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# GOOD BOOKS BAD SCREENS

- Aanya Paul Sarkar, XI

In a world where screens have become our ever-present companions, there's something almost rebellious about picking up a good book. "Good Books, Bad Screens" could be the anthem of our times, where literature battles the onslaught of endless Instagram scrolls and Netflix binges. Imagine a 1968 redux where hobbits, armed with nothing but their hairy feet and boundless courage, take on the mighty screens. Frodo might just whisper, "One does not simply binge-watch their way to Mordor." Yet, despite the enticing glow of screens, there's a certain magic that a book holds. The crack of a spine, the smell of ink on paper—it's a portal to worlds where hobbits roam and heroes are made. Books don't just tell stories; they create kindred spirits out of strangers.

Niall Ferguson, the historian often hailed for his sweeping narratives of the past, might chuckle at the idea of "Good Books, Bad Screens." People often think reading is only just about getting smarter when really it's all about getting lost. Feeling nostalgic for the Victorian era? Crack open a Charles Dickens novel, and you're there, complete with foggy London streets and an overabundance of orphans. Want to visit the

future? Sci-fi has you covered, with its alien invasions, dystopian societies, and robots that are disturbingly more charming than your classmates. All you really need is a comfortable chair and a willingness to suspend disbelief. Picture this: the year is 2004. But instead of protests and flower power, we have the hobbits go all the way to

Mordor to reclaim the lost art of reading. In this hypothetical adventure, Frodo might well carry "War and Peace" instead of the One Ring, using it to battle the forces of screen-induced lethargy. Gandalf, the white wizard, with a knowing wink, would say, "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us," which, frankly, should involve fewer memes and more meaningful pages. In this alternate universe, it may be suggested that the real revolution isn't televised but written, bound, and dust-jacketed. It might even be argued that the act of reading is the most defiant thing you can do in a world dominated by screens. After all, books require focus, patience, and imagination—qualities that scrolling through social media doesn't exactly cultivate. "Reading," after all, is the thinking person's Netflix. Now, don't get me wrong; screens aren't the root of all evil. They've given us cat videos, after all. But while screens can entertain, only books can truly educate. And History is best understood not through fleeting pixels but through the well-considered prose of those who lived it.

So, as we sit by a cozy fire in our own personal Shires called Toye Units, let's take a leaf from both Ferguson and Tolkien. Embrace the good book, let the bad screens be, and remember that the real adventure lies in the turning of a page, not the swiping of a screen. In the end, even hobbits knew that the best stories were the ones you could carry with you—preferably in hardback.

# insaniyat, jamhuriyat, kashmiriyat

-Tanveer Ahmed, XI

On 16th of September 2024, the three-phase elections for the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly will commence, as announced by the Election Commission of India. In 2019, the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian constitution saw Jammu and Kashmir become a Union Territory. Although local-level elections and the Lok Sabha Elections 2024 were held at J and K, September will see the assembly elections being held after a decade. While the valley has seen relative peace and calm, Jammu has seen more frequent bursts of terrorist actions. The new delimitation allocates more seats to the Jammu division and perhaps is the reason behind the recent terrorist actions in Jammu. While Pakistan remains a pariah state, the days of the assembly elections will see the desperate hand of the ISI to institutes out continued unrest in the region. Various parties such as the BJP and the Congress along with local parties such as NC are contesting the elections. The dregs of the past and dead terrorists in the name of martyrdom all promise to be a part of the election display in the valley. The Congress has joined hands with the Abdullahs in the hope of a favourable result. The popular slogan coined by the Vajpayee doctrine of 'Insaniyat, Jamhuriyat, Kashmiriyat' will be put to the test as the people of Jammu and Kashmir coin their votes in the hope of a healthier and happier state of affairs.

# The Great *BRITISH* Mayhem

- Khichu Khat, XI

Violent clashes have gripped parts of the UK in recent days as protests fuelled by anti-immigrant sentiment rage across communities. Fueled by online misinformation, the fatal stabbing on 29th July was followed by mass unrest among the citizens. Some stated that the suspect was an asylum seeker in the UK. Local police also arrested a 17-year-old male and false information circulated in social media that the suspect was an Islamist migrant which led to violent anti-Muslim protests. Many of those involved describe themselves as patriots who say that illegal and legal immigration is undermining British society. Far-right activists argue that immigration has fuelled and increased the rates of violence and crime while Human Rights groups claim it is simply not true. Amidst many protests happening all over England, there have also been anti-racist counter protests, in solidarity with immigrants and ethnic minorities that have been targeted in the last few days. While the riots in the wake of the Southport tragedy have largely died down, their impact is still being felt and the fissures in society stand out clearly. This can be put down to racism but the truth runs deeper. There is no doubt that immigrants from certain repressive societies have not been able to successfully settle within the liberal British society. The pro-immigration policies of the government do not address the fears of the middle-class English society which remains under the apprehension of being swallowed by a large immigrant population. The debate rages through England even as PM Keir Starmer finds himself at the center of the storm.

# THE PARALYMPICS.

*India*

-Dikshita Sharma, IX

The Paris Paralympics 2024 took place from the 28th of August to the 28th of September. The Indian contingent brought home a haul of 29 medals with 7 gold, 9 silver and 13 bronze. India competed across 12 disciplines, three more than the last Paralympics. Avani Lekhera, won a gold medal in shooting, making her the first Indian woman to secure two gold paralympic medals. Sumit

Antil, India's flag bearer and a world record holder for javelin throw brought home two astounding golds. Harvinder Singh brought home gold the first ever for India in Archery while Yogesh Kanthuniya secured his second consecutive medal in the Paralympics bringing home glory to the country. Sheetal Devi, stood out brilliantly as the first and only female Para-

Archer without arms, to win a gold. Hokato Hotozhe Sema of Nagaland won a Bronze in the Shotput event making the North-East proud. India's Paralympians

are a cult on their own and the kind of heroes who needs more songs and sagas to be sung in their honour.

# SOCIAL MEDIA

## BOON OR BANE?

- Dr. Navodita Pande, Department of Humanities

It all begins with the desire to revolt and find freedom. But as rightly put, Article 19 (1) of the Constitution of India discusses the six freedoms- one of which lies at the heart of finding your true voice and squeaking your own little opinion within the four walls of 'freedom'. Freedom of speech and expression is one of the fundamental rights which form the backbone of our Constitution.

In the era of social media, it becomes ever more important to become mindful and sensitive to others' feelings and sentiments before we decide what to post on social media. We all heard about the terror attack in France (2015) where Charlie Hebdo's office was assaulted by two French-born Algerian terrorists to protest against objectionable cartoons of Prophet Muhammad. They claimed to be members of Al-Qaeda. Similar allegations of 'sedition' were made on political cartoonist, Aseem Trivedi in 2012 due to his controversial works of art where he projected Ashok Chakra and the Indian Constitution in a negative light.

We should also not ignore the voices of dissent coming from the likes of Gauri Lankesh, noted activist and editor and Kanhaiya Kumar, a student leader-turned-politician. They came into limelight

for raising a voice against the draconian laws curbing visual representation, speech, or written word that causes or gives rise to 'hatred or contempt'; or work to incite anti-government feelings among citizens. Yet, these dissenters have started a trail of voices that give meaning to anguish felt by citizens against government laws and policies that limit freedom and free speech. Raising a voice against the government policies that may not suit citizens or lead to their welfare needs to be done with care and with utmost respect to the integrity and esteem of the national symbols and emblems.

On social media handles like X, LinkedIn or Facebook and Instagram, we are always careful about how the others might feel for what we write. While it becomes a potent tool for disagreement, expressing one's opinion, it also is a great tool to connect with people who are different from you and may belong to a different ideology or have a different way of thinking.

Respect for differences leads to diversity and a 'synthesis' of ideas arising from two opposing viewpoints rather than hatred or aggression. The sooner we realize this nature of social media, the better it is for us as social media users.

## *On The Streets of Kolkata.*

- Adya Rakshit, VIII

"What was she wearing?" This is what some people said after the RG Kar rape case in Kolkata. Three weeks after the case there are still protests going on. People across Kolkata are holding protest marches throughout the city. People have raised questions about the investigation in the crime and alleged cover-up and their demand for prompt justice for Abhaya has also given traction to the other pending cases against the Mamata Banerjee government. The reputation of the Kolkata

police has taken a beating charged with tampering of evidence and protecting the accused. People from all walks of life have begun to take the initiative to organise these rallies which happen around the clock despite the summer heat and brow-beating humidity. With the Supreme Court deferring the hearing of the case despite taking a Suo-moto cognizance and assuring a fast court trial, the Junior Doctors across the state have called for a mind night rally on the 8th of September.

# Campus Caricature

Bend it like  
Namdang

Illustrated by Mashunsing Keishing, X



## CAMPUS NEWS



### NATIONAL ROLL BALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Yoana Bansal of class 7 of The Assam Valley School, was part of a team of six students that represented the state of Assam at Under-14 Sub-Junior (Boy's and Girl's) National Roll Ball Championships 2024. The team won a gold in girl's category. Many Congratulations to the girls and their coach.

## CONFERENCE AND AWARD CEREMONY REPORT 2024

- Mr. A.S Huidrom, Head of Pastoral



On the eve of Teachers' Day, 4th September 2024, the Reading Torch organized its 1st National Level Conference and Award Ceremony at the prestigious India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The event celebrated the significant contributions of over 150 schools and educators, including The Assam Valley School, recognized as a "Progressive Reading School." This initiative by Reading Torch aims to identify the "Best Reader" while cultivating a deeper, structured reading culture across institutions. The ceremony highlighted the organization's mission to foster a consistent reading habit among students, encouraging educators to employ diverse strategies that not only enhance reading comprehension but also nurture a lifelong love for books. The forum was dedicated to exploring innovative approaches to building

a reading community, with a focus on creating curiosity among students to promote reading habits. The event saw prominent figures from various sectors sharing their insights on education and reading habits. Dr. Deepak Vohra, former Ambassador to Poland and Special Adviser to the Prime Minister of India on Africa, spoke on the topic of "India in 2047." The Assam Valley School was honored with a

certificate and trophy for its progressive efforts in fostering a reading culture, received by Mr. Huidrom on behalf of Headmaster Dr. Amit Jugran. The recognition is a testament to the collaborative efforts of students, parents, teachers, and well-wishers of the school to promote reading as a core value. Congratulations to all the stakeholders of The Assam Valley School for this significant achievement!

## MEDAL OF HONOR

We are thrilled to announce that one of our teachers, Dr. Navodita Pande of the Department of Humanities, has successfully completed her doctoral degree in Economics from the Swiss School of Business and Management, Geneva securing 91%. The topic of her doctorate was 'The effect of taxation on economic development of India'. Her findings indicated that the focus of the budget was mainly on development and not entirely on welfare and very little was discussed about taxation and public expenditure.



## GIFT OF LIFE

Ahsash Agarwal, ISC Batch 2024, has founded an NGO called 'Gift Life'. Along with Urvee Rathi, Spriha Kashyap, Nazifa Noorine and Aarini Mukhlania as its core members, the NGO has taken an impactful step towards spreading awareness on organ donation. Team Gift Life has successfully completed 4 awareness drive campaigns and has impacted more than 500 people offline, and 650 people online. Gift Life has worked with some of the finest NGOs such as the PATHIK and The Lions Club, Guwahati. We wish Ahsash Agarwal and Team Gift Life the very best in their future endeavours.



# THE OUTPOST

India brought home a staggering 29 medals from the Paris Paralympics, 2024 a finer show than the previous game. With a budget that is one tenth of the regular Olympics contingent, the Paralympians are a lesson to Indians across the country about what grit and determination will get us. Olympic wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia join the Congress on the eve of the Haryana Legislative elections giving it a new twist. Kolkata remains in a turmoil with the civil society protesting against the Mamata Government which shows very little remorse and no intention of stepping down from power.



Illustrated by Kavya Goel, XI

## Ripple #233

- Jentina Yaomei Shangkhu, XI

*The young detective flipped through the file  
on his desk.*

*A case of a missing child lost for 30 years.*

*It should have been his first.*

*The complaint had died.*

*The case could be forgotten.*

*As he combed through the details,*

*The description and photo seemed familiar.*

*He drew closer and saw the child's face.*

*It was him.*

## Tongue Of Slip!!

1. "Disaster in the landing of the moon" - Mr. Bijan Panigrahi (Chandrayaan 2.)
2. "Guys am I Tang?" - Swastika Baruah, XI (No, you're Fanta.)
3. "Share me the tea." - Rajkumari Anya Devi, X (You bring the cake.)
4. "He can sing the Tabla also"- Sreestee Paul, VIII (Vocalist of the year.)
5. "I've read 1 page with 800 books" - Aahil Faraz, VII (Don't be caught near the library!)

## Keep It Reel!

*Goal*

- Immanuel Issac Paramata, IX



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