering as it is considered to be the foundation of engineering. If you’re good in that, you can go into many different fields.”

Mr Omkar, who is currently in the second year of his degree programme, enjoys the “hands-on practice” he gets at MDIS as it gives him a chance to apply what he has learned in theory to projects and see them come to fruition.

One of the projects included making a chair lift during a year-one module called Manufacturing Systems.

“We had to carry out research, make a chair lift all by ourselves and then present it to the class.



“It was quite an experience,” said Mr Omkar, who took two months to work on it and scored an A for the individual project.

Besides the projects, he also enjoys spending time with his classmates, who are from different parts of the world.

“It gives me an opportunity to observe how people think and react to a situation differently from me, teaching me how to better understand and interact with people of various ethnicities.”

The Indian national will be graduating in September next year.

Mr Omkar, who reads magazines and books on automobiles and engineering in his free time, shared that he wants to do a masters in engineering after he graduates.

While he has not decided on what he wants to major in, he said his dream is to work at Volkswagen, which was reported to be the world’s largest car-maker last year.

He also plans to start his own company when he is much older.

“It will focus on research and development of greener fuels for vehicles. It is said that in the next 10 years, we will no longer use fossil fuels. I’d like to use my knowledge to contribute to the change and introduce green fuels,” said Mr Omkar.

The Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering (Honours) by University of Bradford has now been replaced by Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) Mechanical Engineering, awarded by Northumbria University, and the next intake for the new course is in September.

Some of the modules in the new course include Engineering Skills in Experimentation and Presentation, Engineering Economics and Professional Skills, Computer Modelling and Design and Energy Management and Efficiency.

The skills provided by a mechanical engineering degree not only sets students up for roles in all areas of engineering, but the math content in the course also allows entry into finance and management careers.

Focused... Mr Omkar working on a school project in the engineering lab at MDIS. PHOTO: AMRITA KAUR

About the course

- The Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) Mechanical Engineering is awarded by Northumbria University, UK.
- The programme duration is 16 to 28 months (full-time) and 24 to 36 months (part-time).
- The course fees for local students is \$26,215 to \$39,055 (full-time) and \$25,680 to \$38,520 (part-time), depending on their entry level.
- The next intake for the full- and part-time courses are in September 2017.
- For more information on MDIS and its full suite of courses, check out www.mdiss.edu.sg or call 6247-9111/6372-1000.



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