

AWAAZ

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**SYMBIOSIS LAW SCHOOL
HYDERABAD**

A Constituent of Symbiosis International
(Deemed University), Pune

Symbiosis Law School, Hyderabad is a constituent of Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune. The law school is dedicated towards bringing out well qualified and dynamic lawyers for the legal fraternity.

Of Resonance and Reckoning – The Inception of AWAAZ

We live in a world which is travelling through various courses and discourses at every moment. Humankind is facing a peculiar challenge – one, to move on from their past and create a brave, new and hospitable environment for itself, and another to accept the way life unravels itself for them, where they should be prepared to accept their own mortality and limitations.

In a world which calls for adherence to the established norms or seek a band of followers for fulfilling one's own agendas, AWAAZ seeks to carve a niche for itself, on its own terms and in an unbiased manner. It seeks to accept the world as it is and then to move on to usher in the change.

AWAAZ, in plain words, calls for a change and seeks to be an agent of transformation, discover a new way to look at the world through our own individual and collective selves. As V.S. Naipaul, the noble laureate, had once remarked, "The world is what it is; men who are nothing, who allow themselves to become nothing, have no place in it". Thus, in this context, AWAAZ seeks to travel beyond one's individual self, provide a platform for airing differing and at times jarring viewpoints.

- R. Radhakrishnan, *Editorial Advisor*



INDIA'S RAFALE DEAL: SCAM OR JUSTIFIED?

Sourayan Bhattacharya, (2015-2020)

India's dominance in airspace has been faltering ever since the need was felt for a technologically advanced aircraft capable of ruling the skies. The Rafale aircraft was India's answer to show the world that it was a force to be reckoned with. In 2007, the UPA government after its Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA), decided to enter into a contract with Dassault Aviation, the makers of Rafale Aircraft, to make 126 aircrafts for the Indian Air Force (IAF). Unfortunately, this deal was left in a deadlock and the present government scrapped it. The present government, in-stead, decided to go by a government to government contract. As a result, the number of aircrafts was reduced to 36 and the price was raised threefold. This has stirred a nationwide political debate, much of it being based on limited technical knowledge and less on hard facts.

The price per unit of a Rafale aircraft cannot justify its need, as more than that goes in the operational utility of these machines of air dominance. According to the official website of Dassault Aviation, The Rafale can be used in various scenarios which the makers like to call its "Omnirole" capabilities, extending its use to nuclear deterrence. Such aircrafts need proper logistics support and technical support which were not included in the earlier deal. Such costs cannot be computed in a real world scenario and thus the contention for the exorbitant increase in price per unit of the air-crafts is moot. Adding to that, the deal between our government and the French counterpart, a confidentiality clause was inserted which safeguarded the government from releasing the actual price. This clause is not arbitrary, as it is reasonable for the governments to safeguard their technological prowess in the defense sector, or else the result would be similar when USA's J-20 stealth fighter blueprint was allegedly hacked by China to make their own stealth jet. It is also worthy to note that, unlike the previous deal, now there is an agreement for the terms of transfer of technology. The government of France will provide for 50% offset to the 36 Rafales bought by the Indian counter-part which will be a welcoming extension to the 'Make in India' initiative. Breaking it down, the Government of France will pump 50% of the money which it will get, back to India, so that the lat-ter can develop its own technology, repair, maintenance and logistic support. The developers of such technology will be Reliance Defence Limited, which will enter into a joint stock venture with the makers of Rafale aircrafts, Dassault Aviation. This will help the IAF and DRDO to maintain a strong air command and also develop new technologies of its own.

There exists a statutory framework after the infamous BOFORS scandal of 1986 which sets out the procedure and rules for dealing in defense procurement and acquisition-it is called the Defence Procurement Procedure (currently in its sixth edition). A bare perusal of the procedures show that all the actions taken by the government are done in the best interests of the society. The only good thing coming out of the above mentioned scandal was that it solidified the fact that a government to government contract is the best way to go. The critics of the new Rafale deal should keep in mind that there does exist a constitutional authority to look into the integrity of defense purchases. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India are known for their independence from political squabbles and the people's representative always have the recourse to ask the authority for an audit in case they think they smell any wrongdoing.

In conclusion, the Rafale deal is a welcoming step in strengthening the arsenal of the Indian Air Force which is very much needed as countries are already in the process of releasing prototypes of more advances aircrafts than the Rafale. The Rafale aircraft is a deadly machine and although the writer believes that spending such an exorbitant part of the Consolidated Fund



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**SPARK
INITIATIVE**

Ignite | Improve | Implement

The Spark Initiative is a group of law students working for better governance in the country, beginning from the grassroots. Having heard of issues that plague our country, there seemed little hope-until law school began and the members learnt that they could take action and sue for rights and necessities. Beginning with a PIL for residents affected by fluorosis affected water in Nalgonda district, and a second PIL that resulted in a win at the National Green Tribunal against the Jawahar Nagar landfill, the founding members, K Mukhendu Kaushik and K S S Ysaswi, created The Spark Initiative that now functions through three bodies-Samvidhan, to create policies and laws the country/state lacks; Siddhant, to identify issues arising from government inaction and to file representations to collectors which in turn become a PIL if inaction continues and Sankalp; to focus on implementing UN Sustainable Development Goals at the grassroots. This article focuses on a survey conducted in a nearby village.

THE COUNTRYSIDE AROUND CAMPUS

How much do we really know about what happens outside campus? As we sit within the four walls of comfortable classrooms and occasionally engage in heated discussions on Delhi's politics or China's economy or the Kashmir conflict and spend much time over academics, projects and sports, there often seems to be little time available to us to inquire into what happens immediately around us- instead, we seem to know more about the problems and conflicts in areas miles away from us.

These were our thoughts as we collected information from a survey in the village that we reside in. Of course, these opinions were only formed after we had gained all the information. However, information on the issues the village faced was hard to obtain. The reason? The people felt passive (do not mistake this for their content) about what necessities they were to be given, as a right- partly because they were direly unaware of what necessities they deserved and what the government and society was liable to provide to them.

Picture this: One of the Initiative's members asked- do you face any issue in this village?

Resident: No, not at all.

Surveyor: Can you be absolutely sure?

Resident: Yes.

For a moment, this answer coupled with a complacent mentality tricked us. Maybe the village did not face any issue at all. Even newspaper reports had no information pertaining to issues they faced. Water, which was often a huge issue as the scorching summer season approaches every year, did not seem to be a problem given that we could clearly see well installed pipes all over. Just to be sure however, we decided to change the wording of our questions.

We then asked whether they are you happy with the schools in the village:

Resident: Yes

Surveyor: Do you have adequate faculty?

Resident: No, there is a problem there. One of the schools has only one teacher.

Surveyor: What about the infrastructure of the school? Libraries etc?

Resident: We do not have those. There isn't a sports ground or a toilet for the boys either.

Changing the wording of our questions unearthed quite a few issues- very soon, the villagers narrated the following:

During a particular health crisis, the villagers had very few options. Firstly, there was no Primary Health Centre that every village is supposed to have. The villagers often took trips to the nearby town, Shadnagar, for health services. Here too, the doctors' services were poor- they often took days off or served for a short period of time- there seemed to be very little that the villagers could do to rectify this. Moreover, the lack of a PHC also meant the lack of other emergency provisions such as a Casualty Ward or ambulance.

We, however, have to mention that it was not just survey answers that gave us information. There were observations made by the team as well. We noticed that there was a dearth of proper street lighting and surveillance systems. Further, several vegetable sellers had set up shop on rugged mats on the street which raised that question of why there was no facility for better sale of such provisions?

Apart from this, The Spark Initiative did notice positive features of the village. Having surveyed areas with drains running freely around houses, the village around campus seemed better off- this however, does not mean that the situation is anywhere close to ideal.

Find out more about our other projects on our official Facebook page or visit thesparkinitiative.org



CATCH 22

A CHIEF JUSTICE WHO CHANGED THE WAY WE LOOK AT LAW

Sudarshan Satalkar (2016-2021)

Introduction

The position of Chief Justice of any court is considered as the most prestigious position that any law officer can hold. No matter the jurisdiction, the position of a Chief Justice is always revered and celebrated, rightfully so, because a Chief Justice can be considered as a person who genuinely has the power to change not just the rules that govern a particular jurisdiction but also the way we perceive and think about the idea of law. This article describes one such justice and the way in which a particular judgement that we were given by him showed us the power that a Chief Justice can wield.



Lord Mansfield of King's Bench, Great Britain.

William Murray, typically referred to as Lord Mansfield was widely regarded as one of the greatest justices who ever lived. More than anything, Lord Mansfield was considered as a pragmatist. He was a person who believed more in the principle of law and the spirit of law than the case law or judicial precedent. The reason why Lord Mansfield is remembered today is because of the sweeping reforms that he tried to bring about in various fields of law such as mercantile law, Copyright law etc. The decision that Lord Mansfield is remembered for was in the famous Somerset case where in one sweeping move, Lord Mansfield declared the practice of Slavery in England and Wales and illegal:

James Somerset was a slave of African descent who was purchased by Charlie Stewart and brought to England in 1769 but Somerset Escaped in 1771. When Somerset was recaptured it was decided that he would be sold in Jamaica to a plantation owner. Somerset's godparents applied for a writ of Habeas Corpus and thus Somerset was produced before the court. The most significant part about this judgement was Lord Mansfield deciding that since there is no positive law or any other piece of written legislation that supported Slavery or even acknowledged its existence it was entirely up to the Judge to decide its standing in England. In this particular case Lord Mansfield held that the institution of slavery was not just not mentioned but also incompatible with the principles of the British common law. And thus, through this one judicial decision Lord Mansfield decided that the practice of Slavery was not to be permitted in English common law thereby ushering in the end of slavery in England and Wales.

Lord Mansfield through his judicial decisions completed revolutionised the way in which law began to be viewed. Through his famous line 'The Black must be discharged' in the above Somerset case, he ushered in a new era of judicial activism that can be considered as nothing short of ground breaking.

Law can never be viewed in isolation and it always has to evolve with time. Many consider the concept of a judicial precedent as baffling with respect to how exactly judges, the people who are supposed to enforce the laws are the ones making them instead. However, one must also remember that it is these judicial decisions that help in giving shape to the law. Lord Mansfield is a perfect example of how the judiciary should not just be an enforcer of laws but also a protector of laws.

THE TALE OF OPPORTUNISM

Rikit Shahi (2017-2022)

During the General Elections to the Legislative Assembly of Bihar in 2015, at a press conference, Bihar CM Nitish Kumar recited a poem- "Behti hawaa sa tha woh, Gujarat se aaya tha woh, kaala dhan laane waala tha woh, Kahaan gaya usey dhundo, Humko desh ki fikar sataati, Woh bas videsh ke daurey lagaata, Humko badhti Mehngaai sataati, Apne Mann ki baat sunaata woh, Har waqt selfie kheechta tha woh, Dawood ko laane waala tha woh, Kahaan gaya usey dhundo"

Evidently, it was directed towards Prime Minister Modi. It is no secret that Nitish Kumar & Narendra Modi have never got together well. Announcement of Modi's candidature for the Prime Ministerial post led to JDU's withdrawal from the National Democratic Alliance. Nitish Kumar believed Modi's past in Gujarat and the riots of 2002, will harm his prospects in Bihar. JDU went solo in the Lok Sabha elections.

The "Modi-wave" of 2014 swept the entire nation, and Bihar was no exception. Regional parties like the RJD & JDU were left with nothing but to fight for survival and this fight forced the once bitter enemies to align for the assembly polls. Elections were held and the mahagat-bandhan defeated the BJP. Nitish Kumar once again became the Chief Minister. But RJD having won maximum seats, was dominant. This also led to Tejashwi Yadav, scion of the Yadav family being made the Deputy CM. Until now, Nitish always maintained his stand against BJP & Modi.

The Modi juggernaut, after this brief halt continued to roll and went on to win over the state of Uttar Pradesh too. By now, a lot had changed in the circles of Bihar. Lalu Yadav's family was in all sorts of trouble, or so it seemed so. Lalu Yadav's daughter and son-in-law were being interrogated by Enforcement Directorate, his youngest son was accused of scams, and Lalu himself was to be pronounced guilty in the fodder scam.

On the 26th of July 2017 in surprise chain of events, Nitish Kumar resigned as the CM of Bihar which was immediately followed by PM Modi's tweet -

"For joining the war against corruption, I congratulate Nitish Kumar. A 125-crore strong India is welcoming and supporting this move. For the country, and particularly for Bihar, rising from petty party differences is what the present time and the nation demands."

It had become evident that the man who snapped his ties with the BJP on 'significant issues' like that of 'secularism' & 'communal harmony', in his own words, was ready to once again ally with the same party, and this time he had no issues with it. Nitish went on to say that it had become difficult for him to work given the chain of events that took place. Praising PM Modi, he said that no one in the country could defeat Narendra Modi.

As of today, JDU along with the BJP is ruling Bihar. The issues of secularism & communal harmony seem to have been solved. The black money that Nitish said Modi was to bring from abroad has come back. Problem of inflation does not even exist now. Dawood Ibrahim surrendered ages ago. The special category status that Nitish has been seeking from the centre seems to have been given. The Rs. 125,000 crore package that Mr. Prime Minister had assured the people of Bihar during the poll campaign in Bihar seems to have been issued and utilised fully. Bihar is a developed state now and its CM, Nitish, indeed is a visionary man.



THE CRIME OF BEING A HOMOSEXUAL IN INDIA

Anushka Dwivedi (2016-21)



The name of Dominic D'Souza, a resident of a one-horse town Parra in north Goa, might not ring a bell for many. However, a look at the history of gay rights movement in India will indicate his contribution. The 29-year-old was having breakfast with his mother when he was unceremoniously arrested from his house on a fateful day in 1989. His crime - homosexuality. Without being told of his crime, he was whisked away to a police station and badgered with questions about his personal and sex life. It was only when he was shown his file which had 'AIDS' written next to his name, that he realized that he was HIV positive. He was kept in an isolated enclosure, referred to as the tuberculosis sanatorium, as per the Goa government's archaic Goa Public Health (Amendment) Act, which enumerated AIDS under it and sought isolation and deportation of patients infected with these immuno-deficiency diseases. D'Souza succumbed to his illness in 1992 while battling the injustice done to him by the State government. He might not be alive but his struggles have left a mark. They act as a reminder to us about how homosexuality is perceived in the country.

Merriam Webster defines homosexuality as, "Sexual attraction or the tendency to direct sexual desire toward another of the same sex." A reality check would tell you that it's not that simple in India. Rights of gays, lesbians and transgenders have been considered a taboo subject both by the Indian society and the government. With no legal standing, homosexuals in India lack a legal framework that safeguards their basic rights. Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 criminalizes consensual sex between two adults of the same gender.

Though same-sex intercourse was decriminalized in 2009 by the Delhi High Court, the same order was set aside by the Supreme Court in 2013. In Naz Foundation vs Govt of National Capital Territory of Delhi, a non-governmental organization which works for rights of sexual minorities filed a petition on the issue that Section 377 violates the fundamental rights of homosexuals in India and that it encouraged paedophilia and sexual abuse.

The bench of judges of the Delhi High Court agreed that the statute violated Articles 14, 15 and 21, which guarantee equality before the law. The order was challenged in the Supreme Court and it accepted the appellants' arguments and upheld that Section 377 criminalises sexual assault and paedophilia. The Supreme Court also maintained that the law was a pre-constitutional statute and said that the makers of the Indian Constitution would not have made it a fundamental right if it was a violation in the first place.

Many legal experts feel that decriminalising homosexuality in India is a concept whose time has come. Internationally, countries like Canada have attracted global adulation for maintaining a liberal attitude towards lesbians and gays, and legalising same-sex marriages. Indian-origin born lawyer Leo Varadkar, who was recently sworn in as the prime minister of Ireland, is openly gay.

Moreover, experts argue that decriminalizing homosexuality doesn't violate Article 14 of the Indian Constitution. The statute bats for equality before the law so that there is no discrimination against any person on the basis of caste, creed, religion or gender. The recent Supreme Court judgment entitles the right to privacy which also includes sexual orientation. Lesbians and gays have to face a lot of social atrocities that include rape and sexual assault. Living in a country that denies their existence, they have trouble getting houses on rent or employment.

The above arguments amply stress on the need of this largely marginalized section of the society to a life of dignity. Marriage comprises of mental, psychological and physical union of two persons and every individual should get a chance to lead a life the way they want to live.



I welcome the initiative of the students in creating a new platform to express their views and counter-views, perceptions and understanding on a plethora of issues. I wish AWAAZ all the success in its future endeavors.

-Dr. Sukhvinder Singh Dari, Officiating Director, SLS - Hyderabad



BREXIT- IMPLICATIONS FOR EUROPE

Swapnil Deb (2015-20)

On 23 June, 2016, a referendum-vote was held to determine whether the United Kingdom of England and Northern Ireland (UK) should leave or remain as a part of the European Union. With more than 30 million people voting, England voted for Brexit, by approximately 53% to 47%, as did Wales. However, Scotland and Northern Ireland both voted in favour of staying in the EU. It was alleged that Britain was being held back by the EU in the form of imposition of too many rules on business, membership fees, immigration, trade etc. They also cited the principles of sovereignty and democracy and wished to take back full control of its borders. The European Union, a partnership involving 28 European countries which was established post World War II in order to facilitate politico-economic co-operation for peacekeeping purposes, has since adopted its own set of trade laws, citizens' rights, currency, parliament, transport system, etc.

Following the referendum, a certain agreement called Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty, which gives the two sides two years to agree upon the terms of the split, had to be triggered by UK. The Brexit Bill made its way through Parliament where it had a majority vote in its favour. Once Article 50 has been triggered, the UK will have two years to negotiate its withdrawal. However, it is pertinent to mention that complete exit negotiations will very well be delayed as the terms of Britain's exit cover treaties and agreements concerning various subject matters and will have to be agreed by 27 national parliaments, a process which could take years.

The EU law still stands in the UK until it ceases to be a member. The UK will continue to abide by EU treaties and laws, but not take part in any decision-making. The UK government is looking to enact a Great Repeal Bill which will end the primacy of the EU law in the UK.

Because the exit process could be a time-taking one, UK's future is likely to witness a slower economic growth for the country as well as a decrease in investments, resulting in depreciation in the exchange rate of pounds, higher rates of unemployment and lower salaries. Meanwhile, this may be a blessing for the exporters of British goods and certain sectors including tourism, energy, and the services industry.

With Brexit having happened, deep concerns about the future of the EU continue to flood in. Considering the fact that populist movements in Europe have upheld Brexit vote as a win and the growth of the Euro-sceptic movement, the nation states of France, Italy and Greece who supported the idea of Brexit are likely to have a referendum on similar lines on its cards as well. On the other hand, Scotland, which was in favour of the EU, aims to vote upon a second referendum seeking for independence from the UK and joining the EU.



#PECO

#PECO stands for People for Environmental Conversation

The #PECO movement aims to act as a bridge between environmental knowledge and environmental practice in and amongst the institutes of India.

By accepting the #PECO movement we state that the youth of today have accepted their responsibilities towards their environment and shall strive to conserve it.

We Support #PECO movement



SWARAJYA -MOCK PARLIAMENT



Swarajya, the annual intra collegiate mock parliament is the Centre's flagship event. The theme for the debate is announced in advance, and students argue both for and against, observing parliamentary procedure as they do so.

The Mock Parliament was conducted with the aim of providing a holistic approach to the students with respect to Constitutional Law and an understanding of the Parliamentary affairs.



The third edition organized in February, 2018 dealt with the Aadhar (Targeted Delivery of Financial, and other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Bill, 2016.

This controversial issue invited active participation and captivated the audience as well as the judges.





PANORAMA

THE NEXT BYTE - TECH OF TOMORROW IS YOUR WASHING MACHINE GOING TO KILL YOU? OR AN INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNET OF THINGS

Ashwin R Nambiar (2015-2020)

It's the end of a work day and you have an intense craving for chocolate cake. You pick up your phone and Google 'best recipe for chocolate cake' and you instantly get pages and pages of results. You open the first link on the first page and voila, you have the perfect recipe to satisfy all your cravings.

Now imagine, you perform the same search and you click the first link. Along with the recipe, you are shown exactly what ingredients are available in your refrigerator and what items you are missing. You click a small toggle box on the website stating that you plan on baking this cake once you get home and instantly the refrigerator orders the missing items from the local grocery shop, sets your car's navigation for the shortest route home via the grocery store and it even sets the oven to pre-heat just as you arrive home. The automation doesn't stop there. You walk into your house, the temperature has been set to the optimum level based on how tired your smart watch says you are, while a soothing "Leisure Cooking" playlist from Spotify plays on the sound system and your coffee machine has already brewed the perfect, rejuvenating coffee

blend. All of this, simply because you searched for 'best recipe for chocolate cake'. This integrated, connected ecosystem of gadgets, home appliances, vehicles and services, all talking to each other using the internet and the cloud, with minimum human interference, is called the Internet of Things or IoT.

It's all anyone in the tech world can talk about, the buzzword in all the forums and what tech moguls are terming as the "the next big thing". But how is it going to change the life of an average, not so tech-savvy human? The short answer, is that it will connect everything that has an on-and-off switch, making available information that will allow for an increase in convenience, comfort, health and safety; while at the same time increasing energy efficiency and better utilisation of resources.

IoT takes a platform that already exists and allows for a way to extract the data from it. The information from that data can coach people, reaffirming them when things go as planned or suggesting an alternative course of action if things go wrong, thereby allowing them to improve different aspects of their lives.

The obvious concerns about privacy, security and data ownership do exist, but these are not an IoT issue. Rather, they are general internet issues that are amplified by the growth of new technologies. These issues already exist for the internet of people and industry. The government and regulatory bodies have measures in place to address them and now these measures are being amended to include IoT.

The IoT will change the world in an even more profound way than the internet has. Today, it is hard to imagine that there existed a world where communication was instantaneous and the tools that we find commonplace now, didn't exist. The same will happen with IoT. In a decade from now, we will be dependant on the information and statistics that our various devices and appliances will provide, making us better informed, more accurate and capable of making better decisions to save money, lives and even the planet. The IoT can and will make the difference.



DEMONS INSIDE US

Anwesha Bhattacharya, (2016-2021)

She took a deep breath and entered the room, knowing that she had to confront him. It wasn't going to be easy. She entered the interrogation room with dilatory steps and noticed him standing in the corner; his eyes were bloodshot, staring off into a void. Her son, Aryan. Her only son.

As the tall, well-built, dark haired lady strolled towards her child, her solid assurance to go up against him began blurring; all that her feet wanted to do was take backward strides and flee. She feared that her nightmares might actually be true. She gathered all the courage she could muster and softly called out to him, "Aryan... son?" He did not reply, just continued to stare into the open space.

She crossed the small distance, took a chair, and sat beside him. Placing a quivering hand on his shoulder, she startled him out of oblivion. "Son... listen... to me" she tried to calm her voice as much as she could. Tears blinded his eyes, his shoulders shook with resignation, her fears were answered solely by his posture, yet she controlled herself and asked, "Did you kill the girl? Was it you?" Her tone was soft, yet, held the commanding authority that was required of a police officer.

He did not reply but his expression was enough to make the mother understand. He didn't answer, however, and these silent declarations of the child were sufficient. She was beginning to disintegrate, she could feel it, however, she had an obligation: an obligation to carry out as an officer of India.

"Tell me everything", the sweetness was lost, her voice was demanding and her son obliged. "It was after father's demise", the exceedingly ruthless recollections of her past fluttered before her eyes but couldn't interrupt and comfort him. All she wanted to do was console her son but she could not lose her resolve. He continued, "You were not there, you were never there, you were out to catch his murderer". The accusations stung her already bleeding heart, yet she kept quiet.

"I was trying to find solace wherever I could, when, I admit, I fell into bad company, I started taking drugs. It had been going on since a month, when one day, a girl found out about our group and threatened to tell the police. Out of fear, the gang leader thrust a knife in my hand and asked me to kill her. The fear of you getting to know and my drug overdose had blinded my judgment. I killed her. YES, I KILLED HER!" Her feelings of trepidation made it difficult to accept this. Yet, what she knew some place inside her four chambered heart had at last been affirmed. He had killed. Her son had killed. Before she could let her heart overpower her mind, she asked the constable to take him away.

As she heard the dejected, retreating steps of her son, she could feel the walls around her heart finally start to crumble and shatter into a million pieces. Sanyukta Rathore had been successful in solving another case, but at what cost? It had cost her the only living part of her. His face flashed in front of her eyes. Finally, she lost her calm. Gone, he was gone. The fiend had grabbed him away; the fallen angel was the offender. The devil inside her son. The mourn-filled cries of a hurt mother reverberated throughout the entire office.



MOVIE REVIEW : THE MAN FROM EARTH

Shreyak Patnaik (2017-2022)

Review 'The Man from Earth' in one line? A stroke of pure genius; A single setting, eight exceptionally well actors and a purely dialogue-based scene progression; Richard Schenkman hit it out of the ballpark with this movie, a '12 Angry Men' of the 21st century, if you will, except that it's science fiction. Dan, one of the characters, perfectly sums up the experience of watching the movie in his last dialogue before departure: 'I'm gonna go home, and I'm gonna watch Star-Trek for a dose of sanity.'

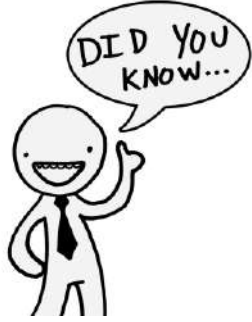
The storyline is quite simple, 7 professors visit their colleague in his cabin to bid him farewell before he leaves for a new place. While they are conversing, the departing colleague (the protagonist) asks them to humour him on whether a Cro-magnum (A man from the later Palaeolithic age) could have survived through these 14,000 years and would he be any different from a man of this century. While the room lights up with the possibility of that happening, the protagonist, John Oldman, in a rather nonchalant manner makes it known to the room that he is indeed a man from the Cro-Magnum era and thus the stage is set; 7 perplexed scholars from different fields of study question the sheer validity of the reality John seems to be convinced he's from.



The brilliance of the script lies in the simplicity of it, for instance, when asked by the anthropologist if he had any relics from the earlier millenniums to prove his old age, John picks up a pen, gives it to the professor and asks, 'A hundred? A thousand years from now? Would you still have this pen as a keepsake? What would be your cause of keeping it?' There's no fancy backstory of vampire bites which made him live this long, the character is portrayed as a simple man who just never died. The essence of the movie is perfectly captured in a scene where the professor, pointed with a gun, is asked, 'If you indeed are an immortal, will you heal when shot by a gun?' and the simple retort is, 'I never said I'm immortal, just very old.' But having said that, even though the movie is simplistic in its approach to prove its main character's truth, one cannot deny the sheer research that has gone into the making of this movie; topics of religion, geography, anthropology and even psychology are intertwined with common logic to document the journey of the protagonist throughout history. The film never resorts to flashbacks or cut away scenes of the protagonist life. The audience is kept in the same shoes as the rest of the cast: Not entirely sure regarding the verity of the arguments but not positive about its falseness either.

Shot in a lonely cabin in the middle of the forest, the setting, in itself, very subtly mirrors the loneliness of the protagonist who outlived his friends, his family, his generation and even his supposed lifetime. Actor David Lee Smith makes space for these small character-defining moments of humanity, for example giving passing grades to a kid so that he can apply for medical college ('what does history have to do with pre-med?' he says), which give a touch of emotional depth to a movie otherwise reliant on textual information and cold arguments. The ending is a simple, emotionally loaded conclusion to the story which, for the sake of a beautiful movie experience, I will not divulge.

All in all, this movie, which completely deserves its rank in the top 250 movies of IMDb, is the perfect intellectual cocktail to be enjoyed by cinephiles and bookish scholars alike.



Satyajit Ray was awarded the honorary Doctorate by Oxford University, the second film personality to receive the honour after Charlie Chaplin. Ray is also the first Indian to be presented with the Honorary Academy Award for Lifetime Achievement although none of his films ever received an Oscar nod.

Although *The Great Dictator* was banned in Nazi Germany by the Führer, he screened it for his own entertainment, in privacy.

MOVIE REVIEW: THE GREAT DICTATOR (1940)

Abhijith Christopher (2016-2021)



In 1938, the most famous movie star in the world began making a film based on the monster of the second world war: Adolf Hitler. Charlie Chaplin looked a bit like Adolf Hilter, maybe because Chaplin had chosen the same toothbrush moustache like him. Using this resemblance, Chaplin went on to devise a satire in which the dictator and a Barber from the Jewish Ghetto would be mistaken for each other. In 1940, this satirical Masterpiece, a movie called 'The Great Dictator' was released. This was Charlie's first talking picture, and the highest grossing film of his career which would eventually cause him great difficulties, and indirectly lead to the USA exiling him.

During the 1930s, Hitler was yet to be recognised as the embodiment of evil in many quarters. Various influential isolationist forces in America began spreading a policy of non-intervention in the troubled affairs of Europe, and the rumours of Hitler's brutal policy to begin a genocide against the Jews was welcomed by anti-Semitic groups. Chaplin's film, aimed scornfully and obviously at Hitler himself, could only have been funny, as per his autobiography, if he had not known the full extent of the Nazi evil.

As the movie proceeds forward, in its climax, we see that the Jewish barber (never named) has fallen for the maid Hannah (Paulette Goddard, Chaplin's estranged wife at the time). But he and the disloyal Schultz (a German Officer whose life he saved when he was a soldier at war, this officer later saves him in return when the Dictator, Hynkel sends his storm troopers to round up the Jews in the Concentration Camp) are eventually put in a concentration camp, The Dictator Hynkel then has a boating accident, is mistaken for the barber, and gets locked into the camp just as the barber and Schultz escape -with Hynkel's uniform. Now, everyone assumes the Jewish Barber to be the Dictator.

In the well-known classic Chaplin tradition, the movie has a richness of comic pantomime and gags, including Dictator Hynkel's famous ballet with an inflated balloon that makes the globe his plaything.

In the final moments of the film, Chaplin delivers a speech as the Jewish Barber who is now disguised as Hynkel. The speech, in a passionate way, urges the people to rise up against op-pression and make use of technology as a tool for change. One of the few means of technology present during Chaplin's times was the radio. In the present generation we have even more powerful technology at our disposal. Chaplin might have dreamt that this movie would possibly be a way to create mass movements and protest, and thus connect us globally. It is now in fact, our reality.

Charlie Chaplin ensured that Hitler was personally handed over a copy of the film – we will never know whether he watched it or not but you definitely should!



“*Greed has poisoned men's souls, has barricaded the world with hate, has goose-stepped us into misery and bloodshed. We have developed speed, but we have shut ourselves in. Machinery that gives abundance has left us in want. Our knowledge has made us cynical. Our cleverness, hard and unkind. We think too much and feel too little.*”

“*We have developed speed, but we have shut ourselves in; machinery that gives abundance has left us in want. Our knowledge has made us cynical, our cleverness hard and unkind. We think too much and feel too little. More than machinery we need humanity, more than cleverness we need kindness and gentleness. Without these qualities life will be violent and all will be lost.*”

UNWRAPPING KOLKATA

Doyal Basu (2015-20)



The city of soul, fabricated by art, culture, history, beauty, love, mystery, respect, enthusiasm and some undeniably amazing sweet delicacies run in the veins of the city. Being a metropolitan city, pace is its new ornament. A warm and welcoming city, which thrills the outsiders at first and later seems to become a part of their souls has earned the nickname of 'city of joy'. Kolkata is vibrant, uplifting and probably the friendliest city in the Indian subcontinent. Its a vintage city which has preserved everything starting right from Pujo celebration and hand pulled rickshaw's to clubbing. The Tram being one such preserved treasure, is an integral part of the city's heritage. Strangers will invite you for a chai just to talk and exchange ideas. With friendships being bound instantaneously, this city is abuzz with intellectuals and creativity. Kolkata has been the heart of art and culture for centuries. The Bengali language, considered to be one of the sweetest verbal languages in the world, is a language of dream, love and romance. The poetry, folklore, proverbs, music, and literature still remain the greatest assets and passion for all Bengalis, from all over the world. Kolkata is often dubbed the 'cultural capital of India'. Being home to great personalities like Satyajit Ray, Rabindranath Tagore, Mother Teresa, Amartya Sen and many others, it is the hub for intellectuals and artists. Since Kolkata and intellectualism have a long history, it is more than serendipitous that it is also home to the National Library of India which is the largest public library in the world. Bengalis are as crazy when it comes to sports. Kolkata is also known as the

green valley of Indian football with the two most supported teams in the country Mohun Bagan and East Bengal. Calcuttans are die heart fans of football. And cricket, for us, is synonymous with Sourav Ganguly.

Kolkata is one of the most popular tourist destinations of the country. It has a huge rush of tourists around the year. The most visited tourist spots include the famous Victoria memorial, Birla planetarium, Science city and The Howrah Bridge which is the busiest cantilever bridge of the world and is used as a symbol for the city. Some moments of peace and tranquility in Kolkata, especially in the evening twilight hours at the Princep Ghat is an experience one will definitely cherish.

Bengali's are born foodies, they love to eat and at the same time feed their guest, the mantra being 'eat and let eat'. Kolkata has an abundant supply of fish and with traditional recipes, one simply cannot miss the Bengali cuisine of 'Machh-Bhaat'. Nothing is more satisfying to a Bengali as daal sheddo, begun bhaja and gorom Bhaat. Bengalis have an insatiable craving for sweets and delicacies, 'Rasogulla' being the signature Bengali sweet and along with the joint contender 'Sandesh' and 'Mishti Doi'. Kolkata has always being the delightful place for the ultimate sweet lovers with its wide variety of confectioneries.

The main festival of Bengal is Durga Puja which is nothing but a carnival, where people from all backgrounds, regardless of their religious beliefs, participate and enjoy themselves to the hilt.

People love to gesture Bong people by the word 'Dada' which is very pleasing to listen according to me. The first words every non-bengali always love to say is "I love you" in Bengali "Ami tomake bhalo bashi". On the streets of Kolkata, there is a sense of nostalgia. Starting from names of the roads to the buildings, we are extremely proud of the gems such as Tagore, Ray, Swami Vivekananda, Subhash Chandra Bose and Raja Ram Mohan Roy who have taken birth from our land. Life lesson from Gupi Gayen Bagha Bayen, never give up on our dreams, never exploit. Kolkata, the city of joy is unique in its own way. Kolkata represents a lot more than what people think and say. That's why we call ourselves 'proud Bengali'.



GENESIS 2.0

STILL ON MUTE

Ananya Rajaram (2015-2020)



The voice of meaningful cinema is still on mute. Cinema according to me is one of the strongest and far reaching mediums for communication and entertainment. Film makers and artists have always felt the need to shed light on societal evils and the negative side of reality through the protected mode of films. Cinema, without a doubt, is one of the most effective ways to create awareness. The complete extraction of this potential of cinema substantially hinges on the statutory mandates of a country concerning the release, distribution and extent of freedom given to the content in movies. The statutory authority in the case of India is the Cinematograph act.

This act provides for the establishment of a Central board for film certification otherwise called the CBFC. This board, in the long run, has come to be known as the censor board. In my opinion this is because of the overtly active role the board has played in controversies concerning the fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression. The censor board in the recent times has become an orthodox watch dog that had not been so active for a few years. The reason, this practically dormant body suddenly came into the limelight is due to its recent questionable choices. The misunderstood purpose of film certification has thrived for a long time by preying on quality cinema, right from the movies like Bandit Queen, Fire and Parzania, to titli, masaan and vishwaroopam, to the more recent instances such as Aligarh, Kutrapathrikai and Padmavat.

The board can reserve complete rights to rate a movie to make sure that the spectators of such a movie should exclusively be the ones of appropriate age. But asking for an obscene amount of cuts for arbitrary reasons and based on vague pre judgment of mass reaction is uncalled for.

A blatantly censored film is no more than the finest of muslins that is poorly darned. It remains merely functional, failing to be its original, much appealing self. Regulatory bodies in India have historically abused the sweeping powers vested in them. The Censor board is no different. The current state of censorship is akin to an abattoir where the artistry of filmmakers becomes the victim. The pseudo dictatorial nature of the board and the undercurrent political influence on its members exacerbates this situation. What is ironic is that, in the age of free internet content, censorship does not achieve its stated objectives. It is the relic of the colonial era and a set of redundant prejudices. The censor board has miserably failed to be in sync with the perennially dynamic sensibilities of the society at large. This is proven by a host of decisions that it took with a myopic view of the society as consisting of a clutch of fringe elements, when society in itself is becoming progressively broad minded at large.

The Indian Constitution bestows on its citizens the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression. Although this comes with the caveat of "reasonable restrictions", the intention behind such a caveat is quite pertinent in its ambit and does not support its misuse for motivated propaganda. The fundamental right being an inherent part of the Basic Structure Doctrine, is protected by law. The price paid to be a part of a democracy that bestows such commendable rights to its people, is the duty of eternal vigilance. It is a fairly important duty that is rightly owed by the people in the spirit of law.

Cinema is no longer just a medium of entertainment. The commercial cinema is undergoing a metamorphosis. Movies that mirror reality and portray the uglier, much ignored side of the society are gaining importance and commercial heft. The curiosity and thirst for unadulterated knowledge of the evils in society is increasing by the day. A mechanism of security for the movies that express clandestine truths is essential to quench this thirst. This sociological change will soon lead to the much awaited demise of the ill motivated and narrow minded approach that the censor board thrives on presently.

Having stated the above, the need of a regulatory body for films is still an indispensable need. However, it has to function largely as a board that certifies rather than censors. Arbitrary cuts and ill explained changes should be replaced with subtle streamlining of films. Hence, urgent structural changes need to be made. The board should be given the status of a quasi judicial body. The body should consist of a judicious mix of members from various walks of society who are educated and also given the requisite training for the job. This would eliminate the dictatorial nature of the board and also nullify the duality between the board and the appellate tribunal. However, most importantly, it will bring down the prejudicial approach to regulation of cinema and bring professionalism into the job. Cinema is art which needs to be regulated sometimes due to its influence on society. However, this does not mean we maintain a stranglehold on it. It is high time that the censor is censured and regulation should be regular.

SHUSH...WE DON'T TALK ABOUT THIS

Sharbani Mahapatra (2016-2021)



Some topics are taboo in India. Most of them, sadly, relate to women. What is so unnatural about the apparent "weaker" section is beyond my comprehension. Women in India have always had a subordinate position to men, and this has affected their lives in many ways. This anathema proves the existence of backward thought in the traditional perception of women, which, alas, persists even today. Is that all a woman is? A collection of taboos and stigmas existing at the mercy of men? Or can we "dare" to be more?

For long, women have been demanding an equal status in society, government and law and we have been denied that repeatedly. The Women's Reservation Bill was placed before the Parliament but could not be passed, for why on earth do women need one-third representation in the Lok Sabha? Women are being raped and assaulted in the name of "matrimonial relations", but who cares that the woman did not consent? Who cares that it should be marital rape and not consensual sexual relations? The 12% GST on sanitary napkins may be lower than the earlier 13.7% under the indirect tax regime but that does not make it any better. Who needs to bother about women? Not the government. It took the horrific Nirbhaya Rape and Murder Case for them to realise that maybe, just maybe, the Indian Criminal Law System needs to be amended.

But, for those who wear the rose-tinted glasses, the world is perfect. For them, the #MeToo campaign was a farce, a publicity gimmick. The Nirbhaya Murder was over-hyped, and honestly, it was the girl's fault (must have been wearing short clothes, or been roaming around at night, all alone- whatever it was, she called for it). And why should sanitary napkins not have taxes? (Condoms MUST be tax-free, however!) Sindoore (vermillion) and should be tax-free, of course. After all, they represent the ancient traditions of the Hindu society (read as: prejudiced, derogatory traditions which represent the fact that women are inferior to and also bound to their husbands). You know what, let condoms be free. After all, the repercussion of not using a condom falls on women alone because men just love running away from their responsibilities. But that does not mean sanitary napkins cannot be tax-free as well!

Men and women are built differently-there is no denying that. But that need not mean that the differences between the sexes should be used to bind and shackle women to the whims and fancies of apparently 'superior' men. Women are demanding a gender equal world. We want a world where we can hold our heads up, and not have the orthodoxy run behind us with axes to chop our heads down.

People need to understand that some things are unacceptable. Just because these are tabooed subjects (honestly, if some people had their way, women would be a taboo!) we should not shy away from talking about it. Frankly, women have no problem talking about this. It is mostly the men who become awkward once this topic is brought up. Now is the time to bridge the gap in understanding between the sexes. It is not a sin to be born a woman. Let us not make it one.

THE QUEEN LEAR AND HER CANVAS OF GLORY

Shreya Devaki (2015-2020)



Whether fondly or otherwise, the reign of Indira Gandhi remains and will remain etched in our minds for decades to come. As a formidable leader who feared none, she sent shock waves through the country with the unimpeded decisions she took and the amount of unbridled power she wielded. As the first woman Prime Minister, she took it upon herself to not only break through the glass ceiling but shatter it. She inherited a nation that was in war with itself and soon became the eye of the storm. She made a mockery of the institution of democracy and got away with it, unscathed. There is a lot of information available at the click of a mouse about her, but there's very little that one can wrap their head around. Even though she was the pinnacle of Indian politics for almost a quarter of a decade, there was a shroud of mystery that followed her around which helped reveal nothing beyond her fierce temper and her bow-down-to-me character.

The stunts she pulled off whilst in power which included sacking chief ministers repeatedly to concentrate power in her own hands, imposing an astonishing emergency which people are still not over and refusing to concede to the judiciary leaves her as a vivid image in our memory. She stood up valiantly to leaders like Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon and has been compared to leaders like Adolf Hitler (not a flattering comparison) and Golda Meir (a very flattering comparison).

As a woman, she was repeatedly belittled by her sexist, patronising male colleagues who went to the extent of calling her a 'goongi gudiya' or 'dumb doll' (courtesy- the ever so charming Ram Manohar Lohia). Contrary to popular belief, she didn't inherit all the power as the First Daughter, she fought to establish a throne for herself and seated herself to a degree of permanency that ensured a reign for almost three full terms. She was solely responsible for the creation of Bangladesh, which was a feat in itself at that point in time as she had to defy both the United States of America and China, the two strongest superpowers. Two of the most favoured words to describe her are 'despot' and 'ruthless'. Interestingly, these characteristics are what kept India from an immediate collapse. The political, economic and international relations challenges that India faced post 1966 put us in a vulnerable position. A force like her, was the need of the hour.

Public opinions about her range from unfettered reverence to profound hatred. Always dressed impeccably in hand-woven sarees with the striking streak of grey in her hair, she won over the poor with her well strategized 'garibi hatao' campaigns and steered the nation towards her version of socialism by exposing the rich through nationalisation of banks and abolishment of privy purses. Even though she was majestically flawed, she painted for herself an unmatched canvas of glory.

To all of you who scoff at the idea of appreciating Mrs. Gandhi for all her master strokes and instead, insist on focussing on how she was an alleged maniacal tyrant, I have a few words of wisdom: "Oh well, you may not like it, Minister but you can't deny Dumbledore's got style."

AN AMENDMENT THAT PERMITS CHILD LABOUR?

Lakshmi Menon (2017-2022)



A new child labour legislation found its way into conversation over a year ago as we discussed a waiter our family had seen the previous night, who appeared to be suspiciously young to be in employment. My parents showered heavy criticism, first on the cafe that employed this waiter and next on the legislation. A mere glance into *The Hindu* newspaper told me little- the child labour legislation was now the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016. There seemed no reason for heavy criticism-until extra reading said otherwise.

A major and contentious provision of the Act is this- children below fourteen years of age are 'permitted' to engage in 'family enterprises' but only 'outside school hours'. The justification? Family and community based trade, which are now near extinction thanks to commodification, could apparently be tackled by such a provision (of course, what better way to protect culture than a provision that may well legalise much of India's child labour).

The government's rationale is not without basis- similar reasons have been used to permit children in employment in countries like Bolivia where this is a strongly rooted cultural practise. The Bolivian government permitted employment of children in specific work under strict conditions and surveillance following wide calls by both parents and adolescents for the same. However, what is significant is that the policies followed in terms of employed children are stringently and specifically created to harmonise society's cultural needs keeping in mind the best interests of children. Given the Bolivian scenario, the reasoning that children may be permitted to work in 'family trade' seems legitimate.

Yet, coming back to India, such a justification is more a sham than valid reasoning. Picture this- a ten year old daughter of a farmer returns after a long day at school- the 'outside school hours' permit now begins. She is immediately sent off to work in farms with heavy equipment and fertilisers, all of which are harmful (and outrageously allowed in the amendment). After long hours of toiling in farms and domestic chores before meagre sleep, she wakes up the following day to seek an education for which she will neither have the requisite health nor the mental preparedness. The plight is doubly worsened if one were to take examples of scenarios such as debt bondage.

Whilst the legislation (seemingly) prioritises a child's rights through the use of the phrases 'outside school hours' and during 'vacations', this clause is perhaps more detrimental to the child's education than being beneficial. Undoubtedly, this amendment is at best, vague and truthfully, a complete irresponsibility on the part of the legislature.

A more troubling change than the aforementioned provision is perhaps the slashing away of eighty three hazardous occupations for a measly list of three - mining, explosives and jobs mentioned in the Factories Act. The list is less debatable and more outrightly offensive to the rights of children, who are now vulnerable to work ranging from brick kilns to chemical mixing units.

Given India's already abysmal scenario in child labour, there is sufficient cause to believe that the scope of this amendment to exploit children is so wide that the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016 is disparaging and might as well remove the word 'prohibition' from the title, for, clearly, this legislation has ceased to stay true to its title and intent.

A RIPPLE IN TIME

Smriti Rao Penjerla (2017-2022)



When we think of space, most people associate it with great scientists like Albert Einstein, Carl Sagan and Galileo Galilei. In the recent past, we've lost yet another great mind; the person who made tremendous progress in the field of astrophysics through his General Theory of Relativity- Stephen Hawking. His demise took the entire world by disbelief. Appropriately named as the "best theoretical physicist of our time", Stephen Hawking was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis shortly after his 21st birthday. This is a nervous system disease that weakens muscles and impacts physical function which left him wheelchair-ridden and unable of speech. Despite being given merely two years to live, he lived up to a commendable age of 76, altering the scientific sphere. He imparted knowledge through a computer that helps him communicate using a small sensor activated by a muscle in his cheek. Despite being dismayed initially, Hawking embraced it with time by saying, "Although I cannot move and have to speak through a computer, in my mind I am free".

With wit that can make any man laugh, Hawking is even recognised in the field of entertainment. Guest-starring in various shows like the Simpsons and Big Bang Theory, he played his renowned role of the invincible physicist. He has a movie dedicated to him, titled "The Theory of Everything". He's always tried to share his knowledge with the rest of the world and for that purpose has published papers, books and hosted TV shows. He also gave a TedEd Talk in which he spoke of how humans could possibly be the only existing life-form of our level of intelligence and development within a few hundred light-years from the Earth. The most remarkable aspect of all this is that he explains his theories in the most basic form for easy absorption for young minds.

One of his most celebrated works is with regard to black holes. Black holes, having an intense gravitational pull, devour everything around them. This, however, violated one of the most basic principles of physics that stated that information in the universe can never be created or lost; in the black hole, information always seemed to get lost. This was one of the greatest paradoxes in astrophysics. However, it was Hawking who later demonstrated that these black holes constantly emit a certain radiation which came to be known as the Hawking radiation. The intriguing factor about these radiations is that they have set characteristics and don't indicate any variations depending on the information absorbed into the black hole. It might not be able to completely answer the paradox but it definitely brings us one step closer to it.

Just how gravitational waves cause ripples in space-time, Hawking's demise is the force that has the same effect on the fabric of time and continuance of theoretical physics. This should not be a hindrance but a reminder that we must work on his revolutionary theories and ideas. I'd like to end with a popular saying of his - "Remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see and wonder what makes the universe exist. Be curious, and however difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at. It matters that you don't just give up."

STUPID + STUPID = SMART?

Aditi Nagesh (2017-2022)



An ant is pretty stupid. It doesn't have much of a brain- no will, no plan. And yet, many ants together are smart. An ant colony can construct complex structures. They can wage wars and defend themselves. How can a bunch of stupid things do smart things together? This phenomenon, called 'emergence', is one of the most fascinating things about our universe. In a nutshell, it describes small things forming bigger things that have different properties than the sum of their parts. Emergence is complexity arising from simplicity.

Water has vastly different properties than the molecules that make it up. For example, the concept of wetness. Take wet fabric- if you consider this on a molecular level, there is no wetness. There are just molecules sitting in the spaces between the atoms of the cloth. Wetness is an emerging property of water, created by a lot of individual interactions between the water molecules. Many things interact under a certain set of rules, creating something above and beyond themselves. This different property is in itself a new thing, and that new thing combines with other new things to repeat the process.

This begs a question- how can something be more than the sum of its parts? The answer is, by following a rule set that produces order through chaos. For example, let's look at how an ant colony distributes jobs. Every ant in a colony has a specific job and it communicates its current job via chemicals. When ants meet other ants, they smell each other to gather information, telling each other their job, be it acting as 'workers', 'soldiers' or 'gatherers' for the colony, and what they are doing. They all keep track of whom they met in the past.

Now, imagine that an ant eater kills most of the gatherers. If this isn't fixed quickly, the colony will starve. Many worker ants need to switch jobs. But how do you tell this to thousands of them? It's simple- you don't. The worker ant will still meet and smell other ants, but it will encounter almost no gatherers at all. It counts too few gatherers until it reaches a critical point and then changes its job. The worker becomes a gatherer. Other ants will do the same, until after a while, there are enough gatherers again. The balance is thus restored all by itself. This simple set of rules is so elegant that a colony's many operations emerge as a consequence.

The actions and interactions of individual are random. Such is the elegance of a simple set of rules that a colony's many operations emerge consequently. On a more fundamental level, millions of complicated molecules interact to maintain a robust and marvelous structure. A being with vastly different properties than the sum of its dead parts emerges.

Some things that emerge are hard to define. You can't touch an ant colony, only its parts. It has neither brain nor face nor body. Yet the colony interacts with the world. Just like colonies emerge from ants, things emerge from humans. Although unintended, we are constantly creating communities, companies, cities, and societies. All of these things are entities that have fundamentally different properties and abilities than the pretty stupid apes they emerged from. No one knows why any of this happens. We merely observe it, and it may, after all, be the most wondrous property of our universe.

PROTECT YOURSELF

Antara Balaji (2017-2022)



Over the past 20 years, there have been numerous advancements in the way we as individuals communicate with each other. It is no longer a face to face meeting after social network and mobile technology made their debut. This has changed the mode of sharing personal data and information. Personal data encompasses not only names, but also information such as a person's occupation, address, physical characteristics, etc. While we share details with others who live across the world via these websites, we fail to realise that our privacy is being jeopardized. Most of our data is sold to third parties for a profit, by companies that offer us free services.

The Facebook and Cambridge Analytica data breach is a fine example of the same. Nearly 50 million Facebook users' personal data was illegally accessed to influence voters opinion on behalf of the politicians who hired them. This was clear in the case of the 2016 United States election between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, where Facebook users that supported Clinton, would see posts and receive information suggesting that she were to win the election, and the same applied to Trump supporters. However Clinton did not win, and people who supported her had no idea how it had happened even though all the information they had about this pointed towards her being the victor. This was because Facebook had accessed individuals' search history and personal preferences to feed information that they would like to see.

Data protection is crucial to prevent information from being leaked or sold to a third party. The European Union's new General Data Protection Regulation(GDPR) is one such policy that seeks to educate the individuals as to how their information is processed, what the company is doing with their data, and where their data is going. The new regulations also ensure individuals' right to be forgotten, which means that if individuals no longer want to have their personal data processed, a business needs to delete it.

The EU's GDPR, come into effect on May 25, 2018. Fines for companies who don't comply are either €20 million or 4% of global turnover, whichever is higher. This motivates companies to take these regulations more seriously. The EU's GDPR not only applies to companies and individuals in the EU but also to any non EU institution interacting with individuals from the EU or domiciled within the EU. It also applies to any EU organisation interacting with any other individual or organisation in the world.

These new regulations ensure the protection and empowerment of individuals, and also increase the accountability of businesses that handle this data, creating a greater level of transparency between the consumer and the service provider. Such regulations need to be enforced in all countries so as to provide a sense of surety and protection for their citizens.

With sharing information online becoming such a simplistic process, a stringent law in place to govern the privacy and protection of the same, has become the need of the hour.



ARS POETICA

The Race

Siddhant Kumar Jain (2016-2021)

Child, listen to the winds
Listen to what they strive to urge,
The voices have tried for years to impede
But in obscurity went all the heed
Dear soul
Dear heart
Dear fearless mind;
Sit and contemplate at what thy mislaid behind
The race was not the one to chase
Fear engulfing the thoughts you make
But remember that, the soul is immortal
Anatomy doth carry to the level
The time is ticking child,
Let thy winds urge you to sit back and look behind // ~

Memory Movie

-Anvita G Joshi (2017-2022)

In old lunchboxes,
Edges of frayed tee shirts,
Photos that were forgotten,
Shoes stained with dirt

There lies a fragment,
A promise of the past,
That stays with us
From the ships long cast

Memories in your mind,
Of you they may be
But seem slightly changed
When you look back and see

Are you remembering wrong?
The perks of aging
Was it really you who
Indulged in some harmless writing?

The tiny souvenirs from yesterday
Are like movies already watched,
You are in it,
Yet you feel so detached

This is the magic of memories,
It is a compromise
You can't relive the sweet ones,
You will taste the bitter in disguise

A Dream to be Fulfilled

Sakshi Sonal (2016-2021)

Dream a dream
What do you fear?
Let your thoughts stream!!

Imagine the unimaginable
Never fear to cry
Think the unthinkable
Be original, Give it a try.

Let the world take its decision
You take your own
But with true care and precision
Never fear of being alone.

For if you are right
The humanity will be there by you
Just keep up the fight
With all your will and might.

Flap your wings
Glide in the sky
Keep on flying
Till you reach up high

But always let your feet stay on Earth
Though you know you have the ability
Even if you know your worth,
On the way, never lose your humanity.

For then only can you remain untainted
Your soul can remain unsoiled by strife
You will always be loved and wanted
And you will live forever a fulfilling life.

Things That I Hate

M Sheetal (2017-2022)

I hate it when I am protected,
When wings fold me within
And I can't move.
It makes me wonder,
Do I seem weak to you?

I hate it when I am not allowed
To do the things I can do
Like a crow offering a nest to a cuckoo
When the cuckoo might be ready to build a nest.
Do I seem incompetent to you?

I hate it when I cannot speak
Of all the things I believe in
Like a bat who doesn't believe in daylight,
You shut me out to what you believe.
Do I seem delusional to you?

What I want is not a hand
When I am more than capable of going my way.
Once, like a broken clock, I struggled to tick
But as long as I worked, there wasn't a soul
And I had to learn to fix myself.

Protect me when I fall and hurt
Help me out when I do not have the strength
And hear me out before I hate my voice.

Because what I want is not a case to put me in
But a free world that believes in the power I hold.

This poem depicts a flustered woman who hates it when people think she is incompetent of doing things just because she might be physically weaker than a man. She questions the protection that is given to her when she is more than capable of protecting herself. She questions her work being taken away from her when she has the strength and passion to do it. Ironically, when she needs help and protection the most, she is left to fetch for herself.

What she faces are two extremes - she has to bear the whole burden of looking after a home as if it were her sole duty or she is considered too weak to be offered her share of work that she is passionate about.

Just like a man who is free to do what he wants with his life, I think a woman deserves the same as well.

What she does not want is to be protected and stored away like an antique. What she asks for is respect for her own individuality and the work she is capable of doing for, just like a man, she too holds equal power.

How I wish I could...

Manisha Nanda (2016-2021)

A new beginning, I feel alive;
You give me love and affection, on which I thrive.
I see a future, a world which I never knew,
I want to be born, to be held by you.
I get jovial as time flies,
You tell me stories about fairies which can fly.
My soul dances within, with joy and felicity,
I can't help myself from doing a ditty.
But, how could that one day decide my fate?
How could you give me up for their hate?
You told me that I gave you a new life, a new purpose;
But now you're letting them murder me, mutilate my corpus.
Even though we're connected with an umbilical cord,
Why do you want to rip me apart for their discord?
You judge me now, even before I'm born,
Is being a girl no more than being a thorn?
I feel the heat, like a ball of fire;
Melting down my soul, my heart's desire.
All I wanted was to live a life, to see the sky;
Please Mother! Don't let me die.
Alas! The journey I never started ends here;
Your nonchalance being the death of me was my worst fear.
Oh, how I wish I could have foreseen this day;
For it would have been easier to surrender myself to the Sun's last ray.

On Syria

Kingshuk Saha (2017-2022)

I was a thirsty traveller exploring the golden sands.
Seeking a miracle, I came across
A man -- a magician I would say,
Who said that he could predict when
The earth gulped up the whole moon.

He said he could divide the earth into many halves,
Build palaces out of iron
And create art out of base stone.
He said he had the power to stop the force of the raging river
And pen his thoughts down on clay.

When he asked me why I seemed so forlorn,
I told him I was depressed
And was looking for a miracle.
He said he could cure me
As he held my hand and he walked me to his library.

No sooner did he open the door
Than boom! A mortar shook the earth to the core.
The yellow pages which held the key to my cure
Were now wanting to engulf me whole.
There was the dust of knowledge all around
But everyone was interested in some other sound.

Some indiscernible cries of praise and hate,
Muffled the dim flutter of knowledge drowning steadfast into a pile
Of dust, smoke, debris, war and prejudice.
I looked around for my companion.
He was nowhere to be found.

As the fire of blind hate burnt the wisdom of the ages,
I suddenly found my friend had turned to stone.
Books collapsed, knowledge arrested, minds prostituted
-
There was no hope, only blood all around.
And through a huge hole in a bookshelf ravaged by a shell
I heard indistinct laments of lives hanging by a thread
Crying humans will destroy
What humanity had made.

This is a two part poem- the first part being about the Assyrian Civilisation and the second, about modern Syria ravaged by violence and terrorism.

The Assyrians were first to predict lunar eclipses, latitudes and longitudes, first to build dams and write on clay tablets. They built palaces out of iron and did stone relief works.

More importantly, they discovered antidepressants and invented the concept of libraries. The second part of the poem is based on how the present terrorism is now destroying these relics and the region's legacy.

Lonely

Shradha Akunuri (2017-2022)

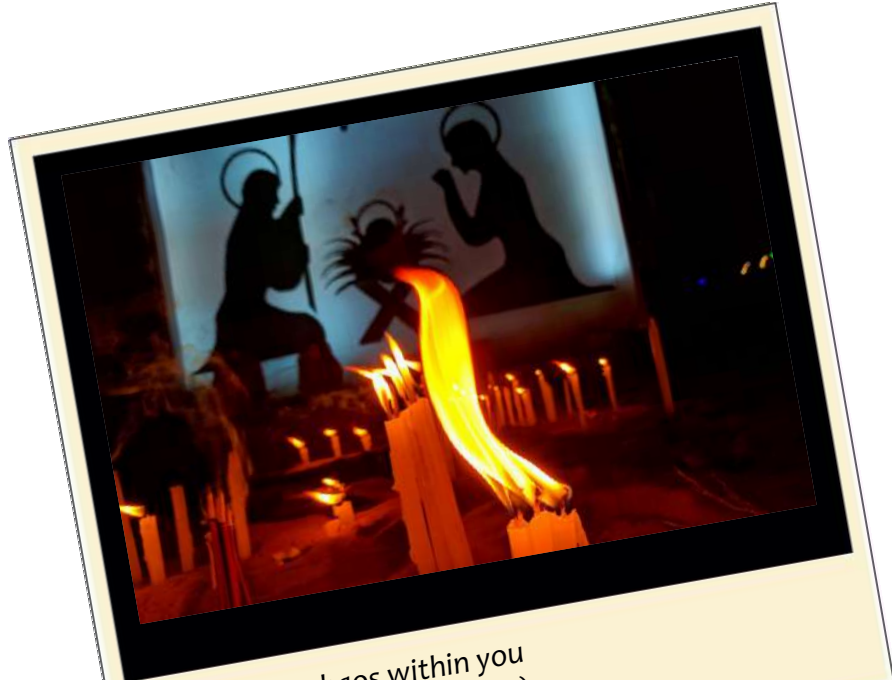
Familiar faces seen everywhere;
But when I want them there's nobody there.
Is this what betrayal feels like?
Or ain't they just my type?
Every night I sleep feeling lonely;
"They are probably busy, I get that totally".
It was a new life and I made friends;
But I didn't know this is how it would end.
Everyone seems fake;
That's enough betrayal I could take.
How many can I count on?
Because now everyone seems to be gone.
My heart not just aches for a boy;
But for those friends who treat me like a toy.

VASARI CORRIDOR

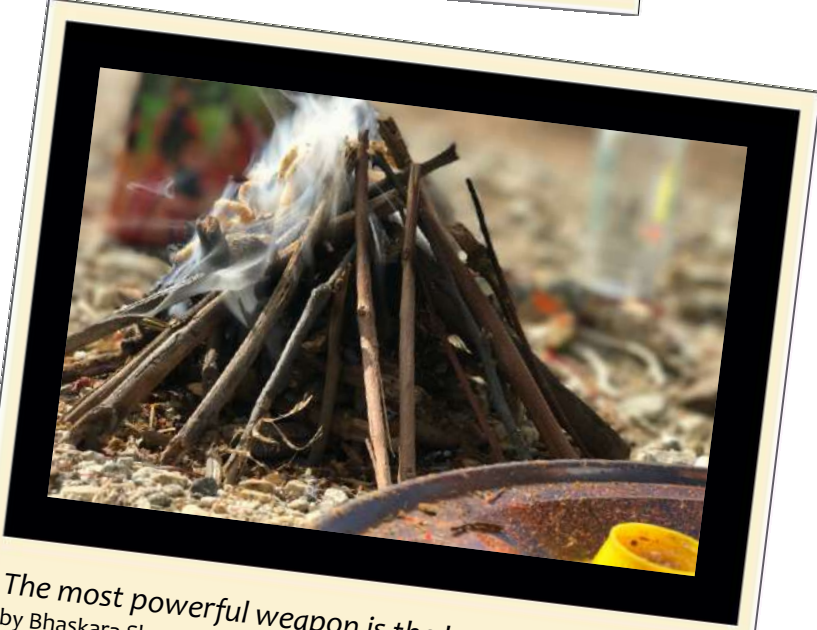
“photography is an austere and blazing poetry of the reality”



The Price of Womanhood
by Prothama Datta Roy (2016-21)



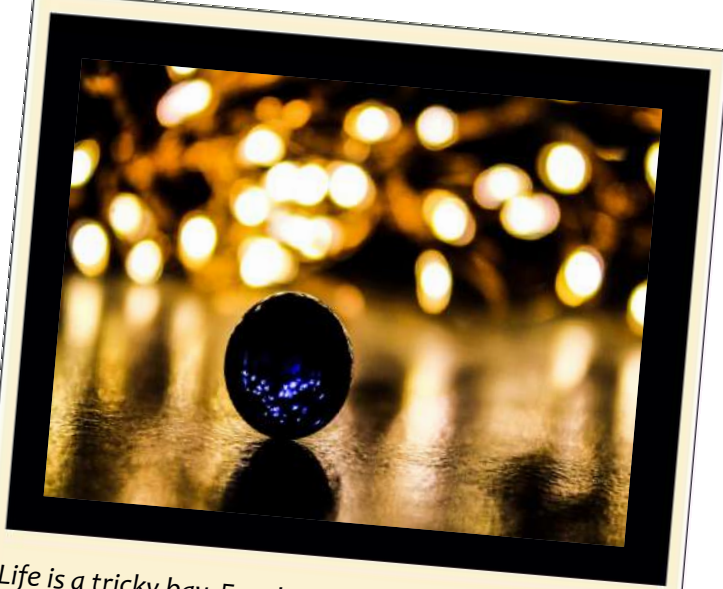
Master the chaos within you
by Budhadya Purkayastha (2016-21)



The most powerful weapon is the human soul on fire
by Bhaskara Sharma (2016-21)



Someone will paint you another sky
by Anvita Joshi (2017-22)



Life is a tricky bay, For those who do not believe in magic
by Aviral Arun (2016-21)



Give him a mask and he will tell you the truth
by Yash Shah (2016-21)



The best therapist has fur and four legs
by Siddhi Shubhangi (2016-21)



A hue for each foot step
by Apoorva Maurya (2016-21)



If you stare into the abyss long enough, the abyss stares back at you
by Ananya Rajaram (2015-20)



SYMINARET



The Secret is Out Shayan Bisney (2015-2020)

A trained pilot, singer and model, who was born and raised in Mumbai in a close knit Parsi family, Behram Siganporia first began singing in his high school band and choir. He lived his passion and formed a band of his own called 'One Nite Stand' which was later renamed to 'Best Kept Secret'. The band was not intended to be formed initially, it all started off when four people who were unknown to each other had to perform at a friend's cocktail party and had to play for just one night and hence the name 'One Nite Stand' was coined. All their efforts paid off as the band started to gain widespread recognition in the following years.

He was also included in Times of India's list of 'Most Desirable Men'! His message to all those who want to be like him is: "I don't think anyone should try to be like me. All you have to do is follow your dreams and pursue your passion." He endorses a variety of brands like Puma, Fastrack, Kodak, Paresh Lamba Signatures and Vivo.

Mix together a touch of rock, a dash of disco, a hint of blues, a shout of pop and a pinch of electronic music and out comes Best Kept Secret! With around a hundred gigs a year, Best Kept Secret has been rocking stages worldwide with Hemanth Diwakaran on lead guitar, Abhilash EK on drums, Steve Rajan on the keyboard and Behram as the lead singer. Irrespective of age, fans have swayed to their music. The band has crossed another milestone after recently releasing their own original songs called "Moving On" and "Can't Let You Go". The band has been featured in leading magazines like GQ and Rolling Stone and their songs have been played on TV channels like VH1 and 9XO. Their songs are now playing on radio stations all over the world including London and New York. The band's main inspiration is Coldplay, a band they often offer tributes to at their gigs.

The band also had the incredible opportunity to perform under the gorgeous Northern Lights in Norway for a world famous billionaire's birthday bash. They've also been roped in to record an album with the same production company that handled record-breaking bands like U2 and Westlife following which they'll gain the status of an international band.

The journey of Behram's life is an inspiration to every youngster out there. No matter how unfavourable the odds may be, no matter how rough the road is, do what you love and you'll love what you do! There's no dream that cannot be turned into reality. This band is an example of how nothing is impossible.



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