

FOREIGN ISSUES

- Mr. Thajeb Ali Hazarika

If the fundamental question of one's existence is identity, its challenge and vulnerability has triggered off a series of panic and often violent responses from anomic destruction to mob fury in India's rising eastern part called the North-East. There is an inbuilt sense of paranoia, a deep and intrinsic distrust to the possibility of being in assimilation with the national mainstream and the suspicious outsider (foreigner).

The wanton rampage unleashed by groups in Arunachal Pradesh is indicative of the

insecurities laden with identity politics. The old fissures of chauvinism by the states of the plains bossing over the hill states has shown that lessons of the past have not resulted in any sort of understanding, amity or peaceful

co-existence. The hill states need an adequate constitutional shield so that their identity, language, culture, resources and life chances are secure. There are safeguards inbuilt in the Constitution and even measures to prevent the illegal entry of outsiders with the Inner Line Permit (ILP) firmly in place. The focus is to understand how far the economy is impacting the local population and accelerating their economic growth and welfare. The entry of illegal migrants has been a major issue in this region with employment opportunities, menial and even semi-skilled jobs literally usurped by outsiders.

The violent outburst of the people is an expression of the volatile and aggressive 'son of the soil' theory at work.

After the end of a 48-hour bandh called by several organizations on the 22nd of February, 2019 against the Joint High Powered Committee (JPHC) constituted by the state government on May, 1, 2018 to grant Permanent Residence Certificates (PRCs) to six non-native non Arunachal Pradesh Scheduled Tribe communities, namely Deoris, Sonowal

Kacharis, Morans, Adivasis, Misings and Gorkhas in Namsai and Changlang districts.

The apparent trust deficit became starkly evident after

rampant violence and mob fury became the order of the day with loss of public property, vehicles and damage to commercial

establishments. The protestors torched the residence of the Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein and even attempted to damage the private bungalow of Chief Minister Pema Khandu in Itanagar.

There were media reports that the Chief Minister had to seek refuge in the Raj Bhavan. Along with the state capital Itanagar, other towns like Naharlagun, Nirjuli reeled under mob violence spiraling out of bounds with crowds resorting to indiscriminate stone pelting on police and army vehicles. Commercial complexes owned by BJP leaders were attacked including Takar Complex owned by Forest



Illustration: Takhe Tamo Reela

Minister and senior party leader Nabam Rebia who led the JPHC. The State Government was shaken awake out of its stupor and agreed to drop the PRC proposal.

The ruling party had been quick to accuse the opposition Congress of inciting violence. Competitive politics using the mob to damage property is fast catching up in this state. Prior consultation with civil society groups and the public could have prevented such a turn of events. The state gave a mandate to the saffron party for

progress and what the BJP would now do well is to introspect how far the issue of safeguarding the interest of the 'son of the soil' is desirable and step back from riding rough shod over regional aspirations. New Delhi needs to have a panoramic instead of a zoom lens so that the trust deficit plaguing the government and the people is bridged. Till such times when political sagacity, wisdom and foresight is visible, the simmering discontent and the live wire issue of identity, will be lying dormant with the ominous potential intact.

In Conversation

Ms. Bano Haralu, a pioneering TV Journalist who has worked with the Doordarshan and the NDTV for over a decade, was on campus as the Keynote Speaker for the first-ever Intra School Round Square Conference. She spearheaded the Amur Falcon Conservation programme in Nagaland and was presented with the highest civilian award for women in India, the 'Nari Shakti Award' by the President. She is presently the Editor-in-Chief of an English daily, Nagaland Today. AVE caught up with her for a quick conversation.

AVE: Your work towards the conservation of the Amur Falcon is unparalleled. Could you tell us a little about your journey so far?

Ms. Haralu: It has been almost seven years since I last witnessed the massacre of the Amur Falcons. Though the situation in Nagaland has drastically improved, people must now attempt to conserve other species as well. Profit making was initially a challenge to the prospects of conservation because the hunters who had now become conversationalists were no longer earning the extra money they once did. The Pangti village is now slowly seeing a trickle of tourists where guides and home stay facilities directly benefit the villagers. We are still appealing to the community to conserve the environment without the hassle of legalities.

AVE : What challenges does the running of a daily entail?

Ms. Haralu : The challenges of running a daily newspaper would most certainly be the news source which we are constantly worried about. It has to be correct and we have to make sure that the news we are reporting does not have any major events missing. Although there are stories everywhere



waiting to be told, as a newspaper we must represent the need of the society in all spheres.

AVE : What did you emphasize on most when you were working as a journalist?

Ms. Haralu : I have been very lucky to be able to represent the North-East and to be able to convey what the region is all about. I have been able to emphasise upon things that are constantly overlooked like the issue of the region lacking policies to safeguarding the biodiversity or the issue of migration where the conflict with resources originates. Environmental problems are much more political than we realize and I have been given an opportunity to show the rest of India the extraordinary beauty which lies in the region.

AVE: What do you think the North East can teach the rest of the country in terms of conservation?

Ms. Haralu : We live in a region where we have ample amount of rich resources and we must learn to retain and preserve the environment. We shouldn't be swayed by the concept of economic development because people don't realize that the building of roads, bridges etc lead to environmental degradation. The basics of society are met when you have a home, some poultry, and access to clean water to drink and air to breathe. The North-East should be able to show an alternative progress.

AVE, Saturday, 2nd March

CAMPUS NEWS

-Sieyina Meru, Deputy Editor

The first ever Intra School Round Square Conference was held at The Assam Valley School from the 22nd to the 24th of February, 2019. Under the aegis of the Round Square Committee at School led by the teacher representative, Dr. Pooja Jain Benjamin, Dr. Hemashree Deka and the RS Chairperson Sempiseng Toy, the Conference was designed to give the School community an opportunity to live and experience the ideals of Round Square. The event began with a speech by Ms. Bano Haralu, a pioneering and award winning Conservationist and TV Journalist as the Keynote Speaker of the event. Ms. Haralu highlighted the importance of sharing resources through an activity and proceeded to talk of her personal journey towards the conservation of the Amur Falcons in Nagaland. She accentuated on the importance of working with the local communities and the perspective people have on environment. She ended her speech with the documentary 'The Race to Save the Amur Falcons'. A student driven event, the Conference with the theme 'Towards a Greener Service', was spread over four sessions and the Barazza groups were named after various endangered species. The first session witnessed the Barazza leaders discuss the concept of Round Square and the endangered

species they were named after. The session ended with ice breaking activities. The second session saw the Barazzas take part in outdoor activities planned around the theme of the Conference. Saplings were planted across the campus and an audit was undertaken on the green cover at School where students catalogued the many different species of plants that dot the estate. Groups also worked on the compost pits and a nature walk was organised where the groups learnt the names of the trees, plants and flowers around the campus. The activity that stood out the most was the treasure hunt where the students could be seen running around the campus in a desperate bid to win the prize. The third session of the Barazzas revolved around the theme of recycle and reuse where students created handmade note pads and envelopes from paper amongst others. The last session of the Barazzas saw them bent over a giant collage on the theme of the Conference and prepare for the cultural evening for the closing ceremony at the end of the day. The Conference came to an end with an eclectic mix of performances and speeches. The success of the Intra School RS Conference is symbolic of the zest that good student leadership can enthuse and promises to inspire other similar events around School in the near future.





NAMDANG HOUSE

-Jagrit Kasera, House Captain

The beginning of the millennia marked the birth of Namdang House in The Assam Valley School; a House that would eventually stand out with its own set of unique qualities. Popularly known as the 'House of Spartans', Namdang had a humble beginning with only 26 students living under its roof. Nineteen years later, the House has grown not only in numbers but also in all spheres of School life.

Being the youngest boys' House in the history of AVS, we make up for our lack of experience with our determination, pride and hard work in every task that we set out to accomplish.

We strive to instill the pursuit of excellence in all our young Spartans by providing the foundation to build their character and take a step closer to their ideals.

The House motto, "Dare to Excel" stands to signify our courage and spirit that are clearly seen in times of difficulty where we learn to take a fall with dignity even as we teach ourselves to stand up with renewed strength. This has been taught to us by our predecessors

who have made Namdang a recurring recipient of the prestigious R.B. Magor Trophy.

We call ourselves Spartans as we aim to become an embodiment of strength, discipline and restraint. We encourage austerity, simplicity and prudence as key principles in the House.

A good relationship between junior and senior boys is of paramount importance. The sharing of each other's successes and disappointments with a good sense of humour are prominent features of House-life.

All boys are encouraged to discover new talents, take pride in them and use those skills to make a valuable contribution to the spirit of the House and more importantly, the School.

It has been with perseverance and focus that the House has garnered the respect and recognition it enjoys in School today. Over years it has shaped boys into men and helped them evolve into gentlemen who give back to society. Namdang as a House continues to grow in leaps and bounds and like its athletes who own the greens, may the 'Spartan' continue to rule.

New Kid on the Block;

MASTERS OF THE TRADE

- Nambam Ryan Ingrai, House Prefect

“There are some people that look for a beautiful place while others, make a place, beautiful.”

In this House, the hand that rocks the cradle lies not with a single person but with many hands that make work light. At the helm of affairs, are the two House-Masters, Mr. Daljeet Singh and Mr. Arvind Benjamin, who look after the Upper and the Lower Houses respectively.

Recently appointed as the House-Master for the Senior House, Mr. Daljeet Singh is relatively new to the Namdang family. He has served as an NCC Officer (Air Wing) in 3 CG Air Squadron, Raipur since 2010. Within a short while, Mr. Daljeet has made a huge impact in the overall functioning of the House with his charismatic personality. As HouseMaster, his primary goal has been to inculcate values that help boys in his care to become responsible citizens of tomorrow.

A House is shaped by the seniors who groom it. The Batch of 2020 is marked by their fierce spirit of sportsmanship in the greens while pursuing cultural affairs. They seek to encourage amongst

the boys the joy of camaraderie as they learn and grow together.

The goal is not to yearn after accolades but to build real strength, fortitude and the spirit of brotherhood amongst the Aviators wearing yellow.

The cherished House Captain of Namdang, Jagrit Kasera, is a young leader who leads by example. An avid cricketer, he is looked up to by his juniors and held in high regard by his comrades and teachers.

The Captain and his close aides, House Prefects Rabden Pempahishey and Nambam Ryan Ingrai, are the industrious trio who shoulder the responsibility of the House. While the Captain stands first amongst the equals, it is the entirety of the Batch that acts as the powerhouse which churns the ‘Spartan’ forward.

The spirit of the House they forge together, is the spirit that binds the boys into a close knit family and makes Namdang, a House to reckon with.

Far From Sparta

-Sayan Nag, ISC Batch of 2016-17

I came to The Assam Valley School in class XI, already having reached that juncture in life where every opinion is clouded by a bias. Having only tasted missionary day school in the past, the concept of boarding houses seemed like a utopian, bourgeois indulgence. I saw young men in identical yellow shirts form queues before meal times. The futility of the process amused me as I tried to empathize with this unsuspecting, institutionalized lot. As I saw it, the world had been presented to them like a globe, in a smooth symmetry without any mutations while I on the other hand had had the privilege of encountering a much cruder version. Yet, when I met my House Captain Murongpang Imsong (Apang), I saw in his demeanor, that assertion of character that comes with the burden of duty. Neither my anger nor laughter had ever

possessed the conviction that his eyes bore as he wished me; a conviction that came with belief. When he led grace before dinner that night, I, an ardent atheist, mumbled along. As the rest of us prayed with our eyes shut, his gaze steadily tracked the flock like a watchdog's; his sonorous monotone lent a sense of security to the otherwise unsettling wind. On my first encounter with my seniors, I committed the unpardonable folly of pronouncing Botany as b-o-t-e-n-y and Zoology as zoo-lo-zy. The same Apang whose face looked brittle enough to break if he smiled, whose collar was buttoned in the morning, now sat bare bodied, devoid of all poise and sobriety, lampooning me for hours. Those two mispronounced words eventually led to a kind of camaraderie that can only be reproduced in art through mimesis, for, in life I doubt if my

feelings shall ever possess the same authenticity. In the autumn of 2014, I felt Namdang gradually seep into me while I simultaneously left a piece of myself in each of its nooks and crannies. The Yellow engulfed me at a time when the mind was still enticed by ideas of revolution and had not been defiled by the leakage of middle-aged nihilistic tendencies. We were a close knit community, smaller than others, segregated by age along with other socio-cultural, politico-economic factors. In a world sprawled across hundreds of acres of lush green, we chose to identify with the 'Spartan'. Like all great institutions, there was a moral code we abided by. One which had initially destabilized all that I stood for. One which compelled me into a teary-eyed apology when I was caught chewing gum. I wasn't so much sorry for chewing it as I was for getting caught.

On a hindsight, I cherish the memory, for I haven't shed tears since, even though the crimes have been graver. My seniors graduated the next year, leaving in me a sense of loss, an emotion, earstwhile foreign to me. At the beginning of the new semester I was

called upon to cater to a Class V boy, Abhiuday Bhalla, who had been crying rivers and was palpitating by the time I got to him. As I knelt down before the anxious 11-year-old, trying to pull his apprehensions with the false assurance that his parents would be back from Kashmir on the morrow, I realized how deep solidarity had been inculcated in us. Namdang took me in as a disillusioned, anti-establishment, radical idealist and sent out to the world, a realist. I was able to put Bhalla to bed that night, irrespective of the means used. In those time tested corridors, one is let in on a horde of secrets, which mold and alter perspectives forever.

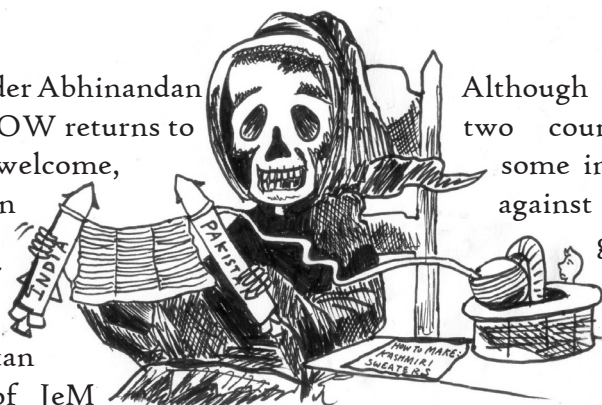
There are legends born in Namdang, passed on through oral traditions and Boards of Honour. It is in the making of legends that norms are broken, the rules tweaked and the end seems to justify the means.

What transpires within those walls can never be explained in entirety and hence the dynamics between the boys are simply celebrated. Amidst acres of the vast garden, we had chosen our abode, our kin and donned the Yellow with pride.



THE OUTPOST

Even as Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman, the brave POW returns to his country waiting in welcome, the staring game between India and Pakistan continues, to see if Imran Khan blinks first. While Pakistan admits the presence of JeM Chief Masod Azhar on its soil, the buzz around the governments next move grows.



Although tensions between the two countries de-escalates and some in the intelligentsia warns against jingoism, the fever that gripped the country post Phulwama, continues to rage.

Even though the Green Book gets the Oscars it is the 16th Lok Sabha Elections which remain the most anticipated.

BADMINTON

1st: Bhoroli-Lohit
2nd: Jinari-Manas
Kopili-Dhansiri
3rd: Subansiri-Namdang

ARCHERY

1st: Jinari-Manas
2nd: Bhoroli-Lohit
3rd: Subansiri-Namdang
4th: Kopili-Dhansiri

THIS IS SPARTA

-Jirmin Toko, XII



Ripple #96

-Jeremy Jahau

Broken bird fallen from
sky
Through troubled borders
returned by
Welcoming salutes, no
goodbye
An Air Marshal's relieved
sigh

Tongue of Slip!!

1. Is she going AVE? - Aishwarya Saikia, XII (*Atleast she's going places.*)
2. I won you. - Tarana Lama, XII (*Now you've lost it.*)
3. The sky on the bird - Prakriti Sharma, X (*Poor Chicken Little.*)
4. A guest in the Gorilla - Akansha Baruah, XII (*What are you, bananas?*)
5. It is hims pen - Arhata Saikia, XII (*These are your words?*)
6. Tomorrow is said tomorrow. - Yayum Toko, XII (*See ya' then.*)

Keep It Reel!

The Blue Blur

-Himangshu Baruah, XII



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