

# THE RIPPLE EFFECT

-Anoushka S. Rabha, Associate Editor

The Partition of India was a traumatic tragedy that was fueled by the sheer mismanagement of the British imperial forces. The borders that marked the two countries were drawn by a British lawyer, Cyril Radcliffe, who was simply ignorant of the geographical, linguistic anomaly that India was and is. He had never travelled to India before nor did he have any experience of drawing borders. Yet, the India-Pakistan border was drafted on the basis of the Radcliffe line, a hastily drawn line on the grounds of so-called demographic data. Radcliffe was asked to base his lines on the population of Muslims and Hindus, in addition to “other factors”. These additional factors were never officially defined but are believed to include economic and communication resources, such as irrigation channels and railway lines. Although the boundary was finalized on August 12, it was published four days later on the August 17, 1947, ostensibly to avoid confusion on independence day itself, and in order to buy more time to manage the chaos that was sweeping throughout the provinces of Bengal and Punjab. It did however exactly the opposite creating a chaos where people moved blindly from one area to the next without knowing which was India and which was the newly formed Pakistan. This fuelled the genocide further. The bloody legacy of the Indian partition is as intrinsic to the central idea of Indian identity as the holocaust of the Jews is vital to German history. The partition of the erstwhile British colony, led to communities that

had coexisted for almost a millennium attacking each other in a terrifying outbreak of sectarian violence, with Hindus and Sikhs on one side and Muslims on the other—a mutual genocide as unexpected as it was unprecedented. In Punjab and Bengal—provinces abutting India’s borders with West and East Pakistan, respectively—the carnage was especially intense, with massacres, arson, forced conversions, mass abductions, and savage sexual violence. An approximate of seventy-five thousand women were raped, and many of them were then disfigured or dismembered. Much of the carnage was lost to the lack of documentation.

An unforeseen consequence of the Partition was that Pakistan’s population ended up being more religiously homogeneous than earlier expected or anticipated. Although Pakistan was created as a ‘homeland’ for India’s Muslim minority, not all Muslims supported its formation let alone uprooting their lives and migrating to the newly formed country. Hence, Muslims continued to be the largest minority group in India. Although it continues to retain the minority status even today, the demographics have long changed since then.

The rushed process that was the foundation of Indian Independence continues to have far-reaching consequences in the contemporary times. We continue to skirt massacre in the name of religion even as the impact of the recent Delhi riots echoes the feeling of foreboding that once accompanied the Partition.

Illustration: Jeremy Jahau



# Of Kitchens And Cuisines

-Mrs. Sahana Majumdar, Director of Educational Administration

I was born in a Hindu orthodox family in Kolkata. Chicken – either the meat or the egg never saw an entry into our household! Pure Bengali food was served on the floor in ‘kansa’ (an alloy of 4:1 ratio of bronze and tin) also known as bell metal, utensils. The kitchen consisted of permanently constructed earthen ‘chulhas’ which was filled with smoke when the coal was ignited. I hated the smoke and failed to understand how my mother and our cook managed to remain inside.

It has been a long journey since then. We saw the advent of gas cylinders and gas ovens much to the delight of my mother. The refrigerator and the dining table followed in quick succession. We were sorted. Other than my grandmother, all of us ate on the table. ‘Kansa’ was replaced by steel which was easier to clean and lighter in weight.

With regard to cuisine although very bengali, my mother became more experimental and broadminded. The chicken made its entry although she never ate it. I remember eating a bowl of vegetables on winter nights which she called ‘stew’ was very red in colour. I realised much later that it always had beetroot in it. I still don’t know why the beetroot could not be avoided and I never asked. On special days my mother made Biryani which she learnt from a ‘mussalman’ lady. I still have that recipe but it does not match any other Biryani recipes I know. After much research I discovered that it was

a Lahori recipe used by few Bohra muslim families of Kolkata.

Someone once taught my mother to make rasgullas and she perfected the art. She became a little more adventurous now!! She tried out different types of bengali sweets and all of them turned out to be perfect. We did not buy sweets from shops anymore. However, I must confess that my father had a role to play behind this perfection of recipes. According to him, no one cooked as well as my mother and that I suppose gave her enough encouragement.

I took good food for granted. I neither learnt nor helped my mother in the kitchen. The time I spent in the kitchen was spent talking to her and doing odd jobs. During such times, I observed that powdered ground spices readily available in the market was slowly replacing wet ground spices.

Years went by and I was married at 19. To say it was a new environment was putting it mildly. My in-laws had rubbed shoulders with the ‘sahibs’. Although Bengali, they never lived in Bengal. My mother-in-law came from Burma and my father-in-law from Chaibasa in Bihar. Food habits, language and way of living was highly anglicized. My husband pretended as if he was brought up on steaks, strawberries and cream!! At 19 I had no clue to this world. And thereon began a new culinary journey along with a new life.

## DELAYED JUSTICE

-Lavanya Adhikari, VIII

It is the second decade of the 21st century and the second time Narendra Modi was elected as the Prime Minister and the infinite time the promise that India will protect its women, has more or less gone unmet. Justice is righteousness, equitability and fair. Justice is sought from the law and law today is anything but just. Seven years ago a brutal gang rape was committed against Nirbhaya and although this was not the first case of such barbarity, it caught the eye of people and on the 20th of March 2020 at 5:30 am, the four convicts were finally, after many long and tedious years of legal battle, were hung to their deaths. In these seven years, there were multiple protests against rape and the call for justice for all rape victims even as they wait ceaselessly for verdicts that are yet to be delivered. These women wait forgotten

caught within a legal maze. Nirbhaya's case made its own tumultuous journey and had been embroiled in a political tussle too. The BJP and the AAP government played ping pong in a blame game each pointing the other for being the cause behind the delay.

The Supreme Court despite being the apex court stayed crippled caught in the web of its own ancient legal paraphernalia pushing the verdict from one date to another. This limbo took seven long years to take action against the convicts of the Nirbhaya case. This case despite being of high profile having caught the eye of the media and despite the persistence of Nirbhaya’s parents, was left simmering over legal loopholes. The thousands of other cases that come from the many small towns and cities of this country that enjoy no

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such limelight, is often left buried in the trenches of the Indian Judiciary. There are about two lakh pending rape cases and cases against the assault of children which have still not been bought under consideration. We cannot blame the government alone for this despite the role it plays because it also substantially reflects the mind-set prevailing in society today. Changes start from home and this stereotypical perception can only be

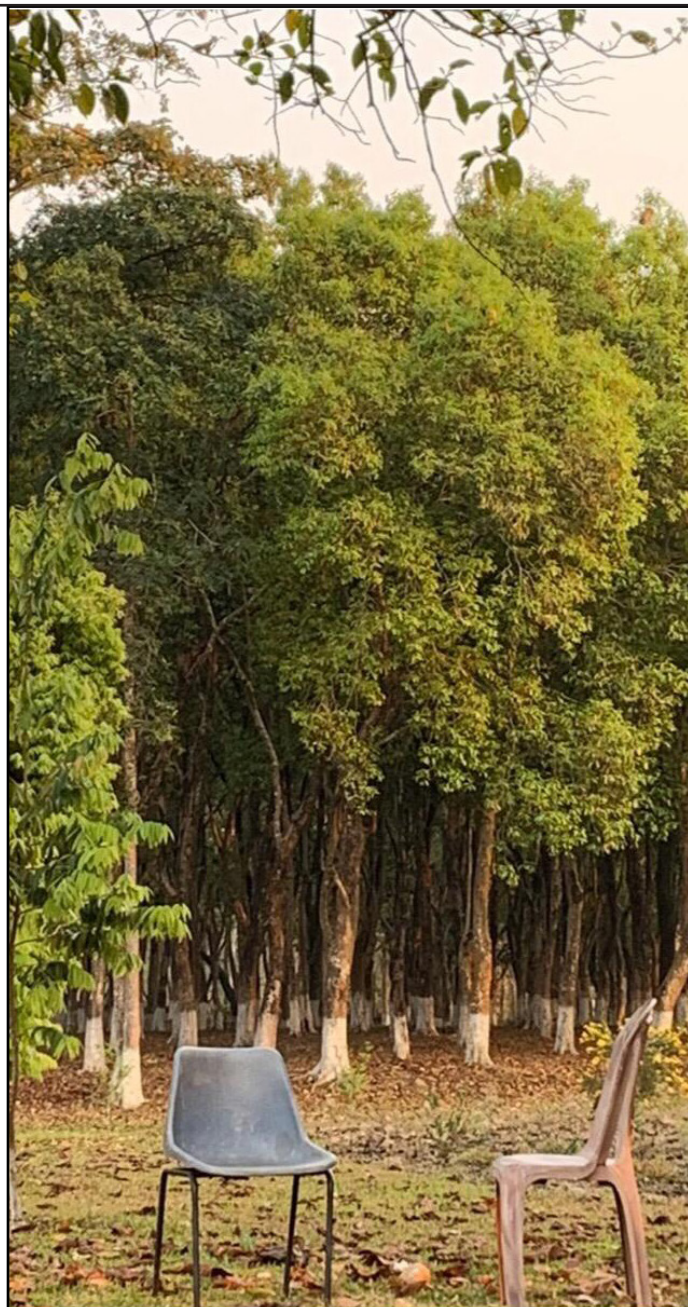
eradicated if societal attitude towards the condition of women change. It is a simple moral value of respecting others that needs to come from within. The daughters of India languish as they wait for justice and wait for society to step out of their parochial mind sets and allow their women the same sense of freedom that had dawned in this country in 1947. We now wait, for the freedom of life and security, freedom to finally be free.

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-Aakangsha Dutta, ISC Batch of 2020

Photo Credits: Yayum Toko

“I love cold winter nights. The days are too bright,  
almost blinding”  
“I hate the nights. The silence of it, it’s deafening”  
“Were we always this?”  
“Always what?”  
“Always crooked for each other? You finding comfort  
in the bones, me longing for skin. You, always wanting  
to bask under the sun, me always wanting to be tucked  
under the shade”  
“And yet here we are, facing each other, with the grass  
and the shade, winter and summer, all in one frame”  
“You don’t get it, we’re too different”  
“We are.”  
\*softly\*  
“We’ll make it through this?”  
\*laughs\* “and for the umpteenth time, why do you  
think so much?”



## THE OUTPOST

While the UN seems to be snoozing while the Covid 19 pandemic runs amok, pressure on WHO increases to find a cure. India plays yet another crucial role this time in organizing a video conferencing of the G20 countries to put forth a resolution in fighting the Covid 19 even as world economy is pushed into a recession. Even before a sign of relief could be felt over the lowering of death rates in Italy, Britain’s Prime Minister Boris Johnson tests positive for coronavirus. China flexes military muscle near Taiwan cautioning the world against the Chinese in the virus.

## Ripple #124

-Letminlun Haokip, XII

A machine called  
life halts,  
temporarily, yes, a  
gift from the East.  
We are prisoners  
in our own devices,  
caged and chained.  
Yet nature and  
thoughts are finally  
set free, if only  
momentarily

## Aviator's Guide To The Quarantine

What does an Aviator do when they are quarantined from the outside world? How do they quench the boredom of solitude? Here are some things you can do:

**JAM OUT:** Whether it's Spotify on the phone or the trusty mp3, music is life no matter what the occasion. (Even if it's staying inside for days upon end.)

**SPRING CLEANING:** Since you'll be spending the most of your days inside, you should try maintaining your environment. Wipe the windows, dust the tables or if you can, remodel your interiors, everyone needs a change of scenery.

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** Nothing new but maybe it's time to finally embrace all the new trends and strange practices of the internet with your friends.

**CARDS:** Whether regular, UNO or monopoly, cards are an easy way to pass the time with your family or even learn some card tricks to impress your friends while your at it.

## GROWTH

-Prapti Borah, VI



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