

THE RUIAITE MONTHLY

**AUGUST
2020**



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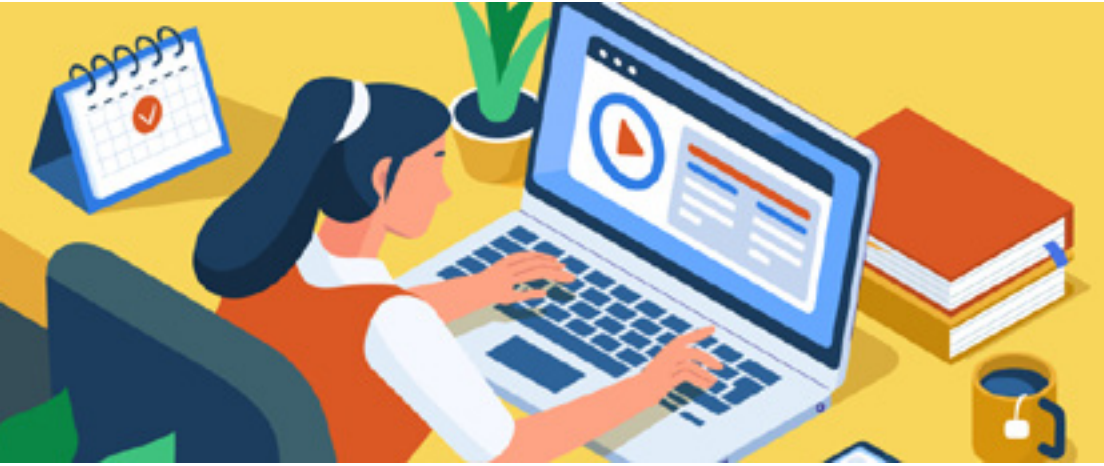
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Credits



Hey there, reader. Welcome to the August edition of the Ruiaite Monthly!



We'll get right to the good part: we've got a whole new team of writers on board from this edition onwards! We'd promised last month that you'll be seeing "new styles, new voices, and new topics", and we're confident that we have lived up to that. But you be the judge! Read our pages from end to end, and let us know what you think. Email us at ruiaitepr@gmail.com. We can't stress enough how much we want to know what you -- yes, you! -- think of our content.

Articles aren't all we've been working on, though! Check out our YouTube channel, The Ruiaite Monthly. Fresh this month is the interview we took of Dr Varad Giri, who has discovered more species of reptiles and amphibians than I have made group projects since nursery. A few excerpts are provided



in this month's Careerwise, but don't miss the real deal! We've also made a video to communicate insights about skill development, so if you care about that -- and you probably should! -- then take a peek.

College is reopening, too -- in a sense. And we'd like to be part of this muted return to normalcy as best as we can. As always, if you have any suggestions or comments for us, please let us know. Here's to a great first month of college.

The Editorial Team



Reporting



'INDIA UNTOUCHED'

- Truths that remained obscure.

Arya Nair | SYBSc

Rajshree Kokare | TYBA

10 minutes read

When it comes to 'untouchability', most of us would react with "What? Are you kidding? This is the 21st century. Our society has changed, I don't think anyone still practices such things, at least not educated individuals....", but the ground reality is contrary to what we actually think.

According to Article 17 of the Indian Constitution - untouchability is strictly prohibited in India, but just by watching the movie 'India Untouched', the true state on the ground comes into the limelight.

To mark the 102nd birth anniversary of Nelson Mandela on 18th July 2020, NSS team of Ramnarain Ruia College organised a movie screening of Stalin K's 'India Untouched' followed by a discussion, as it's first activity under the banner of 'Being Indian'.

'India Untouched: Stories Of A People Apart' is a film which reveals the discrimination



and atrocities faced by dalits and the practice of Untouchability rooted in India with no barriers of religion, region, age and gender. It shows how after almost 70 years of independence, many Indians are still struggling and having to live with a very big question mark on words like equality, fraternity etc. in the Indian Constitution.



The movie started at 4pm sharp with the portrayal of school children in Gujarat with their typical dalit and non-dalit identities. They described how bhangi's are not allowed to sit, eat with Bharwad's (upper caste), bhangi students are not allowed to sit with other upper caste children during lunch time, due to which they skip lunch. The movie shows a bhangi boy who questions the logic behind the untouchability system. It also shed light on



how different states and regions in India follow untouchability practices in various forms. In some parts of Gujarat's Bhavnagar, lower caste people are not allowed to travel by chakkada. In a typical village in Gujarat, school girls of lower caste have to sweep the school ground, clean toilets, wash utensils, make tea, etc. which Patel and Shiroya girls don't. This caste based discrimination is also visible in milk cooperatives in Gujarat's Kheda. South India, often regarded as the most developed region of India, with its highly literate states, is also vulnerable to untouchability and caste discrimination. In



parts of Tamilnadu's Madurai, Parayars (dalit) people don't wear slippers in the areas designated for the upper caste. The same thing is visible in parts of Tirunavelli, where lower caste people can't wear footwear in the shops of the upper caste.



Kerala being the number one state as far as literacy is concerned is no exception to such discrimination. The film shows many such examples of untouchability and caste based discrimination- how there are no upper caste workers in Patiala Municipal Corporation, how in leather industries of some areas in Punjab, primary work of cleaning and dying of leather are done by lower caste people and managerial work is done by people of upper caste. Be it a mason in Mehboobnagar of Andhra Pradesh or mid-wife in Jamui of Bihar, they are still unable to get the respect they want from their masters. Rajput farmers in Gujarat still dominate the area and lower caste, haridas people there live under the control of the Rajputs and can't sit with them, Rajput children's names can't be uttered without the suffixes of -ji or -bapu by lower caste people, Rajput children don't necessarily follow school restrictions etc.

This discrimination knows no boundaries of religion as it exists in every religion, be it Hinduism, Islamism, Sikhism or Christian. In some areas of Southern India there are different churches for upper caste and lower caste people, lower caste people are not



allowed to enter in churches made for upper castes. The same thing can be seen in Sikhism as well where the Gurudwaras are different for upper caste jats and other lower caste people (dalit). The fate of Islamism is not an exception as far as discrimination is concerned. In Islamism Syed's , Sheikhs, Pathans are more powerful than lower caste people, leading their way in various fields like politics etc. In Hinduism many lower caste people are not allowed in temples.



The movie also shows the views of typical fundamentalist hindu brahmana people who are blindly following vedas and shastras and don't consider Indian constitution as perfect. They think shudras don't have the right to education and better jobs and shudras and women get these lives because of their karma in previous births.

With many such examples, the film sheds



light on the ground picture of India's caste system and untouchability, which is truly untouched by many of us.

Soon after the movie screening concluded, an insightful discussion on the opinions and perspectives of the audience commenced.

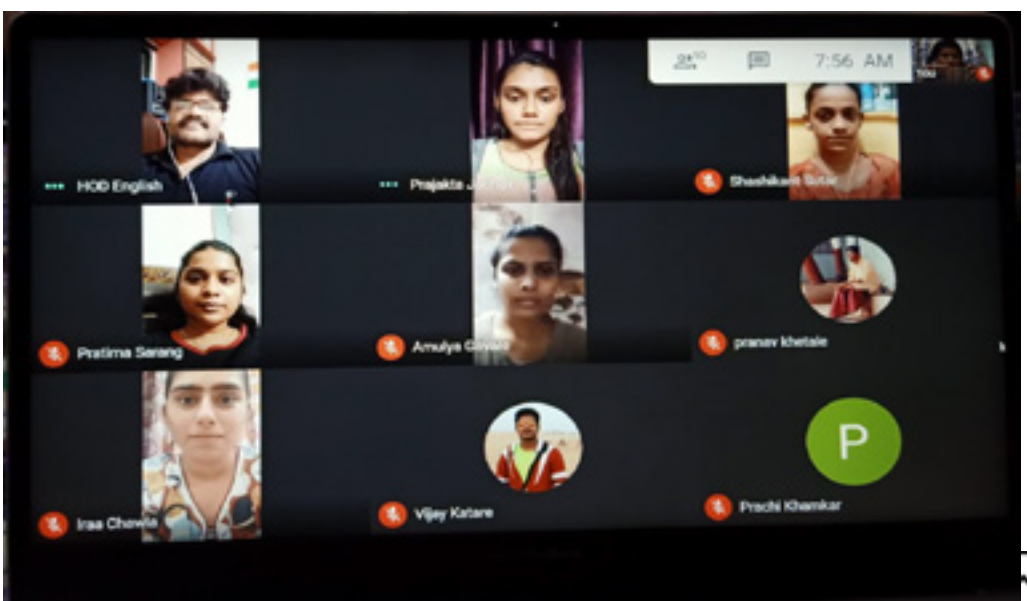
As the event was organized to celebrate the 102nd birth anniversary of 'African Gandhi', Mr. Nelson Mandela, it was initiated with a brief introduction to the major events of his life by Swanand Newaskar, an NSS volunteer. The introduction included the details from his early school life, the battle for equal rights for people of colour, and his time as the president of South-Africa.



Prajakta Jadhav, another NSS volunteer, provided information about the film-maker Stalin K, who actively tries to make people aware of the injustices carried out in India, and on the basis of a survey, the percentage



of injustices still prevailing in our country to form a base for the discussion. She also explained the three factors which make the eradication of the caste system hard— Hierarchy, Heredity, and Endogamy. Vedika Sawant shared her opinion regarding the fear in the minds of people from the socially backward castes, of people particularly from the Upper castes that has persisted for many generations. She did not hesitate to talk about the loopholes in the education system that successfully hide the drawbacks of the Vedas. Atharva Pawar suggested that the media should be a medium to bring the problems of the underprivileged to the surface. He commented on the mentality of people belonging to the lower caste, due to which they follow age-old rules like sitting on the floor when people from higher castes are around even when they are not asked to do so. He talked about revolutionaries like



Namdev Maharaj, a Brahmin who invited people from the lower caste to have lunch at his home. Prajakta gave an insight into atrocities like murder, torture to point at which suicide seems like the only option and the tremendous bullying faced by the underprivileged that is kept secret from the masses. Advait Vadarle explained how people unknowingly support caste discrimination by only considering Brahmins capable of performing rituals. Jagrut Patil talked about the importance of education in bettering the mindset of the people at both ends of the spectrum. Janhavi Sutar shared her opinion about reservation not being an effective solution to completely eradicate the caste system, as many times reservation becomes a reason for anger towards the people belonging to the lower caste in the minds of upper caste people. Amulya Gaware highlighted how we unknowingly judge a person based on their surname. Shravani Korde commented about some people who exploit the laws which are made for the protection of their rights. According to Sayali Sanas, India would be considered developed when people don't find a need to apply for reservation.



The discussion ended with a description of the variations in discrimination that exist throughout the world by Mr. Arjun Kharat, the head of the English department. He explained the brutality of colour discrimination in western countries and how things will change if humans are considered just humans and not on the basis of their caste, creed, or colour.

It was a deeply insightful discussion which opened doors for students to become the harbingers of change within society.

Celebrating Mahalanobis!

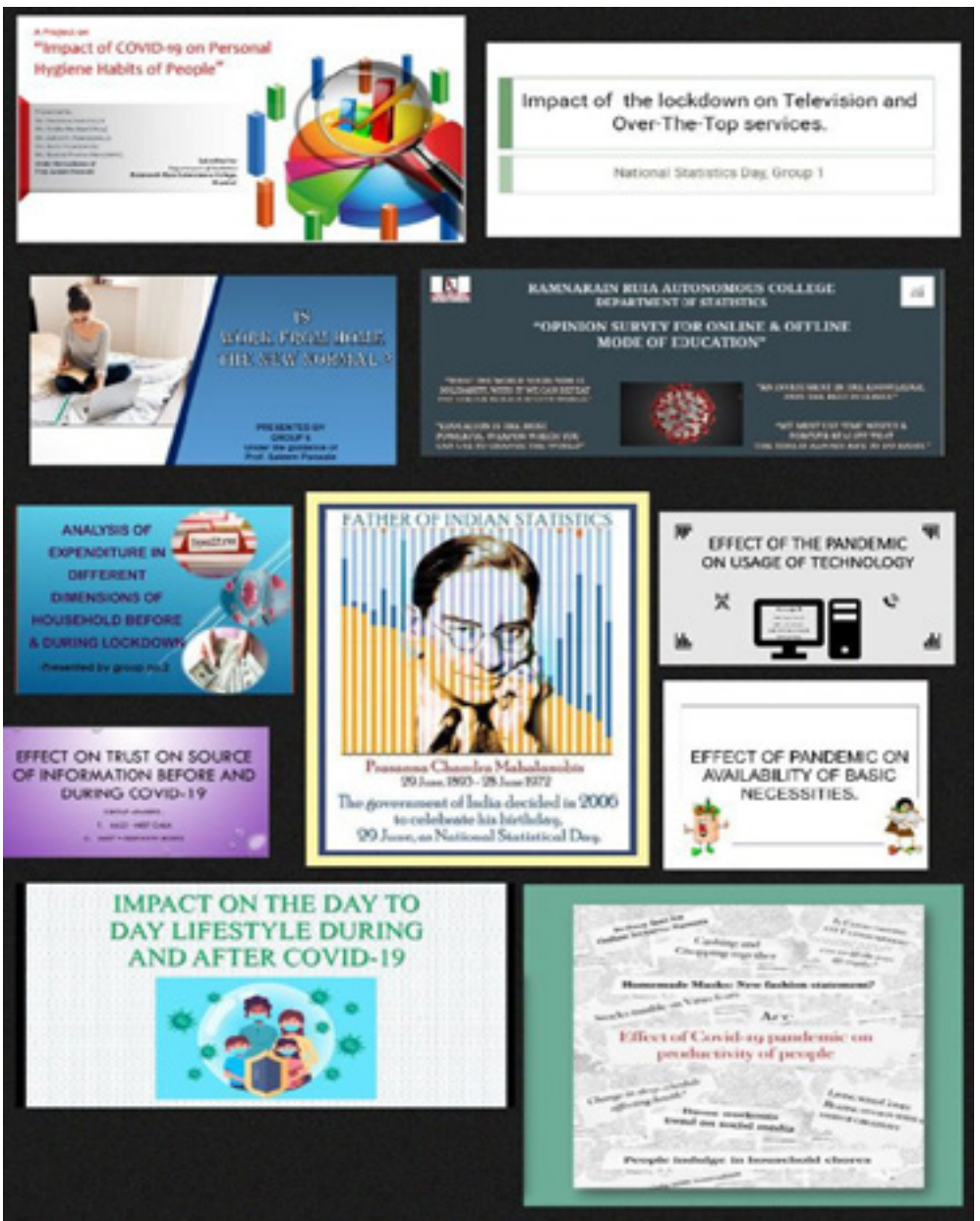


Vaishnavi Kulkarni | TYBSc
6 minutes read

“Statistics must have a clearly defined purpose, one aspect of which is scientific advancement and the other human welfare and national development.” The person remembered for the Mahalanobis distance and the speaker of the above quote; Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis is also known as the father of Indian Statistics. In his honor, we observe the 29th of June as



the National Statistics Day! It goes without saying that the global pandemic failed to stop the inexorable statisticians from celebrating their day. A three day thought-provoking presentation marathon was organized by the Statistics Department of Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College to mark this special occasion. It was conducted in a hassle-free manner over authorized zoom meetings at 3 p.m. each day.



Dr. Sujata Suvarnapathki opened the 3- day meet with her introductory speech followed



by the Vice Principal and the Head of Department, Mrs. Sucheta Ketkar who profusely thanked the Principal for providing a paid zoom account which had enabled the program to streamline easily without glitches. From here-on the program was a smooth transition between the various presenters.

‘Impact of lockdown on TV and OTT (over the top) services’ was the intriguing topic chosen by the 8 member strong Team 1. The data consumption rate per individual had witnessed the highest spike in many years. A few questions raised by the audience were given elaborate explanations by the team. The financial predicament has been a mighty side effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. Managing all monetary situations is proving to be arduous. Taking this topic into consideration, it was Group 2 who presented on – ‘Analysis of expenditure in different dimensions of households before and during lockdown’. Along with the weaker sections of our society, students have been affected at large. Exams, results, careers all have come to a sudden halt. And who could have done a better job presenting on this difficulty than the students



themselves? With a seven-member crew, the next group talked about this issue via their topic- 'Opinion survey for online and offline mode of education'. In their own words, 'the dessert for the day'; the next team acknowledged a very climacteric issue: 'Effect of Covid-19 pandemic on productivity of people'. It has been scientifically proven that looking at certain colors for a specific mood can definitely elevate the mood. The seven-member team put up a colorful and lively presentation that thoroughly reflected their great creativity and productivity skills. Congratulating all the teams for their joint efforts, Dr. Ashwini Deshpande concluded Day 1 of the three day long program. She also initiated the program on Day 2.



“Essentials” is a word that has gained utmost attention in the recent lockdown.



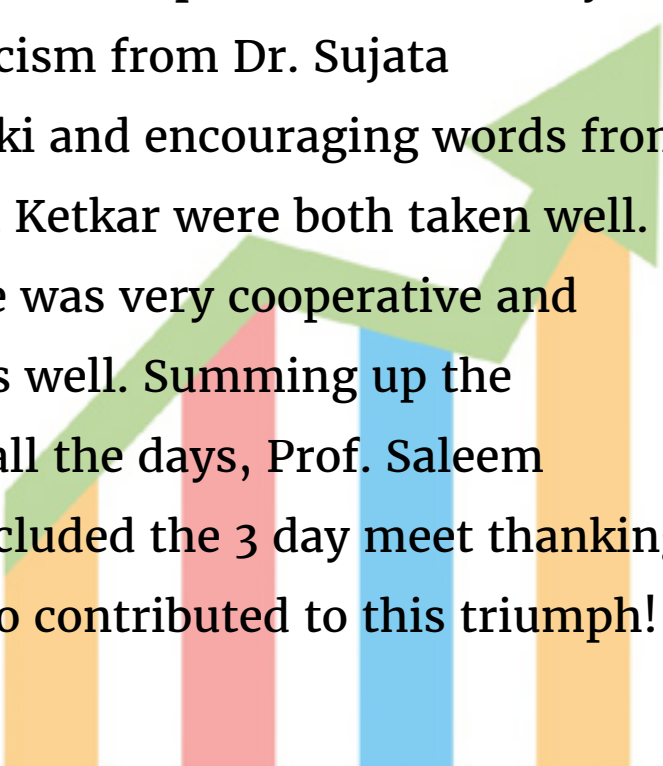
The 7 membered, Group 5 with their topic as 'Effect of pandemic on the availability of basic necessities', portrayed the common problems faced by citizens. In these challenging times, people have adapted to new standards of what's considered normal. Or maybe they've not? To answer the same, the next group had surveyed and presented on the topic - 'Is work from home the new normal?' It was observed that various walks of life like commuting, shopping for essentials, methods of receiving education, diet, entertainment options; everything drastically changed in a matter of months! It was thus the unanimous decision of Group 7 to not consider just a section but to acknowledge the entire revised lifestyle situation in general. They titled this vast section as- 'Impact of COVID-19 on the day to day lifestyle in the long run'. The day had been a success. Miss Sumaiya Shaikh closed the meet with a cheerful round of commendations.

A short addressal by Mrs. Sucheta Ketkar kicked off the celebrations for the valedictory day. Group 8, who were to be the next in row, had unfortunately faced technical issues as well as personal



circumstances hence rendering them helpless on Day 2. Taking this into consideration, they were relieved of their stress and were later given a chance to present on their topic- 'Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the personal hygiene habits of people'. In the meantime, groups 9 and 10 were given the opportunity to present. With their respective topics, 'Effect of pandemic on usage of technology during quarantine' and 'Effect on trust on source of information before and during COVID-19'; both gave absolutely engaging performances.

The entire three-day program was extremely well planned and executed by the Department of Statistics. Creating zoom meetings and as the general host, Miss Sumaiya Shaikh compèred it effortlessly. Positive criticism from Dr. Sujata Suvarnapathki and encouraging words from Mrs. Sucheta Ketkar were both taken well. The audience was very cooperative and interactive as well. Summing up the activities of all the days, Prof. Saleem Panwale concluded the 3 day meet thanking everyone who contributed to this triumph!



Buzz Around

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Understanding Privatization through the lens of **Atmanirbhar Bharat**

Ishita Narvekar | TYBA

Gayatri Madhusudan | TYBA

2 minutes read

On 1st February 2020, the government announced the privatization of Indian Railways. This public-private partnership in process initiates 151 trains and 109 route-pairs through private investments of about Rs 30,000 crore. The justification provided for the move is that it will introduce modern technology, boost job creation, provide enhanced safety and world-class travel experience to passengers. This project also supplements the **'Make in India'** scheme, as the majority of trains will be manufactured in India.



Later in June, the government went a step further and opened up the space sector for private companies. The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) will be set up under ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) with a board consisting of academicians, industrialists and government agencies, to work as an independent decision-making body for regulating activities of the private sector in space. ISRO Chairman K Sivan, in an online media briefing to Times Now called this move “a major reform in the Department of Space”. Besides these moves, the government has also brought in major reforms in various sectors to allow private companies in strategic sectors with the hope of inclining the Indian economy towards growth.



However, does privatization line up with the policy of “Aatmanirbhar Bharat” championed by our Prime Minister? To reduce imports and boost self-sufficiency, an increase in domestic manufacturing and economic growth are prerequisites. While economic growth may be volatile, privatization of Indian industries would certainly boost domestic production. Through its contributions to employment, it will pour money into the economy, making economic growth more of a certainty.

Excessive reliance on imports also leads to a fragile and inequitable economy, and self-sufficiency can help strengthen the economy by eliminating this aspect.

However, one aspect of privatization directly contradicts the agenda of self-sufficiency: **FDIs (Foreign Direct Investments)**. Inviting FDIs is an important part of the economic policy of privatization, which indentures Indian industries to private owners and leads to an outflow of economic gains from the country. An article in the Indian Express states that **“Privatisation does not make a self-reliant nation.”**, continuing further **“Self-reliance can only be achieved through policy changes that deprioritize the interests**



of multinational corporations and embrace a people-centric, decentralised approach to industrialisation.”

Does this mean that privatization and self-sufficiency are inherently irreconcilable? Perhaps not. While reducing FDI dependence is an important step to incline privatization towards self-sufficiency, a strong regulatory framework and a well-designed privatization program are important as the positive impact of privatization on self-sufficiency is contingent on these factors. If the privatization program is designed in such a way that the FDI is used to augment domestic manufacturing capabilities and the regulatory framework enacts measures like regulation of MRPs of imported products, then perhaps all aspects of privatization can be transformed to bolster self-sufficiency. Therefore, whether privatization will detain or retain Aatmanirbhar Bharat depends entirely upon its administration by our political institutions.



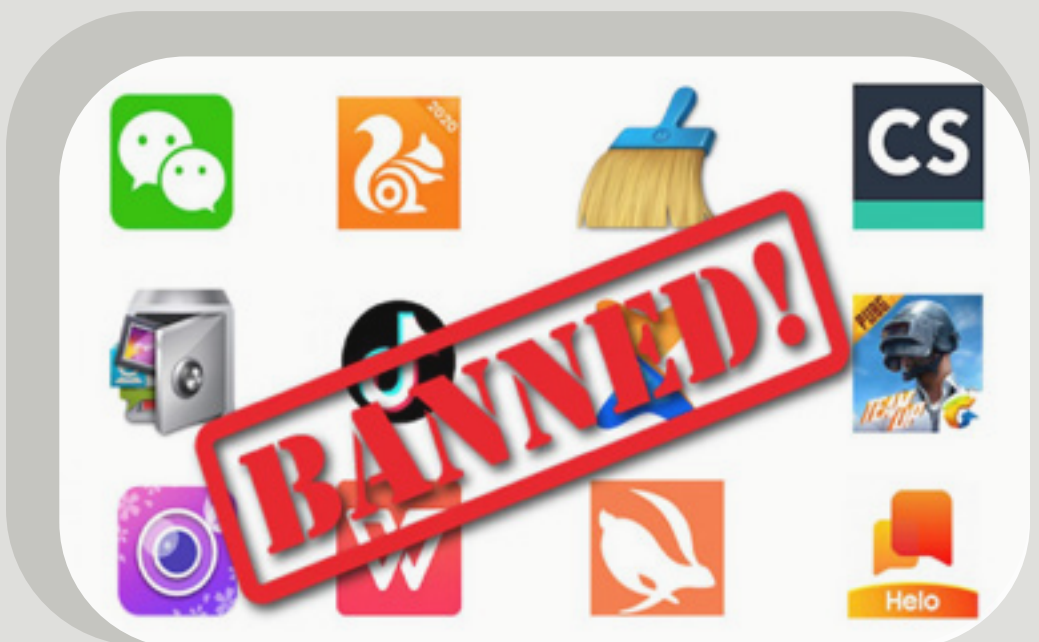
Simply Put

The Bigger Threat: Chinese intrusion beyond borders

Hrithik Nirhali | TYBA

2 minutes read

In the wake of the Chinese aggression in Ladakh, several Indians took to social media with a clarion call to boycott Chinese products. The government went ahead to **ban Fifty-nine Chinese apps**. Though substitution of Chinese commodities by similarly priced goods is feasible, a blanket ban might hurt India more than China in the shorter run.



Why is a complete ban impossible?

There are two reasons for it. Being a signatory of the World Trade Organization (WTO), India cannot impose an embargo on China, which is also a part of WTO. It wouldn't be economically prudent to do so as China is India's largest trading partner. Chinese imports account for 14% of the total imports in India but Chinese exports to India are a mere 3% of its total exports. India also has a trade deficit of USD 53 billion.

Which Indian sectors are dependent on China?

Chinese companies have invested in Indian startups like Paytm, Swiggy, and Ola. India's pharmaceutical industry imports 70% of the active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) from China. 72% of the smart-phone market in India is dominated by China. In the solar and automobile market, there is a remarkable dominance of Chinese products. The raw material required for several Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) is imported from China. In case of a trade war, several Indian companies like Adani, Jindal which are operating in China, are bound to suffer.



What steps has the government taken to reduce dependence?

1. Government E-Marketplace (GeM), a digital initiative under the Ministry of Commerce has made it compulsory for the sellers to enter the 'Country of origin' and 'Local content percentage' for registration of new goods.
2. A 'Made in India' filter has been introduced on the GeM.
3. Foreign Direct Investment in India has to be made via the government for the countries which share a land border. Earlier, the FDI did not undergo any government scrutiny.
4. Anti-dumping duties (imposed when foreign country's products are cheaper than the price in their home markets) have been imposed on steel imports from Vietnam, South Korea and China.
5. Funds have been allocated for creating three bulk drug parks in the country to become self-sufficient in the pharmaceutical sector.



What can be the way forward?

The government needs to incentivize MSMEs to produce substitutes for Chinese products by giving loans. E-Commerce websites like Amazon and Flipkart should be encouraged to follow the example of GeM. Countervailing duty can be imposed on those products which receive a subsidy from the exporting country. The government should frame National policy keeping the immediate and long-term solutions in mind to make India, Atma Nirbhar (self-reliant) in the future.



Ruia Buzz

अनिकेत चव्हाण | TYBA

मिहिर देसाई | TYBA

2 minutes read

आज आपण 'भारतीय डिजिटल पार्टी' (भाडिपा) चॅनलच्या इंद्रजीत मोरे, जो आपल्याच कॉलेजचा विद्यार्थी आहे, त्याची मुलाखत घेत आहोत.

सर्वप्रथम तू आम्हाला 'भाडिपा' आणि भाटुपाबद्दल सांग.

तुझा कधी आणि कसा संबंध आला या चॅनल्सशी?

बारावीच्या सुट्ट्यांमध्ये मी आणि माझ्या मित्राने एक स्टॅण्ड-अप लिहिलं होतं. ते स्टॅण्ड-अप आम्ही भाडिपाला पाठवलं. त्यांना ते खूप आवडलं आणि त्यांनी आम्हाला भेटायला बोलवलं. पहिले मी तिथे 'कास्टिंग काउच विथ अमेय अँड निपुण' या शोमध्ये ए.डी. म्हणून काम पाहू लागलो. तेव्हा नुकतंच 'भारतीय टुरिंग पार्टी' (भाटुपा) चॅनल सुरू झालं होतं. मला फिरायची आवड असल्याने मग मी तिथे काम करू लागलो आणि मी 'भाडिपा' आणि भाटुपाशी जोडलो गेलो.



भाडिपासारख्या मोठ्या मंचावर काम करत

असताना कसं वाटतं?

**एखाद्या चाहत्याने दिलेली प्रतिक्रिया आठवते
का तुला?**

‘भाडिपा’, ‘भाटुपा’ आणि ‘विषय खोल’ या तीनही चॅनल्सची मुख्य कंपनी ‘भाडिपा’ आहे. आता आम्हाला आमचं स्वतंत्र ऑफिस आहे.

पहिले आम्ही ३-४ जण अगदी छोट्या प्रमाणात काम करत होतो.

पण आता आमची एक मोठी टीम आहे. तिथे एक वेगळंच ‘वर्क कल्चर’ आहे. मला माझ्या पद्धतीने काम करण्याची मुभा आहे. आम्हाला असलेल्या स्वातंत्र्यामुळे आम्ही आमचे १००% योगदान देऊ शकतो. लोकांना आमचं काम आवडतं. जेव्हा हम्पीला गेलो होतो तेव्हा मला तिथे एक मराठमोळं कुटुंब भेटलं. त्यांनी माझा त्याआधीचा गोकर्णचा व्हिडिओ पहिला होता. ते माझ्याशी बोलले. नंतर जाताना त्यांनी माझ्यासोबत फोटोही काढला. एवढ्या कमी वेळात मिळालेली ही दाद खूप भारावून टाकते. माझ्यापेक्षा माझी ‘ब्ल्यू बॅग पॅक’ जास्त प्रसिद्ध आहे. ती घेऊन मी फिरायला बाहेर पडलो की हमखास एखादा चाहता भेटतो आणि आपुलकीने चौकशी करतो.

अत्यल्प दरात ट्रीप आखणं तुझी खासियत आहे.

पण कुठे राहायचं, कुठे खायचं हे तू कसं प्लॅन करतोस?

इंटरनेटवर खूप माहिती उपलब्ध आहे. त्याव्यतिरिक्त विमानात असलेल्या मासिकातून माहिती मिळते.

आणि जेव्हा मी फिरतो तेव्हा मी तिथल्या माणसांशी



बोलतो. काही माझ्यासारखे ट्रेकर असतात, तर काही तिकडचे स्थानिक. त्यांच्याकडून जी माहिती मिळते ती खरंच खूप उपयुक्त असते.

तुझं बजेट कधी गडबडलंय का?

नाही. कारण मी गणितात कच्चा आहे. म्हणून मी आधीच काटेकोरपणे माझा प्रवास आखतो. उद्या काय करायचं याचं नियोजन मी आदल्या दिवशीच २-३ तास बसून करतो. एक छदामही जास्त खर्च करायचा नाही ही गाठ मी मनाशी बांधतो.



अभ्यास, अभिनय आणि भटकंती या तीनही गोष्टी तू एकत्र कशा सांभाळतोस?

मी यासाठी अशी काही खास मेहनत घेत नाही. आपण जे काम करतो त्यात जर आपल्याला आनंद मिळत असेल, तर आपण ती गोष्ट अजून आवडीने करतो. आपल्या सर्वांच्या मनात एक ताकद आहे जी आपल्याकडून आपल्याला हवी असणारी कामं करून घेते. म्हणूनच माझ्या बाबतीत जर बघायचं झालं तर ही तीनही कामं एकत्र होतात.



**तू अनेक ठिकाणी फिरतोस. तर तुला कोणती
माणसं किंवा संस्कृती भावली?**

माझं अजून खूप फिरायचं बाकी आहे. पण मी जेव्हा उत्तर-पूर्व भारतात गेलो, तिकडची माणसं मला प्रचंड आवडली. त्याठिकाणी लोकांना आपल्यासारख्या सुखसुविधा नाहीत. पण तरीही तिथे पर्यावरणाबद्दल एक आवड आहे, प्रेम आहे. हीच गोष्ट त्यांच्या संस्कृतीशी जोडली गेली आहे. हे सगळं बघून खरंच नवल वाटते.

**भाडिपाची पडद्यावरची धमाल तर आम्ही
बघतो, पण पडद्यामागे एवढीच धमाल करता
का?**

दुप्पट! पडद्यावरील धमाल माझ्या मते काहीच नसते. जेव्हा आम्ही एकत्र ऑफिसमध्ये असतो तेव्हा आम्ही खूप धमाल करतो. त्यामुळे सध्या ऑफिसची आठवण येते. एकत्र डबे खाणे, एकमेकांची फिरकी घेणे! एक वेगळाच आनंद मिळतो तिथे काम करताना.





तुझ्या क्षेत्राबद्दल तू आमच्या वाचकांना काय सांगशील?

माझ्या मते ही मुलाखत वाचणारे खूप महाविद्यालयीन तरुण असतील. 'तारुण्य' हा आपल्या आयुष्यातील सगळ्यात छोटा पण महत्त्वाचा टप्पा आहे. तो वाया घालवू नका. या काळात स्वतःमधला बदल स्वीकारायला शिका. जो बदल तुमचं आयुष्य चांगले घडवू शकतो, त्याला नाकारू नका. या क्षेत्रात संधी खूप आहेत. त्यांचं सोनं करायला शिका.



Careerwise

“Study nature, Love nature, Stay close to nature. It will never fail you”

- Frank Lloyd Wright

We try to explore the career options for all the nature and research enthusiasts put in this edition of Careerwise.

A hop into Herpetology

Shriya Hadavale | SYJC

Prachiti Jadhav | SYJC

9 minutes read

In the four months of lockdown, one thing that we all have missed is nature. If you love amphibians and wish to study them in detail, here is a career option for you.

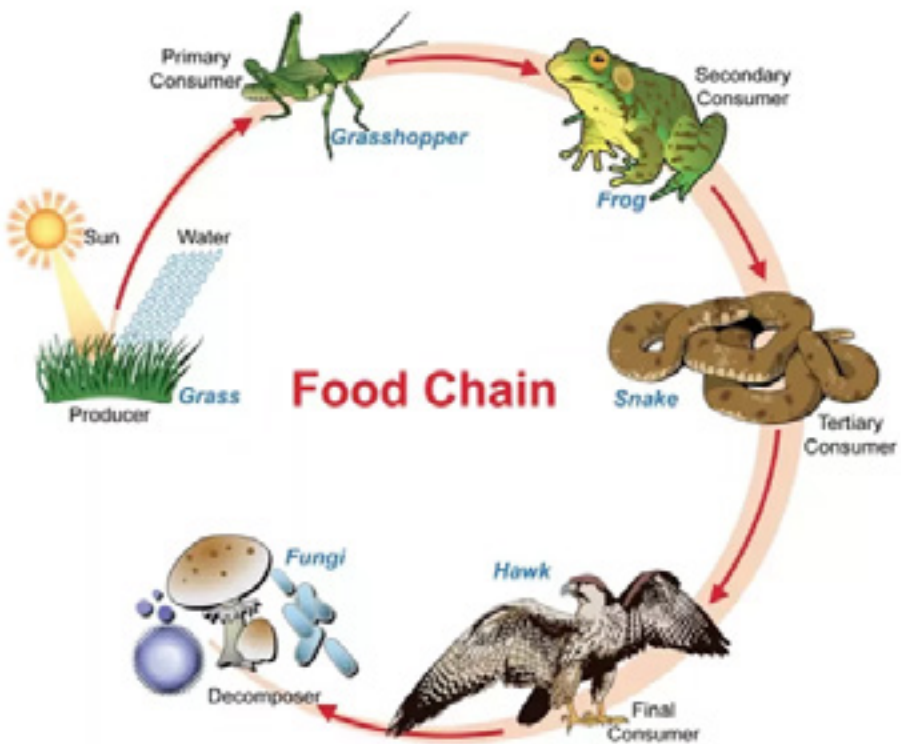
Herpetology is a branch of zoology which focuses on amphibians, e.g. frogs, lizards, and reptiles. On the other hand, Taxonomy is the branch of science that deals with classification and naming of new species. To get detailed information regarding the actual scope and reality of the field, Careerwise interviewed Dr. Varad Giri, a herpetologist, taxonomist and researcher. Here are the excerpts from the interview.

Interview with Dr. Varad Giri:



1. With regard to the creatures that this field deals with, what importance do they hold in the ecosystem and for us specifically?

- Each element of the food chain is very important. The frogs feed on insects and snakes are eaten by eagles. Even if one element of this chain is absent, it will affect all others. Humans have been on top of this food pyramid, and as we all know “**the one on the top gets affected the most**”; we humans will face the impact of this breakage the most if these creatures aren’t conserved.



2. A lot of youngsters these days are taking interest in photographing and rescuing wild animals, especially snakes. What is the right way to start the scientific study of these



- Today there are more snake rescuers than snakes! Let me tell you, catching snakes is not science. There is nothing wrong or bad about it. Even I started off with bird-watching and bird photography. But if you observe animals carefully, read about them, and do research, rather than just click pictures, then you can add a lot to science. There are so many species to study, so many fields yet unexplored to which these youngsters can definitely contribute.



3. As you are active in the field of taxonomy as well, what according to you is the take of the common man on taxonomy?

- Taxonomy is important for people who want to study biodiversity and conserve species but a common man won't understand taxonomy. Unfortunately, India lacks awareness in taxonomy. The urban population might study it, but rural populations are usually more interested in knowing remedies on snakebite than the name and species of the snake.



4. Presently when the field of science is dominated by genetic and molecular studies do you feel that science of taxonomy is endangered?

- See, phylogeny and biogeography will provide you the branches of organisms, but to understand and differentiate between the different branches you will require taxonomy. So taxonomy is very important in science to study and understand various species. It is also crucial to study while working on the conservation of different species. The main issue today is **“People who teach zoology are killing zoology”**. They fail to encourage the students to take this science. This needs to change.



5. You have been an active contributor to academic research and publishing. We have many aspiring researchers among the audience. Can you throw some light on the whole process of doing research and then publishing it?



- Let me tell you, you don't need an educational background to publish. There are many amazing herpetologists in India without a degree. You just need to have important and interesting research questions to work upon. I mean good science journals, and not on social media. One must strive to keep the research accurate for enrichment of us, others and the science. Some of the journals in India are Journal of Bombay Natural History Society, Herpetological notes, and many others. Please publish your observations and research, it is very important!



6. What qualifies as good research and how should we go about it?

- No research is bad research according to me. Any research that enhances my level of understanding is a good research. Science is about hypothesis and thesis. Hypothesis is the question and thesis is the answer. So a specific thesis may turn out to be a hypothesis to someone who will do further research on that.. Everyone who has an interest in the subject must start with some research. That's how it goes.

7. Do we require any specific academic qualification to become a herpetologist? Are there any institutions in India offering that training?



National Centre of Biological Science

- **The best institution that can train you is your own self.** In India there are no specific courses in herpetology but you can do your



Masters in institutes like National Centre of Biological Science which offer courses related to wildlife.

8. How many new species have you discovered so far?

- When I started, discovering species was a big deal and I dreamt of discovering one species at least. At the time, 50% of amphibians and reptiles were not classified, so taking account of the biodiversity was very important. For example, if I find a cobra I will study its characteristics, scale measurements, arrangements. If it doesn't match with other species of cobra or any published information then I'll find tissue samples (with prior permission from forensics or other agencies of course; without that I cannot catch an animal).

After that I will do the DNA phylogeny of the tissue and compare it with everything that is available from all over the world. If it doesn't match then I'll take all this information in prescribed format on taxonomist paper as per the rules and regulations and submit it to a scientific journal. The information will then be reviewed by experts and if they find it



accurate then they will publish it as a new species.



9. As per the sources India contributes a staggering 8% to the known global biodiversity. What makes the Indian-subcontinent a place so rich in biodiversity?

- India has a rich biodiversity because all the enriched resources are available here in ample amounts. India has deserts, grasslands, plains, mountains, everything. Eastern Ghats, Rajasthan and so many other places are there to explore and learn about organisms.

10. It is said that researchers aren't given much resources and government support in India. Do you agree?



- Fully agreed. As a researcher in lesser known life forms, your life is not easy and glamorous. Sometimes, you may not get food to eat too. But I can assure you, if you have passion for this field and continue to work here, you will surely get satisfaction. Money cannot give you happiness but satisfaction can. You can get success in this field only after persistent efforts and undying passion

11. What advice would you like to give to the aspiring biologists and students?

- You need to have a love for nature more than anything to work in this field. Love animals. Take a keen interest in observing them. Strive to conserve them. Read as much as you can to have a better understanding. Watch documentaries. Strive to have a conceptual clarity that will enhance your thinking and understanding. Ask questions and try to find answers to them. That's how you will get a proper direction. All the best!

Dr. Varad Giri also presented a very informative presentation on 'Metamorphosis of Indian Herpetology'.



Here is the link to watch the full interview and the presentation:

<https://youtu.be/qtDYorrkVBQ>

Here are the 3 steps to be a Herpetologist in India

Ankita Mukherjee | TYBsc
3 minutes read

Step 1: Have a genuine and huge interest in animals and biodiversity!

Step 2: A BSc degree with Zoology or Biology as the major subject.

Step 3: Masters, Post Graduate courses or Doctorate related to Herpetology.

As sir had mentioned, there are no specific courses dedicated to herpetology in India, however we bring you some top institutes in India that offer courses related to Herpetology:

1. Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, Uttarakhand



It offers multiple courses like masters in wildlife science, post graduate diploma course in advanced wildlife management and certificate course in wildlife management.

MSc in Wildlife Sciences

Duration: 2 years

Eligibility: Graduate in Biological Sciences or any equivalent with at least 60% marks, along with the scores of the NET (National Eligibility Test), personal interviews and aptitude exam

Course fees: around 6 lakhs INR

PG Diploma in Advanced Wildlife Management

Duration: 10 months

Eligibility: in-service Indian Forest Service and State Forest Service Officers of the rank of Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF)/Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) or equivalent

Certificate Course in Wildlife Management

Duration: 3 months

Eligibility: Forest official (in-service)



2. Indian Institute of Sciences, Bengaluru



PHD in ecological sciences

Duration: 5-7 years

Eligibility:

- Masters in Zoology/Life

Sciences/Biotechnology/Mathematics/
Biochemistry or any other equivalent.

- 4 years Bachelor degree in Engineering or
Sciences

- Bachelor degree in Medicine (MBBS

equivalent) Entrance process: It includes a
minimum eligibility, a qualifying exam and
two rounds of interviews.

(The admission process and the exams are
highly competitive. Last year only 10% of the
applicants got the desired admission. The
candidate must have appeared for UGC-CISR,
GATE or any equivalent exam. Taking the



paper, ecology and evolution in gate (paper code EY) is advisable.)

3. Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), Mumbai



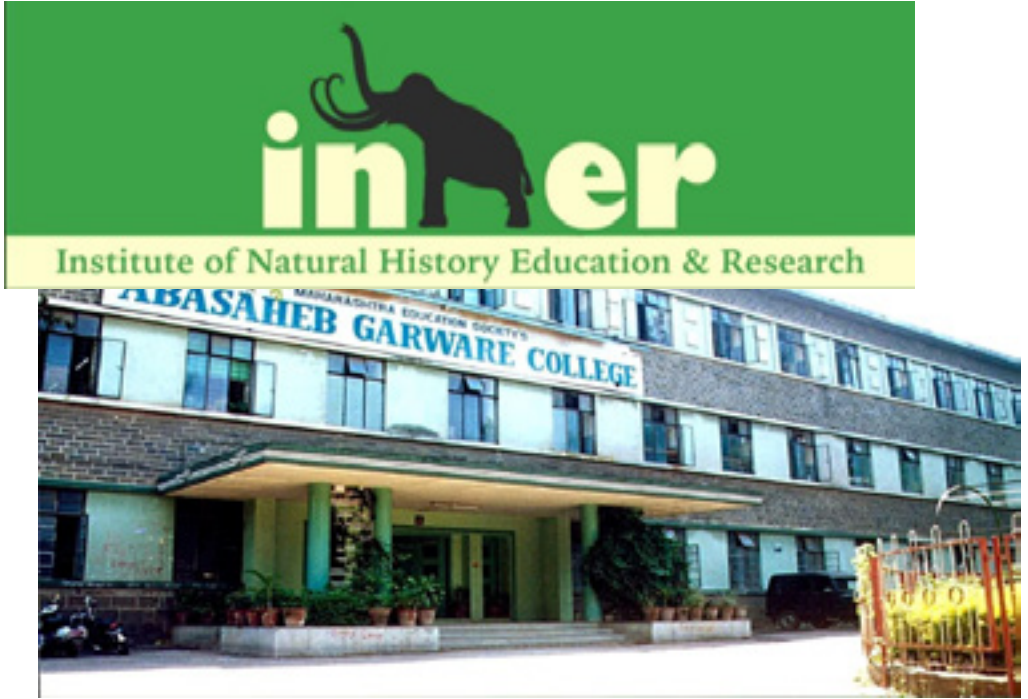
Eligibility: Qualified 10th from any board with interest in amphibians.

This is a hybrid course that covers multiple things ranging from identification to morphology to the behavior and importance of reptiles along with field trips and camp visits.

Course fees: 8000 INR (Exclusive of camp visits)



4. Institute of Natural History Education and Research (INHER) in association with Dept. of Zoology, MES Abasaheb Garware College, Pune



Certificate Course in Herpetology

Duration: 3 months

Eligibility: Qualified 10 from any board.

Fee: 3,500 INR (plus GST)

The course includes Evolution of reptiles and amphibians, Taxonomy and identification, Diversity and Biology, Conservation of Herpetofauna, Types of snakes, snake bites and first-aid, and Photography.



Herpetology research hotspots in India

Rohan Tripathi | TYBsc

Madhura Soman | TYBA

3 minutes read

The Kutch and the Southern Gujarat

- Good opening for budding researchers
- Species that can be found
 - Pond frog
 - Skittering frog
 - *Microhyla ornata*
 - Species from the families of Ranidae, Bufonidae, and Microhylidae

The Great Himalayan National Park

- Species that can be found
 - Marbled toad
 - Himalayan toad
 - Stoliczka's toad

North East India

- Treasure of Amphibians
- More than 20 endemic species
- More than 50 species of frog
- *Bufoides meghalayanus* (Garo hill toads) and *Pedostilies kompi* (Rock toad) are the endangered endemic species of toad found here

Eastern Ghats

- Home to more than 30 species
- Species that can be found
 - Balloon frog
 - Tree frog
 - Small mouth frog

Sunderbans, West Bengal

- Species that can be found
 - Skipper frog
 - Paddy field frog
 - Indian frog





Behind The Scenes



Behind The Scenes *of Ruia.*

Sayli Mokal | TYBSc

Tanaya Sheth | TYBSc

Janhavi Sathe | TYBA

Hiya Shah | SYJC

Malvika Bhardwaj | SYBMM

If it were not for the crucial help of people working in the college office, the ones who make sure that our campus looks clean and polished all the time, the laboratory assistants, the security guards and all other workers who are a part of our non-teaching and supporting staff, the smooth functioning of our college would have been almost impossible.

As an acknowledgement and appreciation for their indispensable yet oftentimes unrecognised work at Ruia, we talked to some members of our college's supporting staff and non-teaching staff to get to know more about them, and how they have been traversing through these difficult times.



Bipin dada

4 minutes read

"Ruia is like a second home to me", says Bipin Kulkarni, popularly known among Ruiaites as 'Bipin Da'. He has been working with our college as supporting staff for over eighteen years now. He manages the technical aspects and sound system of the auditorium for all the events that take place year-round at our college. These days, he misses Ruia and the company of the enthusiastic Ruiaites very much, both of which have become an integral part of his life.

"This period of unemployment feels uneasy, since, in over two decades of my working life, there has never been a time when I had to sit idle at home for this long." He was initially frustrated because of the lockdown but soon made himself busy again by maintaining his equipment, solving issues about how to deal with events in the near future. Managing daily expenses has become difficult since the imposition of lockdown. His income was mostly dependent on events and there is no likelihood of them resuming anytime soon. He has also been working at



an office for some time now.

His work which includes going for events in different cities has allowed him to travel a lot, and traveling is something he loves to do. He had plans to travel to Leh and Ladakh this summer for some events, but it had to be put off because of the pandemic. This lockdown has made him realise that often while being occupied with our work, we tend to forget giving time to our families and loved ones. He has decided, even after his work resumes he will deliberately try and spend more time with family, especially his little daughter. The pandemic and its consequences have also made him appreciate his health, and the efforts that go into maintaining it. After years, he finally returned to doing meditation and exercises for overall well being.



"The first and foremost thing I wish to do once the college reopens is to just go and sit in peace at my usual place in the auditorium, for some time." Along with his work at Ruia, he absolutely loved witnessing the sheer joy and excitement of college students during the college festivals and other events. At the heart of his favourite memory from all the years that he has spent at the college, is the immeasurable love that he has received from the students time and again. Two years back, when he was facing some health concerns, he confided in only a few of the students, and he recounts how almost a hundred of students poured in messages and calls, to inquire after his health, to assure him of all the support that he would need, and of how much they appreciated him. He adds that he has received the kind of love that we do not expect, even from the closest of relatives, from the students of Ruia.

While he wishes for everything to return back to normal soon, he acknowledges the feeling that perhaps the delays that occurred this year, were because there are better things in store for the future. He believes that the only way to make up for the losses endured during



this lockdown would be to start working with a renewed spirit and optimism.



Bipin Kulkarni, at Ruia's auditorium.



Bhaskar Lele kaka

3 minutes read

Bhaskar Lele sir, an ex-Ruiaite himself, has been working at Ruia for over 30 years. His work includes dealing with the documents that are in Hindi or Marathi language, for the office, and working on the pension for retired college employees. When asked about how he expects his work to be post the pandemic, Mr. Lele states that though he has always worked for pensions of the college employees, but with the given conditions, his job will now also include making sure that this pension is sufficient for the employees' families as well.

He shares he is having a hard time making ends meet, ever since this lockdown has been imposed. Along with managing the expenses of his own family, he has been providing for his brother and brother's family as well. He has been working a part-time job at a dairy for some additional income. His son, a computer science student, was expected to get a job later this year since he was in the final year of his bachelor's degree. But that couldn't happen, and now it seems like a far off possibility due to the pandemic.



This pandemic initially felt good as he enjoyed some time off work at home but it got really boring within a few days. Mr. Lele says that these days, he mostly spends time going shopping for essentials and revisiting classic favourites on the TV like Mahabharat. He enjoys spending time with his wife and son, playing board games and having discussions. He loves to interact with his neighbours as well, playing cards together and going to their building terrace to watch sunsets. About his life before the pandemic, he most reminisces over the commute to and fro from his work and all the small nitty-gritty that came with it.



"Coronavirus has caused social, mental as well as physical changes around the world. There is a lot of damage being caused. Many people, especially students are experiencing a lot of stress due to the uncertainty of their academics and future that lies ahead.", he says sharing his thoughts about the ongoing pandemic. According to him, it will take at least another two months for him to resume his daily work, giving credit to the increasing number of cases every day. He says, "Travel and tourism will take a long time to bounce back, since people will consider a lot before deciding to visit places and go for trips."

"Ruia college has always kept up with all the new developments happening in the world of education." In his thirty years at Ruia, he has witnessed a lot of changes including structural, educational and more. One of his fondest memories from the college he says, is the time when he was pushed to complete his studies at Ruia. Talking about his best times, he gets nostalgic about his student life at Ruia. Some years back, along with some of his colleagues, he had contributed to the college's annual magazine, for the theme - 'Ruia- Kal, Aaj aani Udyaa'. He truly enjoyed writing about



all those years he has spent at Ruia. He feels particularly proud about having written in Marathi, when English had become the prevailing language.

Lele Sir has also received an award from the administration, for his contribution to Ruia college.



Bhaskar Lele Sir.



Insight

*“Don’t fear the future or regret the past but
celebrate the present.”*

– Tim Mann, artist

Celebration may be an inseparable part of our life, but how we celebrate is our choice. Make sure to celebrate the highs and lows of life but celebrate responsibly.

After four months of being stuck at home, trying to find fun in routine tasks and hearing the increasing number of patients worldwide, it’s time we move on. It’s time we find our way out of the situation and move towards a hopeful future; to learn to change our traditional ways in order to adapt to the new scenario. For the month of August, we at Insight, start anew. And doesn’t every fresh start need a celebration? Oh yes! No virus can dampen the spirit of enjoyment, for it starts within us...

Friendship Day

Shreya Kenkare | SYBA
3 minutes read

As we brace ourselves to acknowledge the term ‘social distancing’ and incorporate the same in our lives, one can’t help but draw a



strong paradox in 'Friendship day'.



This year particularly amplifies the irony of sorts inflicted on our quixotic passions and fervor of celebrating festivals and other significant days of the month. No gatherings, no usual get-togethers with friends, no embracing and a plethora of other restrictions.

Given the uncertainty of it all, the only residue of certainty we are left with is within the essence of human affinities and its various relations. Unlike the virus itself which proved pervasive, it is the warmth of human relations that soaks us in and spreads a sense of growing comfort.

The analgesic to our sense of isolation is found within the depths of our friendships, and unlike the vaccine for the virus we possess it already. Friendship shapes us, our



biology and has proved itself time and again to be a crucial piece of our evolutionary story. Especially in trying times of this nature where we are friendly but from a distance, where we embrace the friendship but only virtually.

For a long time now, friendships have come to be considered as pleasurable by-products of human civilization. Over the years, its presence has been acknowledged to have it attributed to a particular day. Widely known as 'Friendship day'. In our country the day is celebrated on the first Sunday of August ensuing in a week long celebration of friendship

As the world has turned askew since the virus took a hold of our lives, its complicated ripple effects have been felt in terms of our familial bonds. This year marks the innate desire which leaves us pining for our dear friends and loved ones presence but along with it comes the intangible support felt but left unsaid. What day could cater to this unsaid, unexpressed musing of gratitude towards your friends better than friendship day itself?



This year's friendship day is sure to be etched as a surreal memory in our minds just as it possibly is in our hearts.

Independence Day of India

Siddhi Paraskar | SYJC
2 minutes read

Any Indian citizen will always remember the monsoon of 1947, because it was on the auspicious day of 15th August, 1947 that India had finally escaped from clutches of the Britishers.

Indian celebration can never be compared to celebrations elsewhere. We Indians take the phrase 'Go Big or Go Home' quite seriously. And this year, as we celebrate our Independence Day, at home, along with the memories of our martyrs, we will think about those wonderful years, when we spent our national holidays with our friends and family, tricolour batches proudly pinned to our chests, and enjoying the national parade on TV. That's a lot of *FOMO (Feeling Of Missing Out)*, isn't it?



But before we start to spiral on our *FOMOs*, let's take a ride to the pre-independence era. The era when our freedom fighters spent countless nights fighting for freedom and people willingly gave up their lives for independence. It was a period of revolts and reforms, of uncertainty and sacrifice.

And as we complete *73 successful years of independence*, we seem to face another struggle, a struggle to defeat COVID-19. The fight which India won in August 1947 and the one which India battles now, are so different. The battle of Independence required people to be together and the only way to win present-day is by staying apart; the non-cooperation movement helped our ancestors win, on the contrary, today cooperation will bring us victory.

So, my fellow Indians, let's make this 74th year of Independence, a year of reform again. For, as we battle with corona, let us also make a movement towards a better future for India. We won back then and we will definitely win now!



Happy Independence Day!

World Photography Day

Srushti Shetty | TYBA
2 minutes read

“We keep this love in a photograph; we make these memories for ourselves.”

– Ed Sheeran, ‘Photograph’

Photographs may have served as a piece of evidence throughout history, but its purpose surely does not end there. People go on for the whole of their lives clinging on to photographs, looking at them with a twinkle in their eyes, as a smile graces their lips, with sometimes tears as companions.

Whether it is a picture of the colorful evening sky, the vast oceans, of our near and dear ones, or even the ones from our day-to-day lives, we all want to hold on to the feelings the moment brings with it and cherish it during times when we need hope and love. Photographs can be really life-saving in this way.

Perhaps the thing that makes photographs magical is that there could be a thousand



interpretations of it, with none of them being wrong. The photographer, the eye behind the picture, makes tremendous efforts- with the right lighting and angles- to convey his point-of-view, his version of the story. Photography hence, is an art- an art that finds meaning in the seemingly unadorned objects, breathing life into them and opening them up for analysis. Other times, it simply captures a subtle but remarkable moment, which might have ended up unnoticed.

This World Photography Day (August 19), we may not be at our favorite places or click pictures with our beloved people. But let us all take this time to re-evaluate ourselves and find happiness in the simple things. We can always look back at the pictures clicked before and relive them, hoping things will turn better in the future. Let us capture images of people and things that have made these crucial times easier, and be grateful for their roles in our life.



WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY

Sanika Rajde | SYBsc

2 minutes read

It is imminent to realize that most of us don't comprehend the significance of the Day, because it isn't recognized as a public holiday, but a global observance. This is also the reason why it doesn't have any logo, as it does not “belong” to the UN or any particular agency or organization.

It is celebrated every year on 19th August to commemorate the involvement of aid workers in humanitarian services by risking their own lives. This day is chosen with respect to the anniversary of the bombing of the UN headquarters in Iraq, where 22 people lost their lives, including the UN's High Commissioner of Human Rights, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello.

We don't have any conflict zones, wars or natural disasters to negotiate with as an immediate crisis in this course of time. Although, testing times like these compel us



to work for the indispensable recovery of our future. The Day is extra special this year, as we all fight against the deadly COVID-19.

This year has wreaked havoc on us all, but those who work toward saving lives deserve to be celebrated. Humanitarians are not only doctors, nurses, hospital workers and police officers, but also many Red Cross volunteers and government employees who are involved in the betterment of the world during this time. They are the first ones to respond and the last ones to leave.

This World Humanitarian Day is dedicated to every individual who works for the needy by risking their life. Even if you step out to provide face masks or food for the underprivileged, you are a humanitarian, and this day is to celebrate you.

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is,

‘What are you doing for others?’”

– Martin Luther King Jr.



गणेशोत्सव

समीक्षा धालगडे | SYJC
2 minutes read

वक्रतुण्ड महाकाय सूर्यकोटिसमप्रभ ।
निर्विघ्नं कुरु मे देव सर्वकार्येषु सर्वदा ॥



अशी गणराया चरणी प्रार्थना करून आपण आपल्या कार्याचा शुभारंभ करतो. असा विघ्नविनाशक गणपती बाप्पा - चैतन्य आणि मांगल्याचे प्रतीक!

भाद्रपद शुद्ध चतुर्थी म्हणजेच गणेश चतुर्थीला घरोघरी गणराया विराजमान होतात. तसेच सार्वजनिक स्तरावर गणेश मंडळांमध्येही गणेशमूर्तीचे आगमन होते. गणेशोत्सवाच्या प्रसन्न दिवसांत सगळीकडे बाप्पाच्या नावाचा जयजयकार घुमत असतो. पूजेचे साहित्य, प्रसाद, आरास यासाठी बाजारात ग्राहकांची रेलचेल दिसून येते. हा गणेशोत्सव माणसांनी एकत्र येऊन विचारांची देवाणघेवाण करावी यासाठी लोकमान्य टिळकांनी सुरू केला. तेव्हापासून आजपर्यंत घरोघरी उत्साहाने, श्रद्धेने गणेशोत्सव साजरा होताना दिसून येतो.



परंतु यावर्षी कोरोना विषाणूच्या प्रादुर्भावामुळे जमावबंदी आहे. प्रत्येकजण आपापल्या घरातच आहे, एकत्र येऊ शकत नाही आहे. गणेशोत्सव साजरा करण्यावरही मर्यादा आहेत. पण, दरवर्षीप्रमाणे ढोल-ताशाच्या गजरातील आगमन मिरवणुकीला सध्या बंदी असली तरी मन- बुद्धीच्या गजराने आपण साध्या पद्धतीने गणेशपूजन नक्कीच करू शकतो.

जसा 'ग' गणपतीचा तसाच तो गुणांचा! म्हणूनच गणेशपूजन हे गुणपूजन! गणपतीची मूर्ती न्याहाळताना त्याचे सूक्ष्म डोळे- दूरदृष्टी दर्शवतात. सूपासारखे कान - वाईट झटकून केवळ चांगले तेवढेच स्वीकारण्यास शिकवतात, घागरीसारखे उदर - सगळ्यांना सामावून घेण्याची प्रेरणा देते. गणपतीला आवडणारे लाल जास्वंदीचे फूल क्रांतीचे प्रतीक आहे, दुर्वा दाहशमक आहे. बाप्पाला आवडणारे मोदक- हाती घेतलेल्या कामाच्या मुळापर्यंत गेल्यास यशाची गोडी चाखता येते, हे समजवतात. गणपतीचे वाहन मूषक- चंचल वृत्तीलाही संयमित करता येते हे दर्शवते. अशी ही बुद्धीची देवता गणपती!

यावर्षी आपण खऱ्या अर्थाने गणेशमूर्तीला न्याहाळत आपल्या बुद्धीचा कस वाढवत समृद्ध होऊया. इतर वर्षी बाप्पाच्या दर्शनाला येणाऱ्यांमुळे किंवा इतर काही कारणांमुळे गणपती बाप्पाशी बोलायचं राहून जात होतं, बाप्पाला डोळे भरून पाहणं राहून जात होतं. यंदा बुद्धीने गणपती बाप्पाशी संवाद साधूया.

'बदल' नेहमीच घडत असतो. सध्याच्या परिस्थितीला आव्हान समजून सामोरे जात सण-उत्सवांचा



उत्साह कायम ठेवत निरोगी जीवनाचा शुभारंभ करण्यासाठी
विघ्नहर बाप्पाकडे प्रार्थना करूया.

“आव्हाना या स्वीकार गड्या, आव्हाना या स्वीकार,
हे ही दिवस जातील या वृत्तीने घे आकार।
तुझ्या कलेने नव आरंभाचे चित्र कर साकार।
चैतन्याचे रंग भरीत, ही सृष्टी मैत्रीचा करेल पुकार।”



OP-ED



Introduction

Akanksha Majumdar | TYBA

3 minutes to read

Amongst the ever-growing list of issues to be tackled, one that has recently sparked outrage is police brutality. In the USA, the George Floyd case highlighted Police Brutality as a part of the problem while racism was another part. In India, however, police brutality was the only problem that was brought to the forefront due to the Jayaraj and Fenix case in Tamil Nadu. Police brutality can be defined as the use of excessive and unnecessary force by a police officer towards a civilian, resulting in a violation of the civilian's human rights, however, there isn't a legal definition.

Boundaries

What counts as police brutality and what counts as the legitimate force necessary to make an arrest is a thin line and differs according to each event/circumstance for the most part. It is dependent both on the actions of the civilians leading up to the event as well as the police's intent. By law, the police have the right to use legitimate force if necessary to make an arrest, maintain order or keep the peace. When an officer uses excessive force, they violate the law.

In the USA, there is a fixed order to the escalation of the amount of force an officer can utilize to enforce and maintain the law- it starts with the presence of the police officers, followed by a provision of verbal commands or warnings, then the use of their hands to guide an individual, after which pepper spray, batons or tasers may be used, followed by using force that is not deadly and finally lethal force may be used.

So, for situations to escalate to the point of utilizing batons/lathis and brute force that is barely short of being deadly need to have completely unbiased and universally acceptable justification with ample proof.

There are several safeguards against custodial police brutality that have been laid down in Articles. Amongst which one of them is- Article 5 of the UDHR which provides: No one shall be subjected to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In addition to this, there are standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners; declaration on the protection of all the persons from being subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and code of conduct for law enforcement officials.

In India, we follow the presumption of “Innocent until proven guilty” and thus the burden of proving the guilt of the accused falls on the prosecution which has further led to custodial violence against the accused.

Police Brutality in India

Vrushali Gadkari | SYBA

2.8 minutes to read

1,723 custodial deaths were reported between January to December 2019 as per National Campaign against torture's report but police brutality has caught people's eyes only after the deaths of Jayraj and his son, which occurred on 22nd June and 23rd . As per witnesses, the duo was savagely killed despite keeping their business, a mobile shop, running during the legally allotted time. It was on June 19th, 2020, that 58-year old Jayaraj was taken into police custody.

When on hearing this, his son Fenix, went to the police, he was held along with his father. Fenix's friends, who had accompanied him, have said of hearing the torture they were put to. The duo was stripped naked and was severely beaten with batons, such that it crushed their bones.

Their genitals were also harmed. Their deaths occurred due to grave internal injuries, however, the report released by the police states the cause as heart failure and fever. Such, the treatment of the police, for the innocent.

The most appalling fact, however, is that such treatment, no matter how heinous, is unsurprising. Similar conduct of the law force is a commonality. The Bhagalpur Blindings is a testament to it. Bhagalpur, a town in Bihar saw a spike in crime rates between 1979 and 1980. The police sought a solution to these small-time criminals who were yet to be convicted and they chose to blind them, making the use of acid and needles to poke their eyes. The town saw this as a heroic act, rather than as an inhumane one. And that is where this problem with the law force takes deep-set roots.

Throughout the timeline of our country, there have been several such police brutality cases spotting our history in bad blood. Whether it be the 1987 Hashimpura Massacre, the shooting of Muslim youths by the Provincial Armed Constabulary, the 2003 Muthanga Incident, which involved ruthless treatment

of Adivasis by the police, or the one example fresh in our minds, The Jamia Milia Islamia Attack in 2019, all these instances of the law force abusing their authority bring forth an intricately woven mesh of casteism, communism and classism held together by prejudice and politics.

The Why of Police Brutality?

Disha Shanbhag | TYBA
2.5 minutes to read

The crux of the matter is that while the police engage in cases of brutality, they also easily escape accountability.

This makes one question whether this brutality is a result of an isolated individual case of misuse of power or is the entire institution at fault.

As controversial as it may seem at first, the truth seems to bend towards the latter argument.

The Indian Police force has safeguarded a lot many answers within its history.

The guidelines that most of the state-monitored police forces adhere to are from the police act of 1861.

This act was brought in action as a response to the 1857's first freedom struggle that began in Meerut. The rationale behind the creation of such a force was curbing dissent of the masses and its presence in an independent and democratic country is a classic example of colonial hangover.

Further, as mentioned in this article several times, the issue of police brutality is not new in India, and hence the need for a better system isn't new either.

How the society and our entertainment affect police brutality indirectly?

Hritvi Acharya | SYJC
3 minutes to read

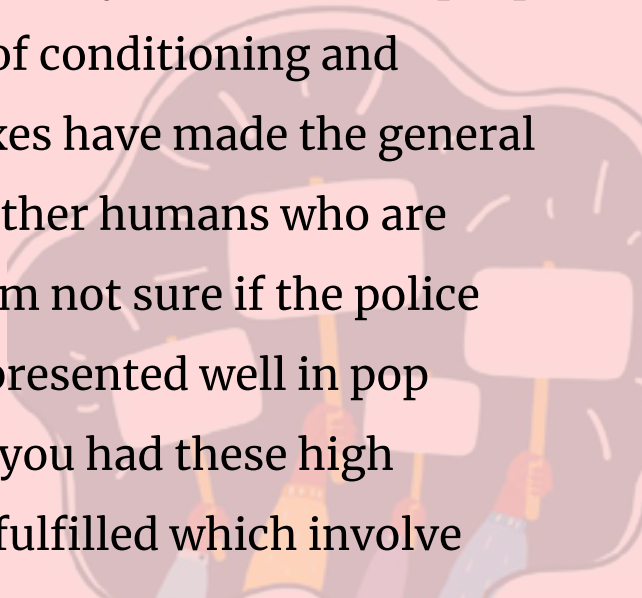
The reflection of culture is seen through its entertainment, art, and literature. The case with police brutality and Indian entertainment is that it is extremely normalized. Well, that should be obvious considering people feel 'entertained' by it in the first place. Bollywood films don't explicitly show police brutality but have things eerily similar to this. In movies like Dabbaang or Singham, the police forces are



depicted as a literal hero. A law-abiding, day-saving, very heavily built guy who kills 99 out of 100 people at one time. He's the Dettol to the Corona. But how many times have we all seen a cop doing any of these things?

Law-abiding in the movies is killing the villain no matter how many other people die in the process. It means dominating and threatening innocent people for no reason. This all feeds the narrative in people's minds that a police officer doing this would be okay, or rather justified. It makes people forget that cops are NOT something to be feared of. They are to assist and give legal punishments when someone does something wrong by law and not according to a personal bias or vendetta. In a country like India where celebrity worship is practiced heavily, nothing is pure entertainment.

This has nothing exactly to do with the people themselves, years of conditioning and inferiority complexes have made the general public crazy after other humans who are supposed 'idols'. I'm not sure if the police themselves feel represented well in pop culture. Imagine if you had these high expectations to be fulfilled which involve



beating up people with sticks and throwing gas bombs on them. Oh well. Indeed, many many other factors are affecting the why and what of police brutality, but the media and portrayal of police in the society also show us why violent acts done by police are accepted as a norm.

Conclusion

In the end, police brutality is not just a one-sided issue. A lot of factors that somehow connect to the institution of democracy and security come into play and it includes branches such as the role of different governments, attitudes of people, pop culture and movies, literature, training given to cops in the country, and many more. Everything boils down to human respect at some point. It is an issue that our country and its people have to mindfully keep raising our voice against. Being vigilant and recognizing an issue is the first step towards improvement.



Open Forum



Faith: the Double-edged Sword

Saundarya Jain | TYBMM

Samyukta Shivshankar | TYBSc

6 minutes read



Bojack Horseman 6:15

That death is inevitable and the final summit which awaits us all is not an easy realization to welcome. In accepting that our lives may culminate into a possible Nothing, we are compelled to undertake the frustrating task of coming to terms with our mortality. Amidst this crisis, the alternative path provided by Faith has revealed itself to mankind as a refuge. When the weight of our transience presses upon us, Faith offers an anodyne – a coping mechanism against our



own mortality. Death cannot, must not, be the final curtain call. Consequently, the hope of re-incarnation, of yet another shot at life or the promise of an afterlife

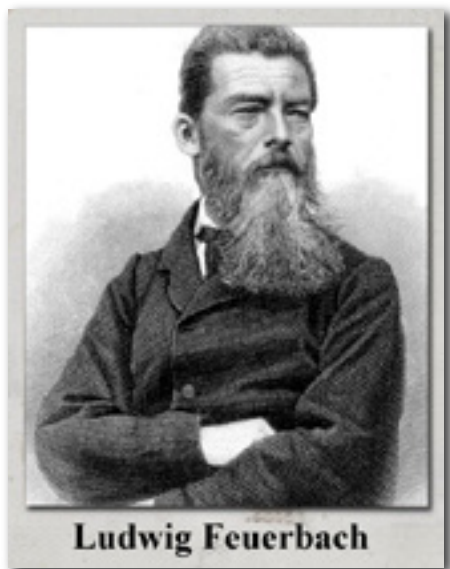


- a Heaven or a Hell - has been too tempting to be ignored, at least by the majority of humankind.

Although this may seem like an existential anodyne, this creates immense anxiety pertaining to death among people because they fear persecution in the afterlife. This is commonly known as the Nocebo Effect, as opposed to Placebo Effect, which is a negative psychological phenomenon that furthers mental anguish.



It becomes, therefore, difficult to disagree with Ludwig Feuerbach, the German philosopher, when he describes Religion as “*the dream of the human mind.*” This dream is rich with promises, filled with hope of something that is going to save us from the innate, and vastly unacknowledged, existential void of our lives.



In Martin Scorsese’s **Silence**, a film inspired from religious upheaval in 17th-century Japan, the Japanese Christians, who practiced their Faith in hiding due to the fear of



persecution, were desperate for tangible signs of faith such as the Holy Cross, rosaries and Catholic priests. It comes across as ironic, and unavoidably so, that although Faith is

cemented into the foundation of “*a leap into the dark*”, of believing in a God, an



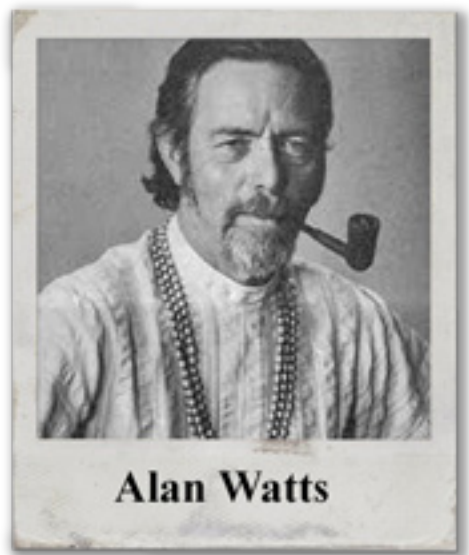
omnipresent caretaker, regardless of any evidence, it heavily relies on material symbols of faith. The film also portrays the purging of Christians by followers of Buddhism – a religion renowned for preaching nonviolence – out of a belief that their Faith is the only Truth.

Misinterpretation (or exploitation) of religious beliefs successfully propagates hate towards non-believers instead of advocating justice and compassion among humans. The dogmatic adherence to one's religion and the dismissal of others' – which has now and again turned violent – has little to do with the core Faith but

more to do with Belief. As Alan Watts beautifully

explained: *“The believer will open his mind to the truth on the condition that it fits in*

with his preconceived ideas and wishes. Faith has no preconceptions; it is a plunge into the unknown. Belief clings, but faith lets go.” It comes as no surprise then that the vulnerability of the mind to cling more and



Alan Watts



forego less has been exploited by those in power, particularly in the case of our Indian landscape. Faith has descended into Ideology, radicalized to the extent where a mass lynching becomes a normalized part of everyday news, a place of worship turns into a matter of personal pride and a religion's representative colour becomes synonymous with political power and social terror.

However, like everything else, religious faith has its own duality: it is not altogether bereft of enriching traits; it is known to have an effective positive influence on people.

According to a study published in The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion, religiously committed people not only are less prone to psychological distress and depression but also display higher levels of life satisfaction and tend to avoid behaviours like excessive alcohol consumption and drug abuse. The study also concludes that faith becomes a medium for hope in despair. Also, Forbes, in a comprehensive exploration on the interplay between belief systems and mental health, has elaborated on how adapting attributes which emanate from religious faith such as



hope, compassion, gratitude, purposefulness and so on can subvert stress and enhance resilience.

Another testament to the positive influence of religion is evident in the contemporary world, as religious practices pertaining to spirituality like yoga and meditation have found their way into the mainstream and are widely followed all over the globe, given their fruitful effects on mental well-being. In addition to this, religious rituals, rites and acts of praying bind people together, imparting a sense of belonging and communion among them as a social and a spiritual community.



While humankind has used faith to nurture wellness and optimism, it has also exploited and misinterpreted faith to create divisions and sow seeds of dogmatism and extremism – the dichotomy that lies within religion and faith becomes more apparent. The “dream” that Feuerbach mentioned has indeed, for better or worse, taken deep root in human consciousness. It is up to us how we realize this dream.

faith
can
move
mountains

beyond
brave



Lockdown dreams

Pavitra Jotisinghani | SYBA
4 minutes read



“

If living in self-isolation has taught me anything, it's that dreams become vivid and clocks forget how to tell the time.

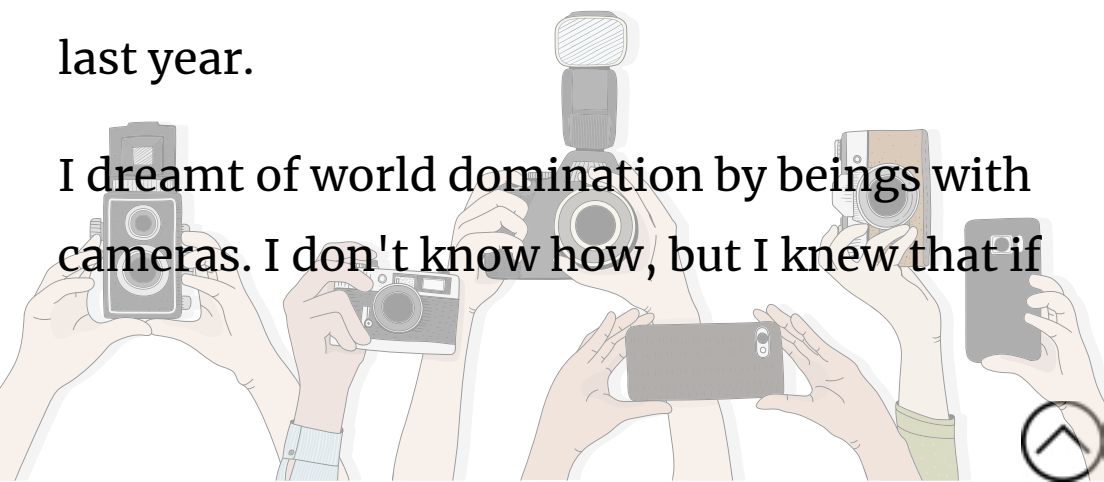
- Michael Faudet

”

If your dreams feel more like 'The Maze Runner' than 'The Sound of Music' lately, don't worry, it's probably a side effect of the lockdown rather than a sign of some underlying conflict the universe has warned you about.

The eerie yet comforting question of whether others are experiencing such dreams is being posed with increasing frequency. A little research shows that Google searches for bizarre dreams have doubled since this time last year.

I dreamt of world domination by beings with cameras. I don't know how, but I knew that if



I looked into the lens when it clicked, I would die.

I'm not the only one whose sleep has been invaded by the pandemic. A crowdsourced website, [idreamofcovid.com](https://www.idreamofcovid.com) took on the task of collecting dreams from all over the world and putting them together through public surveys. Many of them portray the virus as an assailant out to kill the person, their worst fears transforming into their assailant.

Scientifically, what makes our dreams more or less graphic

is a mystery.

Bizzare dreams are our minds' way of working through the fears that permeate our

waking reality in a safe, cathartic way. Our brains need to visualise hence they try to connect it with something we already know.

Deirdre Barret, a psychologist at Harvard University speaks of her research on dreams in a spate of articles. *"The virus is invisible, and I think that's why it's transformed into so many different things"*, she says.



On an average, an adult spends 25% of their sleep dreaming . Dreams can occur during all stages of sleep however, REM (Rapid Eye Movement) cycles which occur predominantly in the second half of the night are considered responsible for more emotive and visual dreams. Since the start of the lockdown, most have benefited from the extra time to catch up on lost sleep.

Ruminating about the pandemic before going to bed can cause stress and anxiety, consequently disrupting sleep and potentially providing fodder to our dreams.



Staying confined to the boundaries of our homes has led to working and learning from home on flexible schedules. Not having to wake up early helps us get longer hours of sleep. Everyone dreams but not everyone remembers it. The early morning rush took our attention away from our dreams, erasing them from our memory. However, waking up naturally from the state of REM sleep and having the time to relay our dreams to others helps reinforce the memory of them.



A spike in unusual dreams in times of heightened alert is not surprising. Similar cases have been reported after traumatic events like wars and natural disasters.

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Why Your Strength Is Your Superpower

Vidhi Dholakia | SYBSc
4 minutes read

Martin Seligman's groundbreaking research on positive psychology has shown the world what makes life worth living. Emphasizing on the fact that psychology requires refocusing to enable enhancing positive attributes in an individual, Seligman refers to positive psychology as a field in which "psychologists are as focused on strengths as on weaknesses, as interested in building the best things in life as in repairing the worst, and as concerned with fulfilling the lives of normal people as with healing the wounds of the distressed." That is, it can help you and me unlock the door to a better life.

Integrating an individual's character as a core aspect in the field of positive psychology, Seligman explains "character strengths," which are the attributes that each person has. The character of an individual is said to consist of twenty-four strengths, and everyone has a unique level of



expression of each of these. These strengths are divided into six virtues, which are wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. The strengths that fall under each category contribute to its greater definition.

A few of these strengths are known to especially stand out in each person and may play an essential role in defining who they are. These few strengths are their “signature strengths”. You can find yours by taking this survey [here](#). Since signature strengths are central to one's character, psychologists have carried out extensive research that portrays sure-shot methods in which you can use your strengths to be happier.

Researchers encourage people to use their signature strengths in different ways. You just need to pick some of your signature strengths, and find ways to use them every day. The beauty lies in the fact that you can use your strengths in just every place possible; whether you're at work, at school, or at home with family. In fact, you might even realise you've been unknowingly using them in some way all along. A person with ‘Kindness’ as their signature strength can



employ it by cooking a nice meal for their family.

Similarly, to fuel their Curiosity, one can easily read a new book or stream a series



on Netflix that they did not consider watching before. Likewise, each character strength can be used in a variety of ways, some of which you can find [here](#). The

next time you consciously use your strengths, make sure you savour the positivity they provide.

Moreover, picking a job that allows you to literally play to your strengths can give you the satisfaction you've always desired from your workplace. Frequent usage of these strengths can help you easily master a task, strengthen your relationships, and make you feel happier by boosting your life satisfaction. An added benefit is that these effects are often long-lasting.





Tech Tricked

CYP#€RT€XT

Athira Patkar | SYJC

6 minutes read

One of the most famous movie tropes is that of the 'Techno Wizard'; an IT genius who gets a coded message, presses a couple of buttons, magically decrypts the hidden message, and thus saves the day without even getting out of their air-conditioned lab.

But what is the exact science behind it?

Cryptography is a vast subject in computer security, and a very important part of it is 'cyphertext'. Cyphertext (also written as ciphertext) is what one gets after using an encryption key on a piece of plaintext, i.e. unencrypted information which has to be sent to a receiver. This encrypted text is extremely difficult to be decrypted by a computer or a human who does not have the decryption key.

Cyphertext has been used for millenniums to send coded messages across enemy borders. Classical or historical pen-and-paper cyphers include substitution cyphers, in which bits or blocks of characters are substituted in plaintext by different

characters to create cyphertext. In this, one character can be changed to a different one throughout the plaintext, or one character can be changed to different characters throughout the text. In transposition cyphers, the plaintext is kept the same, but the order of the letters is changed.



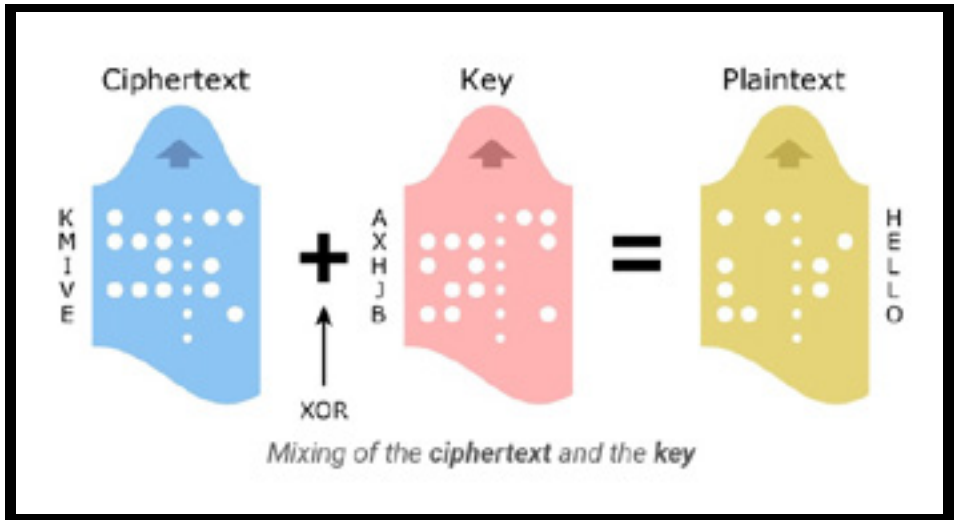
On the other hand, modern cyphers include private-key cryptography and public-key cryptography. In a symmetric-key system, also known as private-key cryptography, only the receiver knows the encryption key used and could decrypt the message using the decryption key linked to the encryption key. In a non-symmetric key system, also known as public-key cryptography, the process is the same as above except the encryption key used by the sender is public knowledge, but the decryption key is



different from the encryption key and is not public.

Unlike traditional cyphers, modern cyphers are extremely secure and cannot be cracked easily except by specialised computers. Thus, it has been used to create algorithms for cracking unsolvable mathematical problems, computer security, and decrypting enemymessages during wars, extensively during World War 2. Some algorithms were also used to find out if brute-force attacks on cryptosystems used by the organisation would or would not be successful. These algorithms, studied under cryptanalysis, have been used mainly by governments for intelligence and military purposes. A new type of technology in this field is that of quantum cryptography, in which quantum mechanical properties are used to perform cryptographic purposes. Quantum cryptography is slowly becoming one of the most secure methods of securing data, as it allows various cryptographic processes to be completed, which was earlier deemed impossible under non-quantum communication. Cyphers are also used in private technologies such as televisions,

mobile phones, and ATMs to maintain security and privacy, as it enables private communication in different network protocols, like those that offer network traffic encryption.



Cyphers have been used throughout the centuries, one of the earliest examples being the Caesar cypher, which is said to be used by Julius Caesar in his private correspondence. Some examples of unsolved cyphers closer to home are found on seals and monuments excavated from Mohenjo Daro and Harappa. Over the years, there have been many unsolved cyphers, some of the most famous being the cryptic letters from the Zodiac Killer, and the Kryptos monument located near the Central Intelligence Agency headquarters in the United States. A fine example of a historical and unbreakable method of creating cyphertext is the Vernam cypher, used in one-time pads.



The algorithm is as follows:

- 1) Use the corresponding numerals for each plaintext alphabet (A=0, B=1...Z=25).
- 2) Do the same for each character of the key.
- 3) Add the numbers for both the plaintext characters and the key
- 4) If the answer is greater than 26, subtract 26 from it.
- 5) Convert the answers back to characters to find the cyphertext.
- 6) For decryption, the receiver should have the encryption key and should reverse the encryption process.

For example:

Plaintext: H O W A R E Y O U

Key: F Y K W B A O D L

Numerals:

H	O	W	A	R	E	Y	O	U
7	14	22	0	17	4	24	14	20

F	Y	K	W	B	A	O	D	L
5	24	10	22	1	0	14	3	11

Answer (n):

12	38	32	22	18	4	38	17	31
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Subtract 26 if $n > 26$:

12	12	6	22	18	4	12	17	5
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Cyphertext:

M	M	G	W	S	E	M	R	F
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Cyphertext: M M G W S E M R F

Cryptography has always been a mysterious subject, but by going deep into its history and usage, one can easily find out why it is an important part of data privacy and computer security.

If you want to know more interesting uses of ciphertext, then check this out: [Cipher War](#)



References:

1. <https://searchsecurity.techtarget.com/definition/cipher>
 2. [Experimental Quantum Cryptography](#)
 3. [For examples of different cryphers and their algorithms](#)
-



Your Data Has Never Been Yours

Aniruddha Dawane | SYBSc
5 minutes read



More than 3.5 billion people have had their personal data stolen in the two largest reported data breaches in the world. Now that it has gotten your attention, we seriously need to talk about how easy and cheap your data is to access in today's interconnected world. But, let's get an in-depth analysis of the introductory part of this paragraph first.

1) Yahoo –

Yahoo announced in September of 2016 that it had compromised the real names, email addresses, dates of birth and telephone numbers of 500 million users in 2014. Yahoo went on to report just 3 months later, in December, that another attacker in 2013 had compromised the names, dates of birth, email addresses and passwords, and security questions and answers of 1 billion user accounts. Yahoo revised these approximations to 3 billion users by October 2017!



2) Sina Weibo –

For those who haven't heard of Weibo, think of Chinese Twitter. In March 2020, Weibo had leaked real names, site usernames, gender, location of 538 million users. For 172 million users this also meant the exposure of their phone numbers. This data was available



for sale to anyone for just ¥1,799 (\$250).

One more example just for good measure would be:

3) Marriott International –

In November 2018, attackers had stolen contact information, passport number, preferred guest numbers, travel information, and other personal information of about 500 million customers. Also it is believed that credit card numbers and expiration dates of

more than 100 million customers were purloined. Eventually it became clear that a Chinese intelligence group seeking to gather data on US citizens was responsible for this breach according to New York Times.

We haven't even begun speaking about India.

Just in the last year alone there have been an alarming number of data breaches in India. Over 3.13 Lakh cybersecurity incidents were reported in 2019 alone, according to the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), the government agency responsible for tracking and responding to cybersecurity threats. According to a Data Security Council of India (DSCI) report, the average cost per breached record in India mounts to INR 4,552 (\$64).

- In April 2019, Just Dial faced an attack that led to the personal information of 100 million users becoming public including their names, email ids, mobile numbers, gender, date of birth and addresses

- The country's largest bank, State Bank of India, left a server unprotected by failing to secure it with a password. Close to three million text messages sent out to customers

regarding their account balances and recent transactions were divulged.

In case you were hoping 2020 was faring better,

•In May of this year, Edutech start-up, Unacademy faced a data breach that compromised the accounts of 22 million users. Usernames, emails addresses and passwords were put up for sale on the dark web. Founded in 2015, Unacademy is backed by investors including Facebook, Sequoia India and Blume Ventures.

Unfortunately or fortunately, depending on how you view this article, I have a word limit to adhere to so I can't even begin talking about the endless -- and I do mean endless -- security and data breaches our nation's Aadhaar program has faced, from targeted attacks to plain incompetence to suspected corruption. I sincerely urge you to have a glance at how poorly protected your personal data connected to your Aadhaar card is which includes everything from your address to your biometric profile.

As a side note, to see how easy it is to get all your personal data, have a look at 'Clearview AI'. There's a great article on it by a reporter from the New York Times.

References:

1. [Central Statistics Office \(India\)](#)
2. [New York Times article](#)



THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY; BUT ONLINE.

Prasad Mokal | TYBSc
6 minutes read



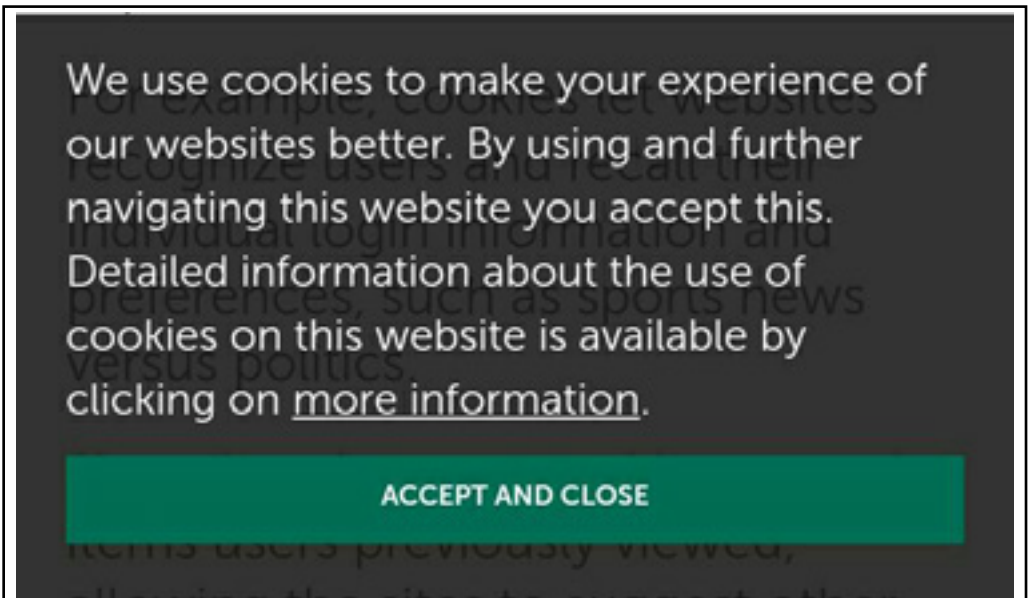
Data privacy laws around the world have garnered recognition and significance in the recent years after the reports of massive leaks and misuse of personal data from leading tech companies like Facebook. Terms like 'Data Privacy' and 'Right to Privacy' are today thrown around by organisations not only from; but mostly originating from, the internet. The meaning behind it being proper safety and regulation of user data. Upon a closer look however, it is found that right to privacy is a much broader, universal and at times intangible concept which is not that easy to be defined constructively. Despite it's somewhat indeterminacy, it was enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 as Article 12 of the Charter. Many countries within the UN then followed suit with privacy laws of their own.

Contrary to what the average internet user would believe today, the advent of the Internet did not single-handedly spur



enactment of Data Protection Laws

throughout the world. In fact the legal battles for right to privacy have been ongoing for a long time. Often, court judgements of simple infringement cases have had to loosely explicate what privacy constitutes of. Many times of which, the determinism would not be adequate but accepted. Today, 132 of the

A screenshot of a dark grey cookie consent banner with white text. The text reads: "We use cookies to make your experience of our websites better. By using and further navigating this website you accept this. Detailed information about the use of cookies on this website is available by clicking on [more information](#)." Below the text is a green button with the text "ACCEPT AND CLOSE" in white. The banner is framed by a thin white border.

We use cookies to make your experience of our websites better. By using and further navigating this website you accept this. Detailed information about the use of cookies on this website is available by clicking on [more information](#).

ACCEPT AND CLOSE

194 countries recognized by the United Nations have at least some form of data protection legislation that ensures the safety and rights for the users on how that data should be used.

A recent and popularly contested legislation is the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation or GDPR. Approved in 2016, it is aimed at giving users control over their personal data and also to simplify the general atmosphere surrounding data exchanges. The GDPR replaces the Data

Protection Directive, which was the precursor regulation in place for data protection since 1995. While the GDPR has been lauded for addressing transparency in data processing, famously incorporating the 'Right to be Forgotten', it also has been criticised for being particularly draconian towards big tech companies such as Google, levying heavy fines for non-compliance. The UK enacted it's own version of GDPR by amending the 'Data Protection Act 1998' in 2018.

The United States does not have a concise federal legislation in place for data protection and processing. Rather they have multiple laws directed at different sectors. Examples of this would be the US Privacy Act of 1974 for personal data and the FTC Act for data stored by Companies. Different states also have their own laws regarding the same. The California Consumer Privacy Act, 2018 or CCPA is considered to be the most comprehensive consumer protection law in United States' history.

Canada amended it's Personal Information Protection & Electronics Documents Act

(PIPEDA) in 2018 to include anti-data breach laws.

Many countries like Australia have Privacy Acts that cover data protection. While European Nations lead the world in robust privacy laws, Asian and African countries too are updating their laws modelled after the GDPR. China's Personal Information Security Specification is said to be more stringent than the GDPR itself.



India's privacy laws too have been challenged and efforts are being made to update them. India's personal data security framework did mostly rely upon The Information Technology Act, 2008 and further rules specified in 2011. It is important to note that The Right to Privacy was not guaranteed by the Indian Constitution until a landmark judgement of a petition challenging the validity and use of AADHAAR data. The Supreme Court of India upheld Right to Privacy as a fundamental right confirmed by



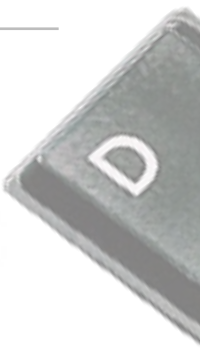
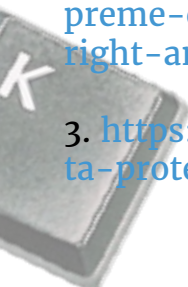
article 21 of the constitution. Finally in 2019, the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) tabled the Personal Data Protection Bill in the Parliament, a complete and concise set of rules for data protection in India. While still under discussion, the bill has already ignited concern that it unjustly enables the central government to handle private data under the pretense of checking illegal activities. Other private bills, including two inspired by a volunteer modelled law called Indian Privacy Code have also been introduced. As of march 2020, The PDP bill is being reviewed by a Joint Parliamentary Committee and expected to be passed in the Monsoon session of the Parliament.

Despite the alleged strictness, the Data protection laws all over the world are still not adequate or precise. Some of them have often been proved hindersome to public security.

Lack of general awareness and understanding is hampering the conception of a set of universal data protection guidelines that could apply uniformly to all of the Internet someday. Until then, guess we all should accept the cookies.

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2. <https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2017/08/indias-supreme-court-upholds-right-privacy-fundamental-right-and-its-about-time>
3. <https://www.prindia.org/billtrack/draft-personal-data-protection-bill-2018>





SAFARNAMA



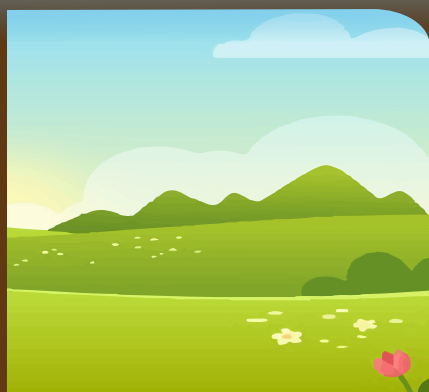
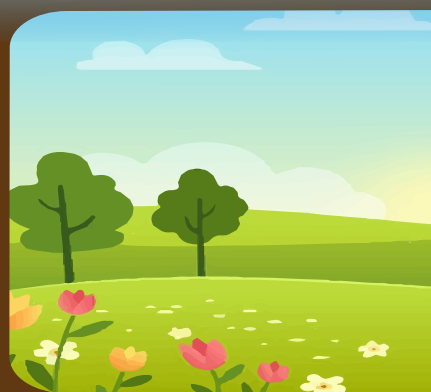
Bon Voyage: Chapter Three

Rashi Gulati | TYBA
4 mins read



Recap - Khwaish was prepared to be blown away by the beauty of Paris but never had she imagined she'd find herself a home away from home.

Lush green fields, wooden cabins, trees swaying to the music of the world, petite houses with grey slate roofs, and drops of rain dripping down the window was the view of her journey to Bretagne. Numerous groups were present there on the train, the TGV, on the same frequency, ready to spend the next five hours of their lives traveling to the same destination. Khwaish strongly believed in the power of the universe and the fact that people cross paths because they were meant to learn and help the other grow.



She was content with learning from a group of Americans who were headed for an exchange to Brest, the same stop as hers. The teenagers were ecstatic to discover she was there on her own. She was blown away by the number of questions she was asked and by the fact that she too had the power of influencing lives. Standing behind the closed doors of the train, her hands trembled because this time she wasn't in a metro city, but in the suburbs of France, where the culture is deep-rooted and families a tad extra traditional. The announcements came to a halt, the glass doors opened and there, in front of her eyes, was a family waiting with arms open, and hearts affectionate.

With a warm bowl of 'riz au lait', a French dessert, and an elaborate exchange of Indian souvenirs, Khwaish went to bed with the excitement of tomorrow rushing through her veins. The morning was seized with a 'pain au chocolat', a loaf of baguette, and a hot steamy coffee.



It was the morning of a weekend, hence she was accompanied by her family to 'Roscoff'.

The heritage of Bretagne lies in its ports, unspoiled clear blue beaches, and mountains hovering over them. They reached one of the ports of Brest early in the morning, so as to secure the best seats on the boat to Roscoff. Riding a boat sounds very minimal, but to Khwaish was one blissful experience. She'd never been on a boat in clear waters as of Bretagne, hence spent the entire ride giggling and clicking pictures of the beauty she didn't know existed. This beautiful seaside town with colorful boats layered by the bay, silhouetted against a pink sky, took her breath away.

They spent their day, lazing around the beach, sipping Breton Cider, visiting it's flora gardens and museum that held the secrets to the most famous delicacy of Roscoff 'the pink onions'.

After an eventful afternoon, and a big filling of moules-frites in the famous terrace



restaurant, they boarded a boat back home.

The second day was spent cycling around Landerneau, a small town in Brest built over a river, sporting one of the most intricate designed churches and happening markets, and walking up to a well-known forest in Huelgoat 'la Grotte du diable'.



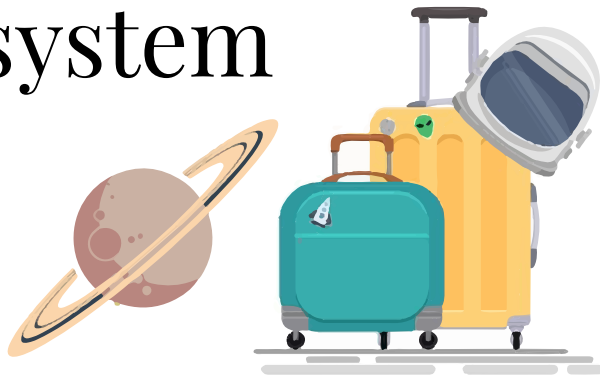
Khwaish spent her last two days, roaming around Brest in tramps, sightseeing through ports and museums, eating fresh-baked delicacies, munching on Brittany's butter cookies, visiting the recognized aquarium 'Océanopolis' and lastly hiking up 'Camaret-Sur-Mer' with her french family, the evening she had to board her train. They hiked the mountain together, early at the hour of dawn. The sunrise was awe-inspiring.



Space tourism: Complete your love for the Solar system

Sanjana Bhate (TYBA)

3 mins read



“Orbiting Earth in the spaceship, I saw how beautiful our planet is. People, let us preserve and increase this beauty, not destroy it!”

– Yuri Gagarin

Mr. Gagarin ventured into space on 12th April 1961 and saw a view of our Earth in a way no one had ever seen. He was the first man to visit space and boost up the future of space tourism. In this article, I shall be talking space tourism, its barriers, and many more aspects. Keep reading...



Story: In 2001, Dennis Tito, an American entrepreneur visited the International Space Station (ISS) by paying \$20M for an eight-day trip.



For now, the rate of space tourists is very low and we can expect a rise in the near future. With the increasing production of private spacecraft, we are witnessing lower prices in space tours. Companies like SpaceX, Blue Origin, etc. have come up with innovative models that enable a tourist to see the earth's atmosphere through full-size windows, sustainable tours, easy on the pocket, and most importantly, SAFE!

New Shepard, by Blue Origin:

Blue Origin has come up with a unique idea of launching these capsule aircraft for their tourists, with comfortable seats, huge windows, and a parachute landing provision. These capsules are a little inexpensive than what the past tourists have been charged. This capsule will get detached from the rocket above 1000m altitude of the earth's atmosphere. Though this will give a limited time in space, it will be worth it!



This '*New Shepard*' is an absolutely sustainable vehicle that is made to be reused. Hence, a tourist will be a responsible and sustainable traveler.



Dragon Crew, by SpaceX:

Elon Musk, the founder of SpaceX has recently signed a contract with a US-based company Space Adventures to launch four tourists in an orbital trip on *Crew Dragon*, a space capsule. They plan to launch the space capsule in late 2021 from Florida, the USA for a duration of 5 days; the tourists will be trained in the USA. The capsule will not visit the ISS but will remain in the orbit like a free-flying object. This flight will not charge less than the current commercial spaceflight opportunities. For those of you who wish to become a part of it, check the astronaut training programs arranged by such companies.



“In 12 or 15 years, there will be routine, affordable space tourism not just in the U.S. but in a lot of countries.” – Burt Rutan

Sources:

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/sci-tech/human-test-space-flights-by-2017-jeff-bezos-says-1.2809410>

<https://www.space.com/spacex-crew-dragon-will-fly-space-tourists.html>



Close your eyes, Listen and Travel

Maitri Kate (SYJC Arts)

3 mins read



It's August, the virus has mushroomed and the situation has worsened. All we can do is sit home and use our time productively. Some of you might love reading books and of course what better way to let your travel imagination run wild than to read books? But not everyone likes reading and excessive screen time (TV series/movies) can get stressful, so that option isn't the best. But, there is another alternative to reading. Travel Podcasts!

Travel podcasts are the best option for those passionate travelers who would rather avoid reading. They are packed with a lot of information and provide us with the necessary



fun at the same time. Some of my favorite podcasts to listen to are:

1. Wander Woman Podcast: The Wander Woman Podcast is hosted by award-winning broadcaster, travel writer, author, and photographer Phoebe Smith. She mostly visits offbeat destinations and speaks about her adventurous experiences, her conversations with the locals, and much more in her podcasts. She is a solo traveler and has the ability to adjust to anything. Her talks inspire many passionate young solo travelers out there.

2. Zero to Travel Podcast: Hosted by Jason Moore, the podcast interviews various travel experts from different fields and they share their unique travel experiences. One can also learn about careers in the travel industry, sustainable tourism, tips and tricks related to travel, etc. It has over 255 episodes to date and can be listened to on Spotify.



3. Field Recordings: As we all live in a city, we have an innate attraction to nature. Well, now you can experience the wilderness by just sitting at home and listening to the Field Recordings podcast. The hosts of this podcast record the sounds of nature - river, jungle, etc. If you close your eyes and listen, opening your brain to the window of imagination, trust me you'll be transported to a completely different world.

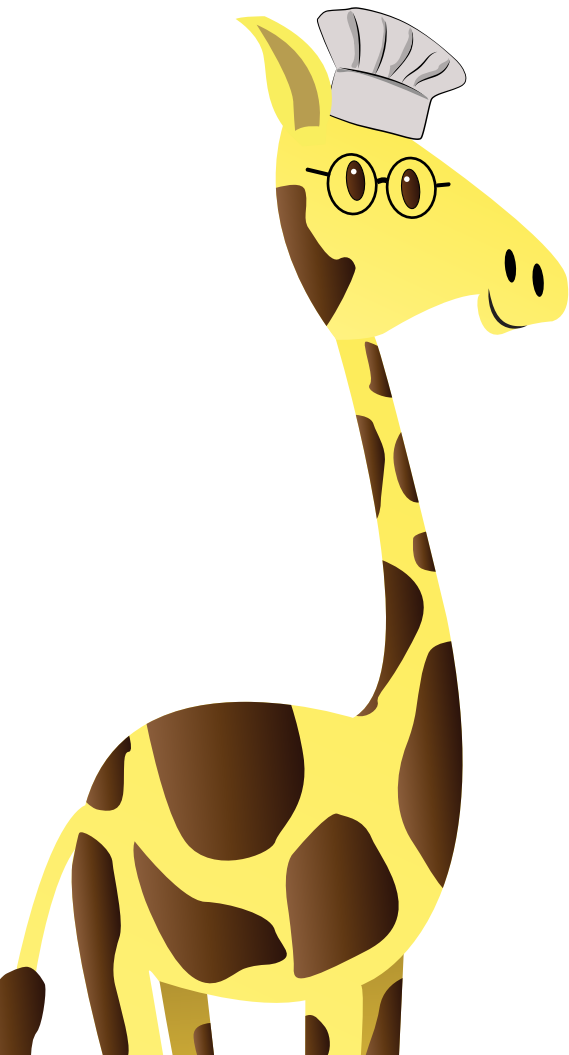
4. Armchair Explorer: This podcast is hosted by Aaron Miller, who conducts interviews of adventurers and narrates their experiences in the form of a story. The most interesting episodes are of horse trekking and climbing Everest. It is perfect for those who like adventures.

All the above-mentioned podcasts are available on Spotify as well as on many other sites. So what are you waiting for? Put your headphones on and Happy Listening!



Guffi's Class in France:

Bonjour! Today I will teach you to make 'Riz Au Lait'. Have a bowl of it while listening to a podcast about France and it will be almost like you are travelling.



Recipe:

- 1-litre milk
- 2/3 cup white rice
- 6 tablespoons sugar
- Big pinch salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Finely-grated zest of one lemon or orange

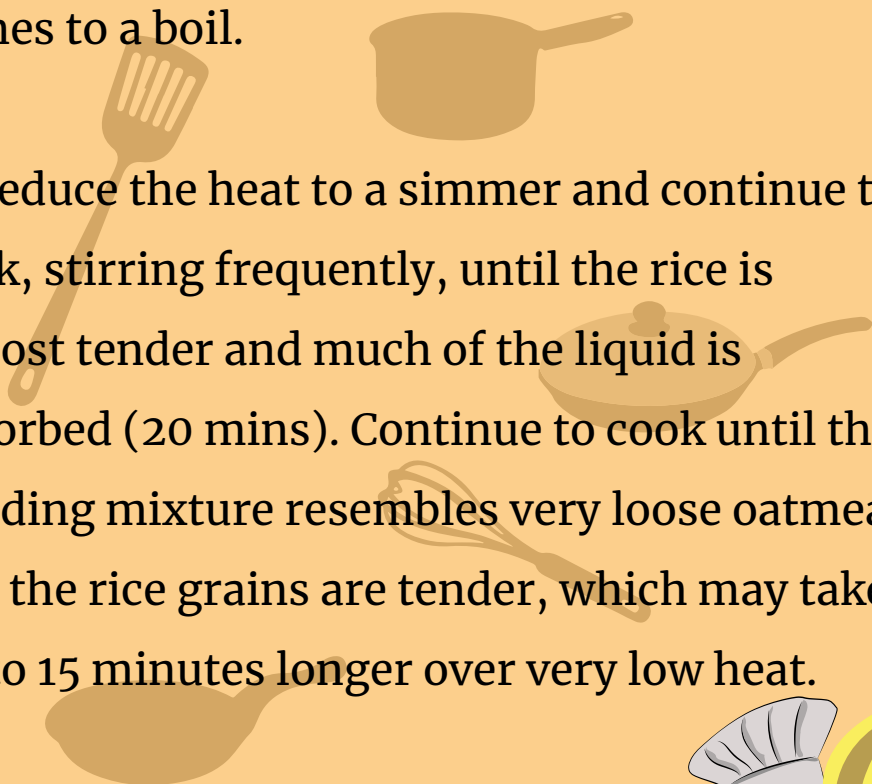


1. Mix the milk, rice, sugar, and salt in a medium-to-large saucepan.

Heat, stirring occasionally until the mixture comes to a boil.

2. Reduce the heat to a simmer and continue to cook, stirring frequently, until the rice is almost tender and much of the liquid is absorbed (20 mins). Continue to cook until the pudding mixture resembles very loose oatmeal and the rice grains are tender, which may take up to 15 minutes longer over very low heat.

3. Remove the heat and stir in the lemon or orange zest and vanilla extract.





FUN



FACT



**April Fool's Day
originated in
France.**



FICTIONALLY YOURS



Point A Finger

Vedika Sawant | SYBA
8.5 minutes to read

I

Ananya's face was filled with horror. She stood in the doorway, frozen with shock.

"Kiara! What happened!? Your forehead is bleeding!"

Kiara leaned forward, losing her balance. Her clothes were tinted red, her hands soaked with blood. Ananya immediately offered an arm and helped her to the couch. In seconds, Ananya was back with a first aid kit, nursing the cut on her forehead.

Kiara kept staring with dead eyes. It unnerved Ananya. Something was wrong.

"You need to listen to me carefully," she rasped. "Don't open the door."

Just then, the doorbell rang.

"Ananya!" Kiara grabbed her arm, staining Ananya's sleeve, her eyes wide. "Don't."

Ananya couldn't move. There was something in Kiara's tone that made her skin crawl. Her lips were pursed; her face was ashen; she clung to Ananya like a lifeline.

The bell rang again.

“I ordered f—”

“Don’t,” Kiara mouthed.

Ananya swallowed hard, nodding. Kiara let her go, sinking into the sofa. She’d never seen her happy-go-lucky friend so serious before.

"When I was coming back from the library today," Kiara whispered, "There was a guy wearing a black hoodie. At first, I thought I was just being paranoid, but... he was following me. When I started running, he chased me. Your house was close. I ran here."

Ananya dabbed at her wound with shaking fingers. "Who do you think it was?"

"I don't know. Someone from our college."

The doorbell rang for the third time. Ananya glanced at Kiara for a reaction, but Kiara smiled slightly at Ananya, her eyes a little glossy. "You ordered food?"

“Y-yeah.” Ananya looked through the peephole. It was indeed the delivery boy.

She paid the man and turned to grin at her friend. “On the bright side, we have pizz...Kiara?”

Kiara was gone.

The alarm beeped uselessly. Ananya was still awake, trying to make sense of what had happened. There'd been no trace of Kiara — no blood, no first aid kit on the table, nothing. It made her question herself. Was she hallucinating?

At college, she could not find Kiara. Six missed calls, eleven unanswered texts. It wasn't like her to miss class.

“You little shit!”

Ananya snapped out of it. Two burly males had closed in on a skinny, pale boy, who was shivering in the corner. She recognized him — they were lab partners. Vivan.

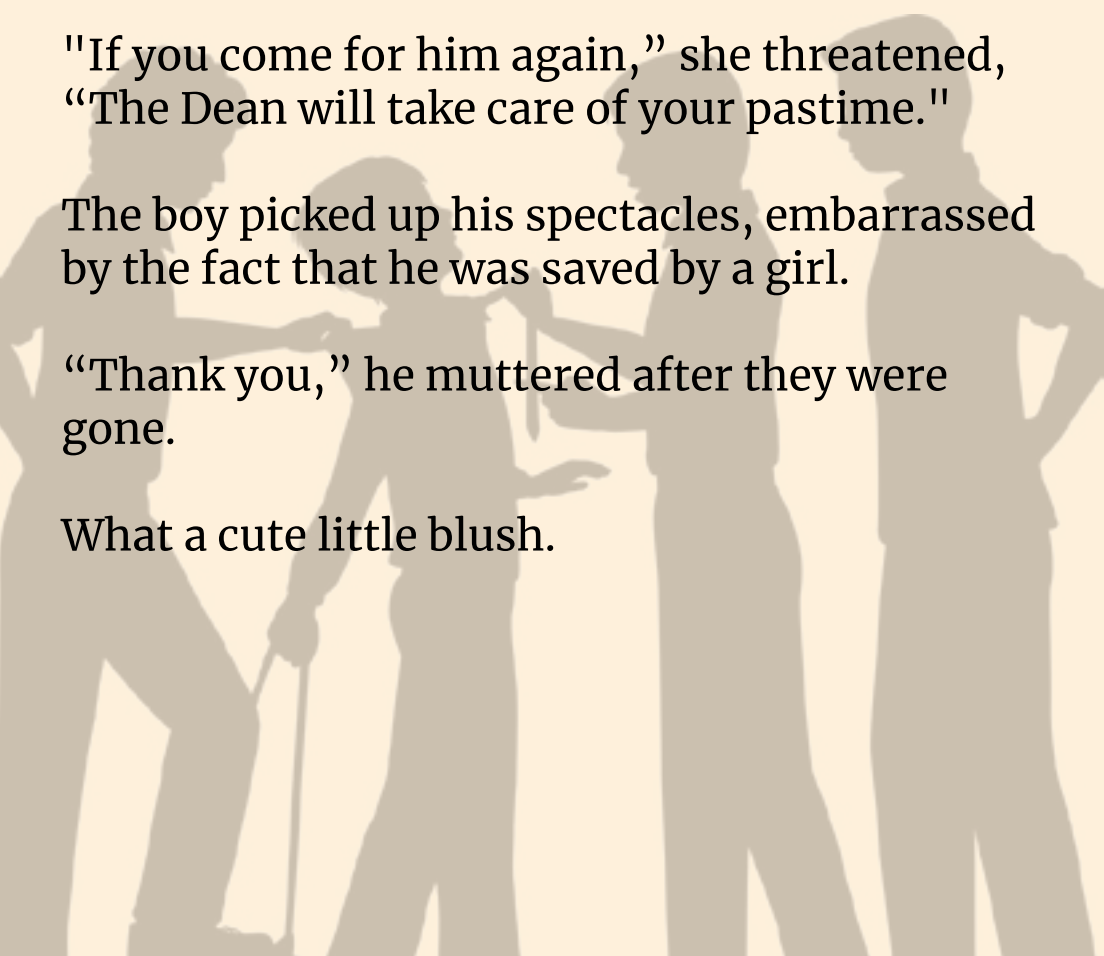
She immediately began to record everything. The thugs noticed Vivan staring at something behind them. Turning, they saw Ananya armed with her phone.

“If you come for him again,” she threatened, “The Dean will take care of your pastime.”

The boy picked up his spectacles, embarrassed by the fact that he was saved by a girl.

“Thank you,” he muttered after they were gone.

What a cute little blush.





It'd been four days. Ananya had no idea where Kiara was. Even her house was locked. Did they go on a spontaneous vacation?

Since the time she had rescued Vivan, they'd been spending a lot of time together. He was well-mannered and incredibly sweet— he seemed concerned for Kiara, even though she wasn't his friend. Ananya was dying to tell Kiara about her new crush.

Her phone rang with an unknown number. She hesitantly picked up the call. It was Kiara's father.

"Uncle, where are you?! Where is Kiara?"

She heard a faint sob. "She is no more. She... was beaten with a rod...in an empty alley. Her fingers had—" He choked on his words. "They cut her fingers off."

Ananya disconnected the call, slowly sinking to the floor. The shock was too great for her to register the words.

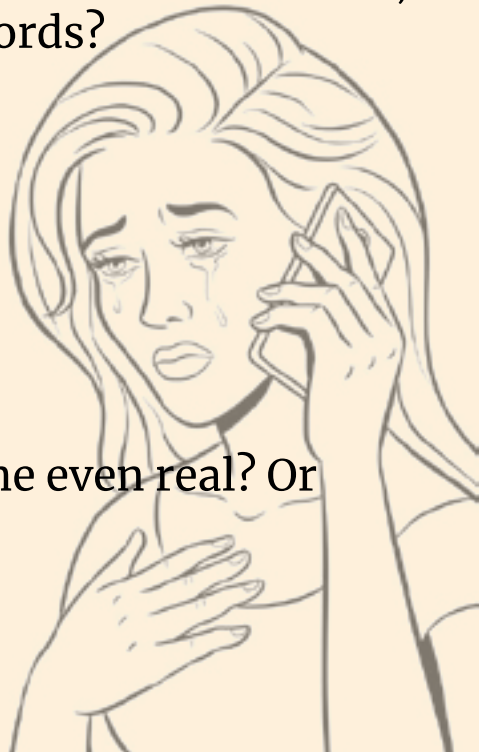
Tears streamed down her face. Her best friend, gone. What were her last words?

"Don't open the door."

Ananya's heartbeat spiked.

"He was following me."

Was that a warning? Was she even real? Or maybe... her spirit?



It was late. In a numbed state, she walked out of the library.

Vivan was standing next to a locker, fiddling with it. He took a step back, sighed, and turned around. He paled at the sight of Ananya.

Overwhelmed, she ran towards him, sobbing into his shoulder.

Vivan said nothing. He rubbed her back. Ananya could barely see through her tears. Her ears were ringing. Vivan didn't ask what was wrong....

He walked her home.

The next morning, a girl had found a letter with "You're next" and a human finger.

Ananya noticed the commotion near the lockers. The poor girl was terrified, but Ananya couldn't feel anything.

She looked around. Her eyes stopped at Locker 526.

...526? She brainstormed her faded memory.

"Yesterday. I was here...with Vivan..."

Her legs moved faster, without thinking for a second, She caught hold of Vivan and dragged him to the storeroom.

"What happened? Are you okay?" He asked, slightly confused.

"Do you know what happened in the locker room today?" She asked curbing the quiver in her voice.

"Yes...horrible right?" He wiped the sweat from his forehead.

"What were you doing near her locker yesterday?" She snapped.

"W-what? I was j-just passing b—"

"Did you do it?"

His expressions became cold and a slightly devilish smile marked his face. His cute smile was nowhere to be seen.

She pushed him in the corner, clutching his collar tightly, "I can't believe you did this!" she gasped.

"Why did you do it?" She cried. "Why are you still doing it?"

Vivan stared blankly at her.

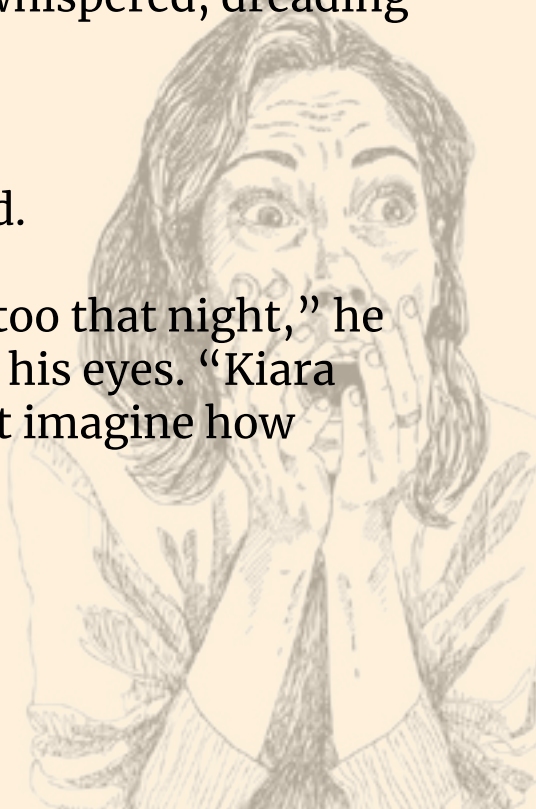
"You killed Kiara," she whispered, dreading the answer.

"Yes."

Ananya's heart shattered.

"I could have killed you too that night," he laughed, a manic look in his eyes. "Kiara fought so hard. You can't imagine how annoying it was."

Ananya stared, petrified



“She was a bully, you know?” He grinned. “She deserved to die. You all do. You think it’s fun? Pointing fingers and laughing at us? Well, she doesn’t have fingers now, does she? I washed away her sins.”

“You’re sick!” She screamed.

"Now that you know, I'll have to kill you too."

He reached out for her neck but Ananya grabbed a lamp and smashed it on Vivan's head. The storeroom floor was covered with blood. Ananya ran.

IV

Ananya and Vivan had been missing for two weeks. However, Vivan's fingers were found in the storeroom. They were both assumed to be killed by the mystery man, too.

“The police have found bodies of two men with excessive bleeding, their fingers chopped off. This seems to be another case...”

She giggled in the dark, switching the TV off. The fingers were roasting over the fire. Her black hoodie was soaking in warm water.

Vivan was right. The fighters are annoying.

TRIGGER WARNING

This Article contains dark things as cannibalism and gore. Don't read if you aren't comfortable ; Thankyou.

A Valentine's Date.

Nishant Bhise | SYBA

3.2 minutes to read

A gloomy evening of Valentine's,

Birds struck with love,

Singing hymns,

On the streets, in the park, and on the new
journeys of liaisons they embark.

Flakes of snow, too, embarked on the journey
to the earth,

Falling like a flight of a bird on the ground, and
amalgamating with the soil,

Like the souls of the lovers on their first night.

I, sprinted, sprightly in the direction of the
home of my beloved,

Through woods, trees, grass, and streams.

My heart was gay, so was my soul,

Gyrating together on the rhythms of nerves,

For the festivity of love.

The glum weather, ineffective of deterring the
verve of celebration,

And the incarnation, of love,

which was slaughtered by loneliness,

And I bathed in the blood of the traitor.

I reached the destination, breathing through a
journey of loneliness, hatred, bitterness, and
violence,

Finally, to my lover.

I, tip-toed, inside the house,

And the wind slid through the open door,
dousing the candle flames,

The symbols of the ignition of love with my
beloved.

"Is that you, O darling?" I heard, from a
distance,

"I am back for you, my beloved," I entered the
room where he sat, switching on the tape.

The rug drenched with blood-red wine, the
symbol of romance.

"I am hungry for the meat you promised." He
said sitting near the fireplace in the wheelchair
to feel the warmth, waiting for the feast.

"Thighs will be served on the platter,
darling!", unveiling the surprise.

I sanitized the butchered meat, washed, and
set in a boiling pot of water,

It was time for love and romance.

Favorites, Bloody Mary, served

Handing him, and leaning for a hug.

"I love the music of your heart. Would you lend it to me? " was said by me, teasingly.

"Of course, sweetheart. I am yours. Consume the love from me in its entirety," he said.

The Thighs were ready and off the stove,

I lit the candles for us, me and him,

With lights off and a room, dimmed.

"I love you. Don't leave me ", his virtual voice via tape spoke.

"Me too. " I waddled, switched the recorder off, and stabbed the fork into the ribs of my half amputated, dead beloved's corpse, with a heart tattering on the platter.

"Your thighs are luscious, and so is your heart, darling," said I refilling the glass of my Bloody Mary with the blood of my mate,

Celebrating love and romance with my Valentine's date.



ART WALL



WALL OF FAME

Kirthi Kamath | SYBA

A blue sky... orange and white mountain with green land. Mountains depicting the heights of our achievement and the Himalayas and green shades representing our heritable agricultural land.



OTHER ARTWORKS



Surabhi Sarfare | FYBA



Prachi Gupta | SYJC



Purva Indulkar | FYBSc



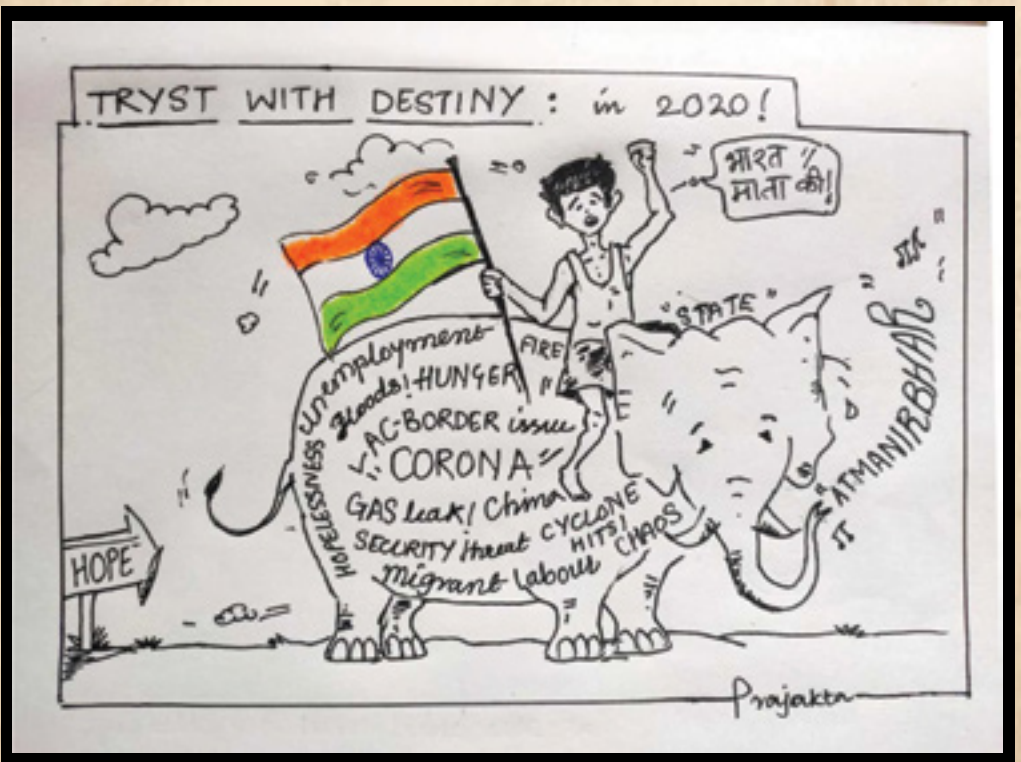
Kanak Deoras | SYBA

CARTOONING

As it says, " Patriotism rides above all"

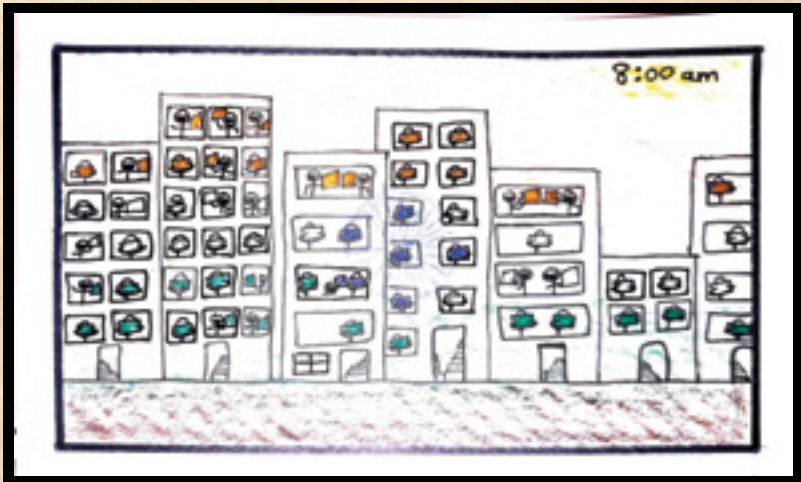
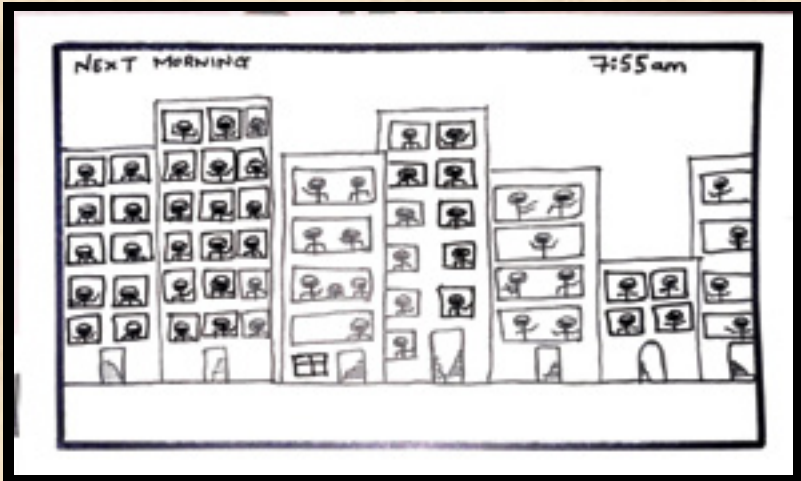
Prajakta Jadhav | SYBA

So, in the pandemic times, India is witnessing her "Tryst with Destiny" ... fighting challenges, being faced globally and, walking slowly but gracefully towards "Hope". Encircled with dangers, of all shapes and forms, the State making a way through...We Indians, celebrate this independence with the hope of better times!




COMIC

Bhavini Thakkar | TYBSc



LET'S TAKE OUR NATION ONE
STEP CLOSER TO GAIN
INDEPENDENCE FROM COVID-19.
STAY AT HOME
STAY HEALTHY



68

PHOTOGRAPHY



Aasavari Shinde | TYBVoc
1 minute read

The municipal corporation building This building is also widely known as BMC. It is also known as the Brihanmumbai

Municipal Corporation Building, or BMC building for short. Located to the opposite of UNESCO World Heritage Site Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus Station and at the junction of Dadabhai Naroji Road. This building houses the civic body that governs the city of Mumbai, the building is designed in Gothic structure and other in indo-sarcenic structure

Shubham Soni | TYBSc
1 minute read

The Amar Jawan Jyot today lives not just for the martyrs on the borders but also for all the brave warriors who spearheaded this battle against the virus.



The pandemic made it clear how important are the national medical and food security for our mere survival. Science and technology have gained utmost importance as food and defence! Hadn't the science and defence of the country spearhead us in this battle, country wouldn't have envisioned otherwise. One of India's greatest mind had rightly said- Jay Jawan! Jay kisan! Jay Vijnyan



Namita Gosia | TYBSc
1 minute read

St Thomas Cathedral

Oldest church in
India. The
Churchgate
railway station
derives its name

from the St Thomas cathedral as the station was linked to the cathedral by a road way leading through one of the three gates of the fortified island city of Mumbai The cathedral marks colonial Bombay's point zero, the exact centre of the city It was also selected for UNESCO Asia Pacific heritage conservation award in 2004

Submission of The Month



**James Princep Memorial near
Howrah bridge**

Aditi Kottapalli | TYBSc

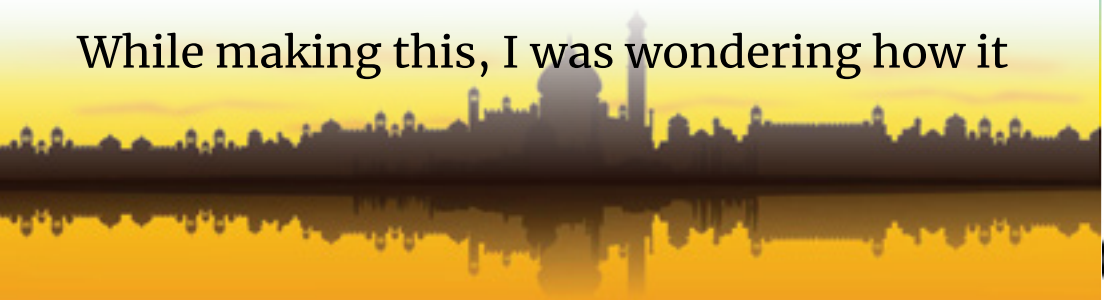
ROAM AROUND THE CITY (RATC)

HOMEMADE ART

Maitreyee S. Sonawane | TYBA
1 minute read



Art can be a good way to express your emotions. So, on the occasion of Independence Day, I made this tricolour flower to express my feelings. This flower is weaved in a doily (a lacy artwork made of yarn and paper) by using the crochet method. While making this, I was wondering how it

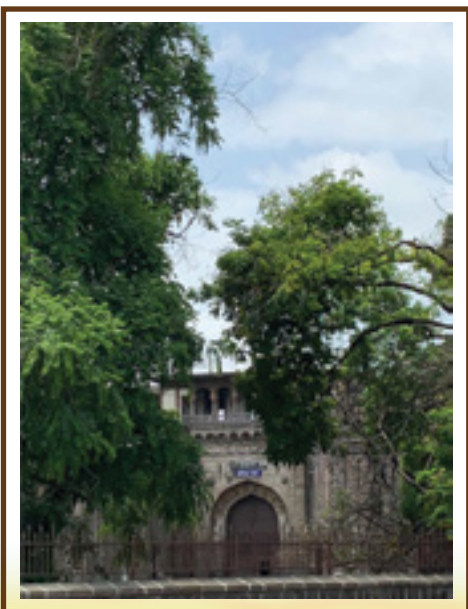


would be to live without freedom but then I realized that without it I would not be allowed to learn and to nurture hobbies. Hence, this flower is a symbol of respect, gratitude, and love towards the various personalities who have contributed in freedom struggle. It has been 73 years since independence but still we are trapped in the cage of inequality, hatred, violence, illiteracy, etc. Therefore, I wish that just like this blossomed tricolour flower, may freedom blossom in India in every aspect.

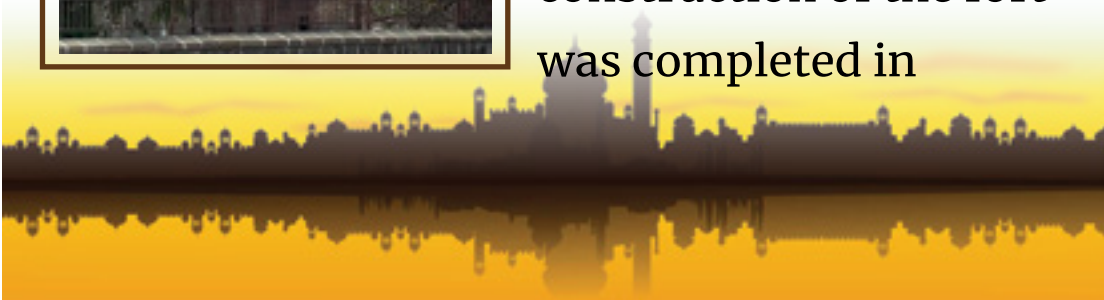
THE PESHWAS

SHANIWAR WADA

Shruti Hinge | SYBA
Shreyasi Karapu | SYBA
2 minutes read



Shaniwar Wada; a fort constructed by Peshwa Bajirao I is spread across 625 acres of land in Pune. It was the home of Bajirao Peshwa I and his wife Kashibai. The construction of the fort was completed in



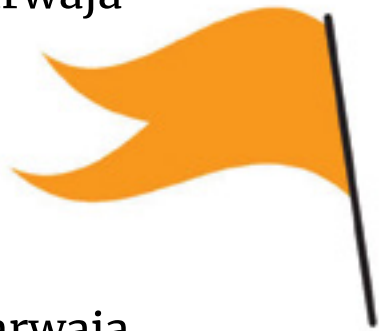
1732 and since then it has served as a residence for the upcoming Peshwas.



The fort gives a bit scary and mysterious vibe because it is said

that people have heard the cries of Narayanrao asking for help saying, "kaka mala vachva" on every full moon night. The major structures of the fort were also destroyed due a mysterious fire that broke out in 1828. There are five main gates to the fort and each of it has a story related to the fort. The names of the gates are:

- 1) Delhi/ Dilli Darwaja
- 2) Mastani/ Aliibahadur Darwaja
- 3) Khidki Darwaja
- 4) Ganesh Darwaja
- 5) Jambhul/ Narayanrao Darwaja



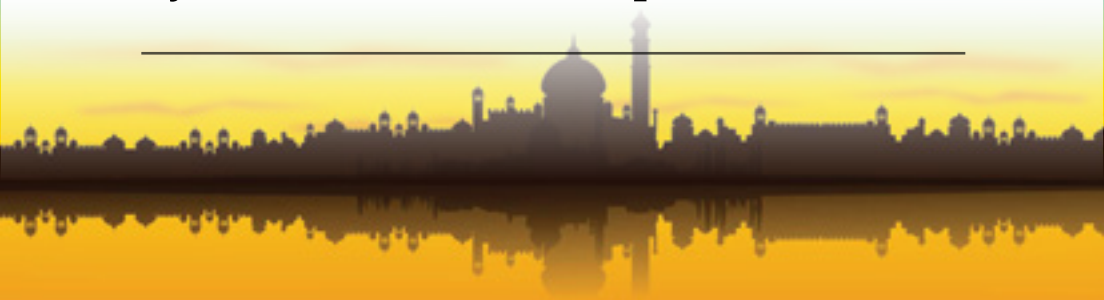
A light and sound show used to be conducted





earlier
before the
fire broke
out but
after that
the shows
stopped and
due to

negligence of the government the fort did not have many visitors. The number of visitors has increased in recent years after the release of the Bollywood movie, "BAJIRAO MASTANI". The light and sound shows are also re-started. People come here to get a glimpse of the lives of our great warriors. The stories of our warriors fill our hearts with pride and also make us feel that we should also do something for our country. People come here in evenings with their friends and family. The fort gives beautiful view of the evening sky and it also shows the busy and bustling Shaniwar Peth. You can also come here for a mini-picnic. The talks of the mysterious killing of Narayanrao and the fire are the main topics of chit chatting among the people visiting the fort. All in all, the fort is a great place to know about our history and the tales accompanied with it.



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