



OUTPOST

Pg. 5

Pressure

---

An article by Hrideek Choudhary

Pg. 3

THIS WEEK'S  
THE  
READLIST

Featuring:  
A Sister's Promise by Shelby Perry  
Tony Taktani by Haruki Murakami  
Runaway Horses by Yukio Mishima  
The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Pg. 6

# CHANGE: WHY WE NEED IT

-Adrika Borah, XI

The Central Government, for welfare and prosperity of the farmers, introduced three new farm bills. They are The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020, and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2020. President Ram Nath Kovind gave assent to these three contentious bills on the 27th of September, 2020. All

*“Technology and new age agriculture is the road forward.”*

three bills aim at benefitting the farmers in many ways from selling their produce wherever they like, provision of contract farming to avoid bank loans and removing few food items from the essential commodities list deregulating the production, supply and distribution of the same.

These three bills are much needed to bring about reforms in the agriculture sector. Now let's analyse these bills individually. APMC(Agriculture Produce Market Committee) sets up Mandis where farmers bring their produce and wholesalers or middlemen come and buy them. Despite this, the trading in the Mandis is controlled by the traders and the farmers have very little say or control in them. The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill,

2020 gives farmer's independency to sell their produce not only in APMC approved Mandis but anywhere they choose to i.e. intra-state, inter-state and also online to different countries. This gives them the freedom of choice. Farmers were restricted to selling their agricultural produce only in Mandis but after this farm bill has been passed they can now sell their produce at a variety of market places. It promotes barrier free inter-state and intra-state trade. Farmers will get better prices through cost-cutting on transportation and competition. However, this might mean that the states will lose 'Mandi fees' or 'commissions' or 'revenues'. The second bill that was passed is the The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020. This bill provides contract farming. Farmers can enter into 'written agreements' with agri-business firms or large retailers on pre-agreed prices. The quality, standards and other legalities can be mentioned beforehand in the contract. In case the buyer tries to cheat the farmer, the written agreement will secure the farmer. Farmers can now enter into direct marketing by the removal of the intermediaries. This again will benefit farmers.

The farmer and the buyer can strike a deal even before the production begins. The amendment bill, The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2020, seeks to remove commodities like cereals, pulses, oilseeds, edible oils, onion and potatoes from the list of essential

commodities. Hence, ending the imposition of stock holding limits except in dire circumstances. The government can only impose stock limit if there is 100 % increase in price of perishable goods and 50 % increase in price of non-perishable goods.

The farm bills are expected to have a major impact on Indian agriculture and Agro-trade. They will accelerate growth and development and transform this sector. Technology and new age agriculture is the rode forward. Punjab and Haryana must make the transition from

their dependency on wheat and paddy to other forms of produce. This will protect the remains of the soil and return it to health as well as maintain the dangerously depleting water levels. These bills give farmers access to modern technology and are also beneficial for small and marginal farmers who own less than 5 hectors of land. The passing of these bills has been described as a 'watershed' moment and are overall advantageous for all farmers. The only roadblock now remains is for the farmers themselves to see and understand this.

# Propose the Opposition:

Farmers protest hinges on resistances to change than acceptance of reforms

## **AGAINST: Anushcka Joshi, XI**

Three months ago, when the Parliament was not in session, three ordinances contributing to the agrarian sector of India were introduced. One would imagine farmers to openly welcome reforms that offer them liberty and revenue, then why is there such a repercussion to the Farmer Reforms across the country? Are these agitations a result of opposition propagation, or is there a well justified cause as to why speculations are being made by farmers? Change is always difficult to accept and adapt to, which propels us to find excuses to avoid them. But the same cannot be said for Farmers, rather than fixation on resistance to change, there are abundant reasons as to why Farmers should be given the benefit of doubt when it comes to liberalizing agricultural prices with better price fulfillments.

Concerns have been raised observing incompatibility between small scale farmers and big companies, with the primary apprehension of guaranty and validity of procurement of crops under the 'Minimum Stock Price' (MSP). Farmers fear that with the decline of the APMC and 'Mundi' system, the MSP will come to a standstill. Farmers are afraid of the consequences of corporatization of the agricultural sector. Let's take a look at how Corporatization of the Agrarian Sector has affected countries around the world. Globally, it has been witnessed how farmers have been expelled from the agricultural market by the pricing policy of

corporations. Many Brazilian farmers are indebted to the American corporate giant Bunge. Liberalization may create opportunities for a free national, and even global market, but shift in prices by investors may normalize land grabbing withing the agricultural society. Land grabbing has particularly affected Africa and South America where small-scale farmers are mercilessly evicted from their lands, with the area being sold to private investors. Even in Colonial India, through commercialization of grains and agricultural products, the East India Company managed to exploit the Farmer community; The ruthless Zamindari system being introduced as a result. Unchecked corporate power and increasing political influence will lay a threat to the Farmer Society.

Yes, it is the manner of implementation of the Farmer reforms by the Government of India that will determine the success of these ordinances. Now, the onus is on the Government to negotiate with farmer needs. It is the duty of the Government to apprise all farmers for their effort, as there has been a lack to do so. The government could have explained to the farmers what their policies aimed at achieving, and this aspect is exactly where it must strengthen its core. In such unprecedented times, farmers have already suffered immensely and need that monetary support. They will be weary of change, but this does not imply that with amendments they will deny acceptance.

## FOR: Trinayana Saikia, XI

*“We are products of our past, but we don’t have to be prisoners of it.” - Rick Warren*

The world is analyzing statistics and economic data to figure out the recent passing of the three farm reform bills that has taken the country by storm. The three farm bills of 2020 are a much debated upon legislature, touted by most scholars and agricultural experts as reforms long awaited. This is an opinion piece in support of the reforms and the proposed argument. The reform bills passed by the Central Government has long been kept in the wish list of the previous Congress led government. For close to 17 years these bills have been argued and mulled over without any firm intent of implementing them. The Indian farmer has long been held prisoner by colonial policies that these bills intend to change. While the manner in which the bills were passed will most certainly be harped on by the Opposition, the reformative nature of this legislature is irrefutable. Yet, the opposition the Bill faces from the various Framers Unions is perhaps not unexpected considering the law intends to change the very fabric on which many powerful dominions have long baked their bread.

The real reasons behind the aggressive opposition of the farmers to these Bills and what makes them so dismissive of the efforts and the promises of the government lies in Punjab’s economic and educational rot. The anger directed towards the reforms also comes from the fact that the image of the wealthy farmer of Punjab has long since become moth eaten. The flashpoint between the agitating farmers and the Central Government is essentially rooted in the mismatch between the supply and demand for the wheat crop in India. The very first bill allows farmers to engage in trade of their agricultural produce outside the physical markets (Mandis) and to other states and help them gain financial independence. The bill gives a large beneficial leap to the farmers as it promotes barrier-free intra-state and inter-state trade of farmer’s produce. A reason for the resistance against Farmers’ Produce Trade and Commerce bill, is that the farmers may not be willing to step out of their comfort zones that they have enjoyed for the past 40 years. Change is constant as is opposition to it

no matter what the benefit and the logic. The second objection is against the Farmer’s (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act which allows farmers to do contract farming and market their produces freely. Here again, the bill is created to work in their favour. The mass anxiety amongst farmers is that major corporations will exploit the bill and rob them of their agricultural land. The Centre’s response to this concern is specific that the bill is designed to protect the farmer’s land and such fears are misplaced.

The third and last objection is against the Amendment of the Essential Commodities Act 1955. The amendment helps in the easy accessibility of essential commodities allowing farmers a wider range to market their produce.

Punjab and Haryana have been the seat of the Green Revolution and have fed the country for 40 years. It is necessary that the sons of the soil be reasoned with and shown that their betterment now lie in diversification to value added crops. The Mandis they trust is the ground of traders and the benefit thereon is reaped by others. The MSP that they are fighting for will benefit as they have previously, only a few large landowning farmers. Change is what they need not merely to sustain themselves but also for their prosperity.

India’s next decade will be determined by the acceptance of change and reforms or the forfeit of a future for an entire generation.

---

# Pressure

-Hrideek Choudhury, X

India is a country of the largest group of Middle Class. This stratum again has a melee of distinction. One common factor that binds them together are the aspirations they have of their children. This aspiration

pursues a life that comprises of a salaried job, a settled life lived out of a self-owned apartment which would have a self-owned mid-ranged vehicle

parked, preferably in a garage. These aspirations are neither new nor are they uncommon. They manifest themselves into gigantic pressure balloons that must then be borne by hapless progenies. Therein lies the crux of this discussion. The burden of marks that must be borne by an entire generation to aspire for goals, they never set.

2020 has been a year that will stay ingrained in human memory as one that forced society at large to rethink and reprocess their lives and the world around them. Smiles lay hidden behind masks and good will in distance. School remained closed and the digital platform now became the world we were to explore. To explore is to follow the endless. This comes in the form of opportunities that could be anything borne out of will and imagination.

The veer away from the demands of the ordinary and the discovery of new possibilities suggest an interesting time for all of us. The age of the Artificial Intelligence was a world of few even though the entire world stayed connected with it in some form or fashion. It is only now that the essence of it and the intricate ways it has seeped into our lives through our smart devices, that gives us a semblance of idea of its vast influence. Suddenly the world has left its axis and is now rotating around another! This new axis is called Coding and has become the new pursuit of parents, or most of those who keep their ears to the ground, to push their children into

this orbit. Instead of 'decoding' the basic idea if or not a child is interested or has the ability to learn this new concept, it is now a Must in the circle of ambition.

Board Examinations have taken on the proportions of Dooms Day. It is no longer important how much a student gets for it is a perquisite to get a minimum of 95% and above. The tenability of these marks, the ceaseless pressure it creates on students, the aspirations of families it tends to hold at stake, gives this all the shape and size of a reckless circus. Schools of credibility look at arming their students with the ability to think. The power to think inspires students to race with their imagination and the technology in their hands brings to them the world of the Jeff Bezons and the Mark Zuckerberg's. Yet the world of marks and the endless queue to higher education stymies these dreams making the real very different from the reel.

The 21st century must find within its folds find the capacity to secure a place for all. Parents must un-plan to re-plan on the basis of the multitude of opportunities their children can pursue without being subjected to a race most do not hold a chance to finish. This is a world build on imagination. Let us not see it through stunted vision.

What you see today could help us achieve what we wish to tomorrow. Marks cannot be the ladder to dreams. Our abilities must be the rope with which we build the bridge to our tomorrow.

## CAMPUS NEWS

The campus has taken a life of its own and the vibrancy in the air is palpable for after a gap of nine months due to the pandemic, the Campus opened on the 15th of December to welcome the Board Examines back. Despite working round the clock, every adult is wearing a smile for familiar faces, familiar sounds, familiar bells seem to chime and remind us, that the Aviator is home. The spirit of the season is now here and amidst the caution and the care, we look forward to celebrations too.

The AVS family has had the pleasure of welcoming to the fraternity Mr. Biswajit Baglary, Physical Education Teacher & Soccer Coach, Mr. Mukund Madhav Chandrachuda Shukla Teacher of Mathematics and Mr. Tapan Barui, Fine Art (Sculpture) Teacher. We wish the teachers long, happy and successful days at School.

# THE OUTPOST

Illustration: Ssara Jha

Farmer's protests continue to rumble at the borders of Delhi posing an ominous threat to Modi's popularity. Erdogan's ambition of establishing a Caliphate takes a beating as America sets sanctions against Turkey. The Nigerian rebel group Boko Haram claims responsibility of kidnapping over 300 students from a school rekindling horrors it inflicted three years ago. India celebrates the achievement of the Indian Armed Forces in the 49th Vijay Diwas. It commemorates the 13-day war against Pakistan in 1971 which saw the formation of Bangladesh. Post- 2nd World War it was the swiftest war to charter mass surrender and victory.



## the middle page #12

By: Tanisha Bhadra



# The Quarantine Readlist

Need help finding a gem amidst a sea of monotony? Grab a cup of coffee or tea and dive into the world of these enthralling stories, here is a list of some of our suggestions:

**A SISTER'S PROMISE BY SHELBY PERRY:** A historian, takes on a journey to find out the truth behind the unexplained disappearance of a legendary pirate nicknamed The Black Prince.

**TONY TAKITANI BY HARUKI MURAKAMI:** A short story about the lonely life of a father and a son, who had a lot in common despite never having a tight father-son relationship.

**RUNAWAY HORSES BY YUKIO MISHIMA:** A young, engaging patriot turns terrorist, organising a violent plot against the new industrialists, who he believes are threatening the integrity of Japan.

**THE SCARLET LETTER BY NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE:** Hester Prynne must wear a scarlet A as punishment for her adultery. Her lover remains unidentified and is wracked with guilt, while her husband seeks revenge.

## Ripple #147

-Moom Lego, XI

*He knew it would hurt  
When the rose thorns  
pricked through his skin  
But he still held on to  
her  
Forgiving all her flaws  
and her sins*

## Keep It Reel!

*In the wind*

-Dristi Rathi, XI

Editor-in-Chief: Jeremy Jahau

Deputy Editor: Letminlun Haokip

Associate Editor: Anoushka S. Rabha

Correspondents: Ojas, Lavanya, Ssara & Neelabh

Design & Layout: Moom Lego & Jeremy Jahau

Illustrator: Takhe Tamo Reela, Eloziini Senachena and Tanisha Bhadra

Photo Credit: Letminlun Haokip

Mistress-in-Charge: Ms. Sarmistha Paul Sarkar

Publisher: The Assam Valley School, P.O. Balipara, Dist. Sonitpur, Asom-784101, India

E-mail: ave@assamvalleyschool.com

Telephone: 09678074320/08812009627 Website: www.assamvalleyschool.com

Patron: Dr. Vidhukesh Vimal, The Headmaster of The Assam Valley School

The views expressed in articles are the authors' own and do not necessarily reflect those of AVE or its editorial policy.