



THE END

-Param Nongmaithem, XII

Over the years Indian politics has seen several transformations, some of which have been fleeting. The Indian National Congress had dominated the political spectrum and for more than a decade after independence, continued to be the primary political player in the country. Congress with its lukewarm Hindutva, nationalist legacy and stalwarts like Nehru and Sardar Patel, had a firm grip on Indian politics post-Independence. The inclusive character of the National Movement led by the Congress enabled it to attract significant sections, groups and interests making it a broad-based social and ideological coalition. But over time the Congress developed several friction and factions within itself, its lack of leadership and progressive vision has seen it erode into nothing more than a dying shell of its legendary image.

Currently, the Congress leadership frustrated with Rahul Gandhi's obduracy attempted to escape the quicksand of political ignominy by projecting the Congress matriarch as the beacon of hope. Sonia Gandhi is yet again in an unenviable position of rebuilding a gutted organization. A dying mammoth, its penchant of portraying a young brigade well into their sixties, the lack of industry in the mother-son duo to see beyond their own coffers and promote those leaders with a strong base in their individual states, has seen to the exit of Jyotiraditya Scindia. The touted 'betrayal' of the scion of the Royal Family of Gwalior, is perhaps really the other way round. Despite having devoted fifteen years to the Congress party, the young leader saw very little opportunity arise in the Congress for his future growth. The Gandhi family's refusal

to share the reigns of the party or better still, to place someone more capable at the helm of affairs, seem to ring the final knell at the heart of this dynastic rule. Scindia's departure is perhaps, just the tip of the iceberg; the

erstwhile famed Congress legacy is on the last of its tethers and it will take but only a slight puff to blow it all away.

The Congress is at a political nadir since its inception, struggling now for its political survival in the face of the ascendant Hindu nationalist party with its charismatic demagogue, Narendra Modi. It is evident that the Congress party has failed to learn the survival tactics from the legendary Indira Gandhi's political legacy — a legacy which continues to loom large over the party. With the remnants of its octogenarian leaders suffering, amongst other things, a myopic vision that cannot see beyond the flimsy potential of a Rahul Gandhi, the Congress is quickly losing its last hope of survival with its young leaders jumping the wagon.

Having long over played its cheat card as the sole inheritance of the Gandhian legacy, its inability to emerge as a versatile evolving political party with a nerve center amongst the youth and

a reorganization of its state bodies, the death of the Congress is inevitable.

Its mass alienation has long slipped off the edge. If it can ring in a miraculous resurrection, the clarion call from deep within its rungs must necessarily be 'Rahul hatao, Congress Bachao'. The 'josh' in the BJP headquarters continues to rise, and with the end of the sole challenger to its supremacy now a certainty, it may well be 'Har bar, Modi ki hi sarkar.'



Illustrator: Lydia Timungpi

INTER-HOUSE LOWER-SCHOOL DEBATES

-Ssara Jha & Lavanya Adhikari, VIII

The evening of the 10th of March saw the finale of the Lower School Inter-House English Debates pan out in front of a packed audience. The motion for the debate was that 'This House Believes that Gender Sensitisation ought to be made compulsory in School Education.' While Dayan Alam was the Chairperson of the evening, Mrs. Sahana Majumdar, the Director of Education, Mr. Tushar Bharadwaj, the Director of Admissions and Marketing, Mrs. Dayita Dutta, Head, Department of History, were the esteemed judges for the event. The debate began with the first Speaker of Side Proposition, Srishti Bajaj who spoke about the importance of gender sensitisation and its necessity in schools. The motion saw Aayat Hazarika next, who passionately opposed the motion and spoke about how gender sensitisation should not only be confined to schools but must be taught in society. The second Speaker for the motion Hana Ahmed continued on the premise laid down by the first Speaker of side Proposition and stressed that school is indeed best equipped to teach gender sensitisation.

Fariha Zaman of side Opposition came up next and spoke about solutions and how the curriculum differs from state to state.

Takhe Tamo Haaro of Side Proposition came up next and his speech on gender sensitization was replete with rebuttals that kept the audience involved with the argument at hand. Ahsash Agarwal of Side Opposition took to the podium next and spoke about parenting, patriarchy in society and laws related to gender sensitisation. The flair with which he spoke and the rebuttals which he threw out in sharp precision clearly marked him as a favourite with the audience. The evening ended with the M/iC of Lower School Debates Ms. Prerna Gurkin declaring the results. While the motion was lost, Ahsas Agarwal was awarded the Best Speaker with Aayat Hazarika being awarded the Most Promising Speaker of the debate. Jinari- Manas took the First Position, followed closely by Bhoroli- Lohit in Second Position, Subansiri- Namdang in Third Position with Kopili- Dhansiri in the Fourth position.

Myth and magic

-Gunming Phassang, VIII

Devdutt Pattanaik born on 11th december, 1970 in Mumbai, India is an mythologist speaker , illustrator and an author. He is an Odia, born and brought up in Mumbai. Some of his well known books are Jaya; an illustrated retelling of Mahabharata and Sita; an illustrated retelling of Ramayana.

He became familiar with stories of Ramayana after watching plays from the Ramayana in his school. Trained in medicine, he worked for fifteen years in healthcare and pharma industries before he focused on his passion, writing. It became his full time work over time. He is known for his interpretations of Ancient Indian Scriptures. He writes as much as he lectures on the varied spectrum of mythological fiction and mythology. His books are replete with illustrations done by him. Other than providing a relief to the literature they act as a decisive connect to the narrative.

This makes him different from other authors because his illustrations make the story or retelling more understandable. Each chapter is accompanied by various sources along with other renditions of the same event from folk accounts from across the country. Pattanaik's storytelling not only brings alive Indian mythology but



has the astounding ability of relating them with the fabric of modern society. He is a must read for anyone with not merely a sense of imagination but also the ability to comprehend and appreciate the nuances of history. To them, they remain an epic journey.

Looking Back

-Nilay Dhakal, XII

The recently concluded Lower School Debates argued over the millennial question of gender equality and sensitisation. The very fact that eons after the Vedic Period we continue to shoulder the weight of this question, reflects the society we live in. At the crux of the matter lies the term 'equality' and it is the ambiguous nature of this ideal that we must first tackle in order to see the picture in a broader spectrum. It is essential to question if women across the world enjoy equality amongst each other? For example, do they all go to bed well fed? For that matter do men across the world enjoy equality? Do all men get paid equally for an equal amount of work done, having an equal skill set? One can argue that professions differ in importance. However, who is to contend if Philanthropy was frivolous in the face of Oncology? If it was, then why was it that all scientific research required financial backing most of which came from, Philanthropy? In this world, everything we do rises from the desire of *self*. Therefore, every desire we nurse is selfish in nature. Selfless service to others also nurses within its fold the satisfaction of *self*, in having served another. Hence what is the essence of true equality in a world where all actions are driven to satiate, *self*? Is there equality in education? If yes, then why are *Public* schools not for the ordinary *Public*? Does the Right to Education suitably bridge this gap between

the classes? Or is it merely an attempt to ease the conscience of a society that is aware that different folks play indeed, with different strokes? The material world therefore does not equate itself to the virtue of equality. As human beings, we exist in this world and live by its rules.

However, lack of equality doesn't provide for a suppressive and regressive society. The Vedic texts revere women in the India culture which is called the *Varnasharma dharma* in the truest sense and they are worshipped as Shakti. Oppression is the corruption of society and its evil keeps us trapped. Mutual respect is necessary for positive growth in society. Men and women have different duties to fulfil in their life on earth, because one cannot do the job of another. In the macrocosm of the *Varnasharma Dharma* or the Hindu way of life, the Vedic texts explain that gender does not play any role in the truest meaning of life. Every entity in the cosmos is made up of energy which does not have a gender and is universal. The material body merely acts as a covering for this energy similar to clothes which protect our bodies from the elements. There is therefore no differentiation of opportunities based on what one wears as there must be none, based on the gender one relates to. Equality is a perception and the way we perceive the world, is how it perceives us, in reflection.



Around The World

-Lavanya Adhikari, VIII

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Why do people keep perfectly maintained, uninteresting and pointless green piece of land famously called the lawn? What is the reason behind the insistence to 'stay off the greens!' and hours of labour poured into keeping it 'manicured'? These greens have always been rare and have always enjoyed a place of pride across the world. To catch a glimpse of it and have the pleasure of 'Tea hospitality' makes Assam-styled bungalows today, a boutique-stay amongst travelers. The question however remains as to what makes these 'greens' so very important and why should we consider them a privilege here at School.

Important landmarks, institutions and Ivy Leagues, residences of high profile dignitaries and Head of States,

from the Buckingham Palace to the White House to the Taj Mahal at Agra boast of this green expanse. To understand the pride and honour associated with lawns, it is essential to understand the history behind it. In the earlier centuries they were merely grasslands around medieval castles, clear of trees so that the guards had an unobstructed view of approaching hostile visitors. The historian and author Yuval Harari in his book 'Homo Deus' writes that the concept of curated tracts of land began in the 17th century under the Bourbons of France. Lawns swiftly took on the status symbol of nobility and wealth. This was because the landowner or the feudal lord had to depend upon the manual labour of their serfs to maintain these vast tracts of land. Considering

these grounds were not used to farm or grow crops and yielded no monetary returns, the owners had to be of exceptional financial means to maintain them. Lawns therefore swiftly became the status symbols for Kings and Dukes. The plusher the lawns and vaster these tracts of land, clearly symbolized the power and strength of the royalty who owned them. This status symbol ended up outlasting the monarchies that created it. Kings and Dukes were toppled and guillotined but new Presidents and Prime Ministers kept the lawns.

With the coming of industrialization and the growth of the capitalist market, saw also the rise of the middle class in America. With the obsession of now owning a home came the desire for the patch of 'green' that clearly marked a certain way of life.

This 'way of life', has been promoted in institutes celebrated for not merely the education they provided but the mark of excellence, scholarship and sportsmanship that was their hallmark. From Harvard to Yale to Oxford and Cambridge to the National University of Singapore to the Banaras Hindu University, the lawns

that surround these Meccas of leaning, are steeped in tradition, history, prestige and endless hours of maintenance.

Studying at AVS, one of India's premier most institutes which boasts amongst other things, a green campus of 324 acres, we have done very little to enjoy the spectacular sunrises and sunsets that we see. The vast expanse of the rolling greens that accentuate the night sky lit with stars captured over innumerable photographs, have been there even when the school was not. The privilege we lay claim to and enjoy seamlessly, is ours simply by the sheer luck of being situated in a corner of the world that allows one a perfect view of the snow clad mountains of Arunachal Pradesh across expanses dotted with exquisite *Nahors*. This green is our heritage. Protecting and preserving it, our duty. Living it is a luxury we will someday forego when we step out of this lush campus and step into a concrete jungle. 'Stay off the Lawns' and 'Do not walk on the Greens'; they are not merely tracts of land. They are our Legacy and it shall not be trampled underneath careless feet.

CAMPUS NEWS

On 9th of March The Assam Valley School celebrated Holi at the Pavilion with an abundance of music, colour, dancing and games.

The 14th of March (3.14) of every year is celebrated as the International Pi Day worldwide to commemorate the never ending saga of Pi. On this occasion, the Department of Mathematics also celebrated the International Pi day. Two events- a Pi recitation competition and a fiction writing competition was organised for Class 10 and 12.

The British Council International Award Project Exhibition was a project collaboration which involved students from classes 5 to 8 from The Assam Valley School and students of grade 5 & 6 Bednarska Primary School, Warsaw, Poland. The exhibition showcased Art & Crafts of North East India: Assam. Pictures of the work done by the students from Bednarska Primary School showcasing day to day life activity reflective of the polish culture and lifestyle. The Departments of Art, CDT, Geography & History put together the project work.



Opinion Poll Results

We asked **YOU** (*our readers*):

If you could champion an environmental cause at AVS, what would it be?

Here is what some of you had to say to that:

“Stop cars for teachers.” -Nehal Ahmed, ISC Batch of 2017

“In my opinion I think the cutting of trees should be stopped in AVS.”

-Biswapriya VII

“We should not litter and throw our trash in the proper dustbins.”

-Subham Maheswari, VI

“Switching off the lights and fans which even after being told we do not turn them off.” -Divija Dibyajoti VII

“To stop polluting in general.” - Himanshu VII

“Reduce the use of paper.” - Mr. A.S. Huidrom

“Make the paper recycling unit functional again.” -Sempisang Toy, ISC Batch of 2020

Compiled by: Biswapriya

THE OUTPOST

Jyotiraditya Scindia, leader of the INC joins the Saffron Party receiving a huge welcome at Bhopal and a guaranteed Rajya Sabha seat with a probable portfolio in the Union Government while his loyal '22' remain incommunicado. With the Coronavirus, now a pandemic declared by WHO, escalating with 148,051 cases and 5,543 deaths worldwide, Trump finally proclaims National Emergency as tourist spots across the world go deserted. With Joe Biden's win at the primaries a certainty, Bernie Sanders refuses to bow down until the Party Convention, further dividing the already divided Democratic Party and supplementing Trump's reelection as President.

Illustrator: Ssara Jha



Ripple #122

-Sempisang Toy, ISC Batch of 2020

Cool ash and warm
tears,
All around chaos
ensues,
The nation burns and
the world looks on
to the dead taken by
faith,
Now together in peace.

Tongue Of Slip!!

1. My low back pain is aching. - Karma Chamling, XII (It's giving your grammar company.)
2. I am giving your AVE for lingo. - Tisha Maheshwari, XII (You got what you wanted.)
3. Thanks for telling me know - Harsheeta Bhartia, XII (You're regretting that now.)
4. He came to me during breakfast at night. - Nizovino Meyase, XII (The eggs are definitely not sunny-side up.)
5. Be careful of handing shakes - Kanishk Nowal, XII (You're already infected.)

THE ZERO-THON

-Ssara Jha, VIII



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