

ALL IN FAVOUR

-Ngukivi Chishi, XII

Come the 19th of May 2019, the last vote of the great Indian General Elections would have been cast and in the following few days', President Kovind will invite the new leader of the country to form the newly elected Government of India. Whether he will be inviting a former colleague from the Saffron Brigade or somebody else, is by far, the most popular topic of speculation in the country at the moment. Predicting the result of the polls is akin to a round of

considering the holds the toxic mix and religion. Despite being the world's largest electorate, we boast of having one of the best percentages of voter turnout fighting the constant threat of proxy voting. The saffron tide since 2014 seems to have hit a rough patch as the popularity of Prime Minister Modi and the BJP leadership has eroded and they are left without their arguments criticizing

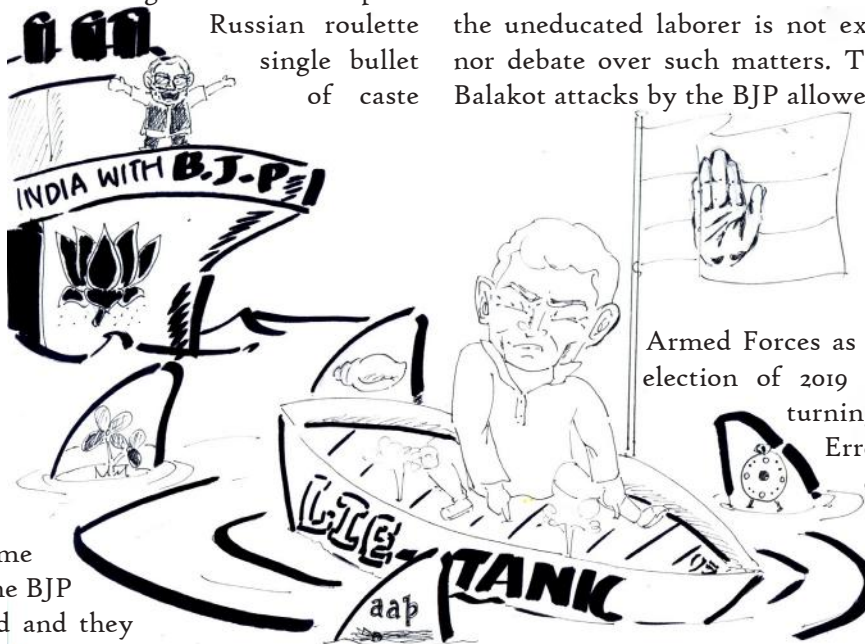
the incumbent UPA Government. A ploy that was pivotal in securing the support of the pragmatic voters seeking a fresh perspective and a change in leadership when they swept the polls five years back. This advantage now seems to rest in the hands of the Congress Party and its allies as the BJP Government stands caught in the crossfire of policies it has introduced in the last five years ranging from the GST, the implementation of demonitisation and the Rafale deal, which the Congress President Rahul Gandhi cannot seem to get enough of. Despite a series of controversial moves on the part of the BJP, the Opposition has failed to optimize on it by coming up with a common manifesto. The introduction of Priyanka Gandhi Wadhwa as a candidate seems to be

Congress's 'do or die' move to garner a vote bank in the all-important Uttar Pradesh elections. A more pressing factor, however, is the astonishingly unchecked growth of communal politics and violence in the country that somehow, in all his animated rallies and publicized 'mann ki baat's, the Prime Minister has managed to maintain his extraordinary silence on. What works out brilliantly for the NDA is the fact that the common farmer or the uneducated laborer is not expected to understand nor debate over such matters. The politicizing of the Balakot attacks by the BJP allowed it a diversion from

incumbent affairs that the Opposition failed to prevent with BJP leaders like Yogi Adityanath referring to the Armed Forces as "Modi ki Sena". The election of 2019 seems to be swiftly turning into a 'Comedy of Errors' as the twenty one odd Party coalition or Mahagathbandhan with only the slogan 'Modi hatao desh bachao' between them, as they eye

the 'Iron Throne'. A fight of hyenas brew between possible Prime Ministerial Candidates long before the last vote has been cast. The BJP gears itself to a possible return and bets are laid as far as the casinos of Las Vegas to the number of seats it can claim, the Opposition sits reticent lending chorus to violence in Bengal and religious chant everywhere else.

The stage has been set and the wheels of a democratic juggernaut put into motion. The nation readies itself to witness the making of yet another government that may serve itself more than the people of this country. The election this season has been about the Congress serving the needs of one family, while the BJP bent to the biddings of one man.



Illustrator: Takhe Tamo Reela

To Be Continued...

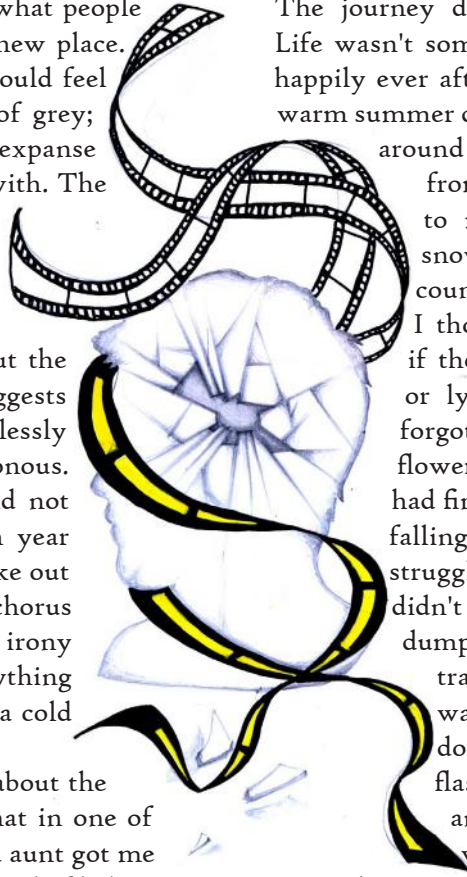
-Letminlun Haokip, XI

Butterflies and excitement. That's what people say you feel when you move to a new place. I, for one, felt none of that. All I could feel was dread and a very dark shade of grey; which was a sentiment the endless expanse of wet asphalt did nothing to help with. The sky, much like the road, wrapped itself in a blanket of similar colours. It wept as the car drove by pine trees and green shrubs in a flash of trailing red. I stared listlessly out the window, as every pitiful movie suggests you do. Raindrops splattered mercilessly against the car, off beat and monotonous. I let out a tired sigh, which should not have been warranted for a sixteen year old boy to make. I could faintly make out Liam Gallagher's voice singing the chorus to 'Live Forever' on the radio. The irony made me crack a faint smile. Everything looked sort of pretty, I suppose; in a cold and wet sort of way.

'It's not about the destination, it's about the journey'. I'd read something like that in one of the self-help books my self-obsessed aunt got me a couple of summers back. What a load of baloney.

The journey didn't matter nor did the destination. Life wasn't some bedtime story where everyone lived happily ever after. Life was a joke. Random flashes of warm summer days spent dealing cocaine and tip toeing around a bikers gang a couple of blocks down from the neighbourhood church came to mind; intermingling like mud in the snow with scenes of cold tiles, countless counseling sessions, and sunless evenings. I thought of Max and Will and wondered if they were still in that godforsaken place or lying dead somewhere in a ditch long forgotten. I was leaning towards the latter, flowers didn't usually last very long. The rain had finally simmered down into a soft drizzle, falling like teardrops from heaven. I didn't struggle when they dragged me out of the car. I didn't fight back when they unceremoniously dumped me on the wet dirt, like the pile of trash I was. I was as compliant as a dog wagging his tail for a treat. As I faced down the barrel of the gun, my entire life flashed before my eyes in a reel devoid of any colour and I let out a loud cackle. Life was a joke.

Everything was one seamless continuous joke.



The Secrets We Learn

-Anoushka Rabha, XI

When Pandora's box was opened and all the world's evils had left the box, only one thing remained : hope.

Faith for human beings became a way to hold on to that hope. Religion is a proposed way of life. The problem is when it becomes life itself.

Hinduism doesn't have dogmas. It's too vast a religion to have any. Religion is personal. It is vital that it keeps pace with changing times.

The Hindu pantheon of gods is dominated by the Trimurti - Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar.

Yet it also celebrates close to 330 million gods; a god meant for every mood and every problem where each is uniquely different from the other, the only commonality being their ability to help sooth mortal souls. Along with the Devas (gods) there are also a whole host of demons not necessarily bad and do

not project a Devil-like character nor is there a concept of 'evil'.

For Hindus, the temple is as important as the deity within. The deity gives meaning to the temple; if the deity did not exist, the devotees would not go to the temple. If the temples did not exist nor would the magnificent archways, embellished walls, decorated roofs or fluttering flags and the devotees would not know where to look for their god.

Interestingly this would have had an impact on commerce art and culture too for each grew and evolved around temple towns and the gods became more than just the source of piety. Thus, the temple and the deity within validate each other. The temple is the body and the deity, its soul.



A Hindu deity may just be a rock in a cave, a tree growing in an orchard, a river flowing down the plains, a cow wandering in the street or perhaps an elaborately decorated idol of stone, clay or metal enshrined in a temple. Anything can be God. So long as it can respond to the human condition. In many shrines, deities are given human form merely by placing a pair of eyes and a pair of hands on a rock. Eyes represent sense organs and hands represent action organs. This indicates the deity is conscious sensitive and responsive.

God creates the world as Brahma, sustains it as Vishnu and destroys it as Shiva. A comparison of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata shows that though both seek to establish order in the world, they are clearly responses to different needs. The Ramayana is about compliance while the Mahabharata seeks revolution.

Seasons come and go. Cultures rise and fall. Values change. Standards change. Worldly truths seem conditional, relative to space, time and opinions of people.

THE PAST DIES WITH US

-Sieyina Meru, XII

The trees seemed to sing as the rain descended and subsided the stifling heat. She watched people walk by unaware of her presence. She didn't exist in their eyes. She refused to listen when well wishers warned, "There's no point living in the past." Somehow the past kept her anchored to the world she had left behind. She spent her time idly going to all the vintage music stores, thrift shops and parks in the neighbourhood. However the one place she longed to go was the house painted yellow with lilies growing in the front porch.

She walked up to the front door unsure of what to expect. The old age home had a visiting area and she waited for the woman with the wispy white hair to sit in her usual spot. The old lady entered the hallway walking at a pace that felt excruciatingly slow before sitting down beside her.

She smiled as kindly as she could but she understood from the look in the old lady's eyes that she wouldn't recognize anyone and Mari wasn't the most visible of people. Her memory was slowly fading away and her death was closer than one would expect.

The two of them were returning home. It appeared as though the sidewalk they were walking on was taking them further away from the last thread of happiness. The cramped apartment they

lived in lay in chaos. They picked their way around heaps of cassettes and stacks of paper scattered around their room. The civil war had demolished much of the city and the people had not been spared either. The prices of the commodities rose and people began to flee the country in a desperate bid to beat the overwhelming inflation. The elderly had been left behind by families who couldn't afford to take them along.

Her father came home earlier than he usually did that evening sporting a gaunt look the dark circles etched deeper around his ghost like eyes. They ate dinner comprising of bread and soup in complete silence. Her father broke the monotony by placing two tiny white tablets on the table and said, "Take these before you go to bed. Diseases are rift around this part of town." Mari woke up the next day to find her home empty of the people that had once occupied it. She had been left behind like the hundreds on the streets.

Mari walked up to the bed that her sister lay in, aged and wrinkled. She's wept as the yester years clouded her vision, the pain of the abandonment and the emptiness of death that followed. Her sister was fading unable to return to health and so Mari sat beside her patiently waiting to accompany her to a world she now belonged to. The radio beside the bed softly played a Beatles number,

"There will be an answer, let it be. Let it be. Whisper words of wisdom, let it be."



Illustrator: Moom Lego

And It Dawns

-Nizovino Meyase, XI

Photographer: Letminlun Haokip

Here comes the dusk,
I've done it another day,
Put on my mask,
One that does not make me look like clay.

My eyes are wide,
The walls are bare.
A teardrop slide
My body broken beyond repair.

Soon the alarm blares,
Gone are the stars.
I wake up with a glare;
Its time, yet again, to cover up my scars.

The sunlight slowly seeps in.
I desperately rub my eyes
To wipe away the remnants of my sin
And hide the person the world continuously denies.

THE OUTPOST

Illustrator: Eloziini Senachena



A three-year-old was brutally raped in J&K, making us question humanity even as the country entered its sixth phase of the elections. Meanwhile, the privileged Indians celebrated the victory of Mumbai Indians as the Ambani owned franchise lifted the trophy for the fourth time. Game of Thrones in its final season had a major glitch as it showcased a Starbucks cup, sending a wave of conspiracy theories across Twitter as Starbucks gained a whopping 2.3 billion from this 'free advertisement'. The uniqueness of the Met gala was proven as celebrities graced the carpet in macabre chandeliers to Disney princesses.

EXTENDED CUT

- Jirmin Toko, XII



Ripple #101

-Sempisang Toy, XII

'A man's best friend,'
they called him.
As he sat by the door
his ears straining to
catch the familiar slow
footsteps.
He Drank away his life
on the lonely winter
night,
Unfeeling to the love
he had squandered
away.

Tongue of Slip!!

1. Let's go to the basketball field - Dikshita Bhuyan, X (*You deserve a court marshall.*)
2. Every people came to look at me - Bornam Bora, X (*I'm sure everyone agrees.*)
3. I'm writing cafe checks - Moom Lego, X (*I see a future fraud.*)
4. You wanna me? - Sieyina Meru, XII (*No thanks, we'll pass.*)
5. She spoke a twist of tongue - Karun Thapa, X (*What a twister.*)

Keep It Reel!

Sky Song

-Letminlun Haokip, XI

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