

# Infected

-Jeremy Jahau, XII

2020 has been, to date, more or less 'smashing.' The year started off with the possibility of World War 3 with the Iranian General Soleimani shown the exit by the Americans. This while the embers of CAA continued to burn in India. Come February and all is quiet except for the small news about a virus outbreak in the Wuhan district of China that allegedly had the potential to wipe out the entire human race called the 'Coronavirus' or COVID-19. So, needless to say, we are all doomed.

But if we were to stop for a second and not jump to conclusions by seeing the news and if we do a bit of our own research, we would see that this situation was not as bad as CNN would have us believe it to be. Within the country and without.

Coronavirus can be considered to be the bigger, tougher older brother of the common flu. It alone does not do much to be considered the Jeffrey Dahmer of viruses but what is scary is the fact that it leaves a backdoor open for potentially more lethal viruses into your system. It is therefore a cause of serious concern but is the amount of hysterics drummed up by the media, really justified?

The outbreak is currently still relatively in its early stages. The human populace stands at a current seven billion people alive on the planet and as of the World Health Organisation (WHO) report on the 4th of March, there are ninety-three thousand cases at the global standpoint. India with a 1.3 billion populous only has six confirmed cases of the dreaded COVID-19. Despite the relatively small numbers, the world sees a shortage of cloth masks and some places have even

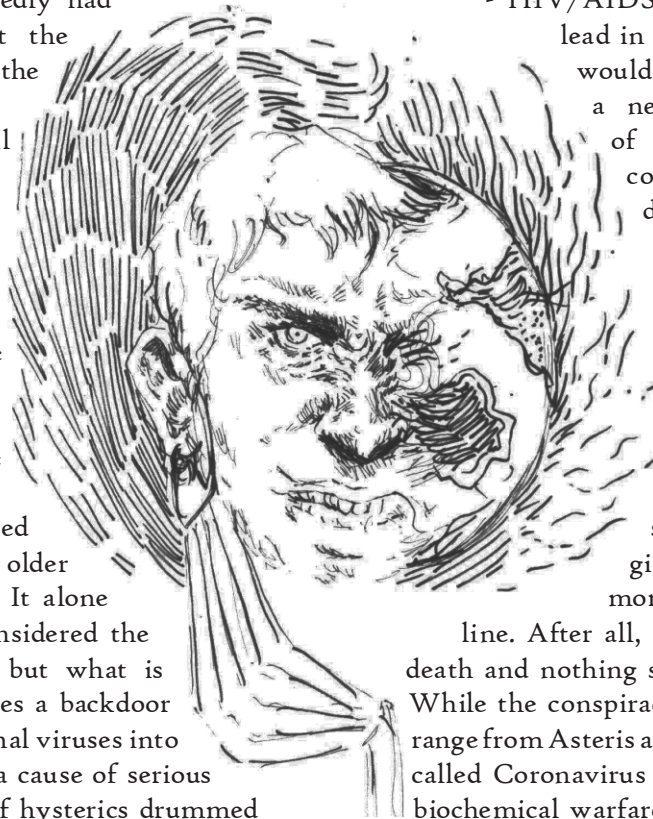
started stockpiling supplies in the dread of a world-wide apocalypse-like scenario.

Take into consideration another disease which is deadlier, incurable and has been with us for a longer timeframe having affected close to thirty-eight million people world-wide according to the 2018 WHO report

- HIV/AIDS. Despite the apparent drastic lead in numbers, the common civilian would rather buy a mask to prevent a new disease that effects tens of thousands rather than use contraceptives to prevent another disease that effectively kills millions.

COVID-19 or the Coronavirus is being treated like the 21st Century's version of The Black Death. With the spotlight pinned on it one may tend to overlook the fact that this may well be a strategic opportunity for the giant Pharmaceuticals to make more than just a dollar on the side-

line. After all, nothing scares like the fear of death and nothing sells than the prevention of it. While the conspiracy theories hovering around it range from Asteris and Obelix featuring a charioteer called Coronavirus to the possibility of it being a biochemical warfare, there is no denying the fear that looms because of it. While we take precautions to ward off that sneeze, we must realise that the human race has fought off much larger and deadlier viruses like the SARS which had a far greater fatality rate. What the Coronavirus poses to us is a larger warning drawn out of climate change that will bring forth diseases we believe long gone. Under the present political unrest with possible nuclear warfare, there are many more pressing matters that must be focused upon than merely steering clear of an Asian looking person with a cough.



Illustrator: Lydia Timungpi

# Tip Off

-Sampada Malpani, X

Alisa was a ninth grader in a reputed school in Finland. She was sweet, nice and completely normal until she started seeing things that she was not supposed to.

Alisa lived fourteen years of her life peacefully. She had friends, was good in school, participated in almost everything and was extremely friendly and helpful. As soon as Alisa turned fifteen, she started to notice changes in herself. She could see people's past, present and future.

It felt unreal. She began to distance herself from her friends and her relations with everyone she knew began to change. She began to see counsellors and doctors hoping for a cure. But the powers she felt within herself seemed to destroy her world outside.

She could not understand what was happening to her nor could she rationalise the kaleidoscopic images that would run in her head the moment she happened to touch someone. She wanted to know how she was able to sense another person's emotions, intensions and their true self with just a single touch.

She had tried to help people with her psychic abilities. Yet she felt herself slip into a dark hole of depression from where she could find no escape.

Alisa began to converse with imaginary people she

conjured up in her head. A world as real as the one she lived in. The only difference being that she did not have to explain herself in this one. She could be who she was burdened with what she saw. There were days when she looked at her mirror and wished she could climb in and out of it to mirror worlds where her life was a little more normal than it actually was. Her favourite spot in the world lay in a quiet corner of a park under a large Chinar. She was reading a book fleeting in and out of her thoughts when an old lady came and sat beside her. She smiled at Alisa and held out her hand. Uncertain and apprehensive, she gently touched her fingers. In a reflex she saw a life rush pass her in black and white frames similar to her own. When she did manage to find her breath, the old woman held her hand tight and whispered, "It is a special power. You can do much good with it. It is a strength and not a weakness. You shall see everyone else's but your own."

Alisa felt the excitement in the air, the hum in the large stadium teeming with people. The announcement rang out and the cheering grew louder. She stood up and adjusted the lapel of her light cream suit. She steadied herself before she took to the podium as the next Presidential Candidate of the United States of America.

## A NEW DAWN

-Deirdre Basumatary, ISC Batch of 2017

"The third Boro Accord will usher in a new dawn of peace, harmony and togetherness and that those associated with armed resistance groups would now enter the mainstream and contribute to the nation's progress", tweeted PM Narendra Modi, three days after the signing of the third Boro Accord.

Back in 2017, I had done a Propose the Opposition article on the topic, "Boroland Should Be Given Statehood" for Issue 24. I shall save you a long explanation on who the Boros are. But in that particular article I had mentioned that if Boroland is given, it could only be envisioned as a State to usher in development and to mark the end of insurgency. No, we don't have Boroland but what I'd like to believe we have now as a result of the recent signing of the 3rd Boro Accord, is something akin to a pseudo-Boroland. What used to be the Boroland Territorial Council (BTC) and Boroland Territorial Area Districts (BTAD) has been fused together to form the Boroland Territorial Region (BTR). Like everything else on planet Earth, the Accord has its pros and cons. I believe as a community we ought not to consume ourselves by weighing the pros against the cons and instead take complete advantage of whatever has been placed on the 'pros' side of the weighing scale.

There have been three Accords signed by the Government of India with the Boro community. The first Accord was signed 27 years ago in 1993, the second in 2003 and the third in 2020 under the Modi-led government. A Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) was signed on the 27th of January in New Delhi. The tripartite Accord was signed by the three NDFB factions, All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) and the Assam Government. On the 30th of January, 1550 cadres, who had long resorted to insurgency in their attempt to protect the rights of the community, surrendered along with 130 weapons. This very act supports the argument that this Accord could finally mark an end to insurgency. The stark change resulting from the MoS would be the herald of peace, a luxury that has long eluded us and the hope that has kept our community fighting for the last few decades.

The list of objectives pointed out in the MoS and the scope presented is wide, what with the increase in representation of the Boro people in the legislature, provisions for government jobs, ramping of universities, along with other economic and political benefits. However, the fashion in which many of these clauses have been drawn leave them ambiguous which could turn into a bone of contention in the future. Today

the community rejoices and continues to promenade in jubilation as the new Accord brings in the much waited ray of hope. It will in the end, all boil down to how best

the community makes use of the Accord to usher in progress, development and employment, regardless of the loose ends the Accord carries.

# Born To Serve

-Anushka Agarwal, XII

*"Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be everyone who blesses you!"* Genesis 27:29

This is what the Bible has to say about the First Born. I am the First Born in our family and the supposed member of the club of the 'chosen ones'. Being a First Born however does not always feel that entitled. Like everything else, it has its pros and cons. Parents are always excited about their first child and they are very special and close to their heart. Every child is special, no doubt, but the first born always holds a tender set of memories for their parents. A First Born has responsibilities that they must shoulder like looking after their younger siblings when their parents are not home, teaching them good, moral values and etiquettes or correcting them when they do something wrong. They are the ones who are supposed to be mature and ensure that they do not have a negative impact on their younger siblings.

They are also expected to make compromises and sacrifices for the larger good even if they think and feel otherwise. They are perpetually on a tight wire expected to be if nothing less, then a source of inspiration to others

around. This may not be the primary aspiration in the life of the oldest child however. The First Born are often those who are experimented upon. Considering they are the first to face the might of their parent's ambition, they often become the barometer for expectations from future progenies.

The siblings who follow then get a smoother road to education and other such fanciful happiness. First Borns leave behind them a trail of accomplishments and failures most of which is used as a benchmark in the younger sibling's life, along with hand down clothes and toys of course. That is how most Indian families function and have been doing so since the Vedic Period. This way of life is as much a custom as it is a tradition. Although annoying and frustrating at times, at the end of the day, it feels normal. When I think about it, I do not have any complains even though my younger siblings are far more pampered. A sense of

responsibility from an early age has helped me become more aware as a person. It has made me stronger and a much better person and strengthened our familial bond. Don't complain about being a First Born, enjoy it and cherish it. It is going to be how it is and I am thankful to God for this.



## THE OUTPOST

The US and the Taliban have agreed to a seven-day "reduction in violence", a pre-agreement to serve as a precursor to ending America's long war at Afghanistan. Despite a creaky and uneven public healthcare system, India has a formidable record at defeating polio and facing up to the swine flu pandemic. This record stands challenged by COVID-19. The sectarian violence that has wrecked Delhi has invited international criticism from Muslim-majority countries like Malaysia, Iran, Indonesia and Turkey. The biggest rescue operation of a private sector commercial bank is underway as the SBI agrees to be the Knight-in-shining-armour to Yes Bank.





# INTRA-SCHOOL ROUND SQUARE, 2020

Greta Tintin Eleonora Ernman Thunberg said: *"Adults keep saying, 'We owe it to the young people to give them hope.' But I don't want your hope. I don't want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. And then I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if our house is on fire. Because it is."*

The words we will live by during the next two days is - no one is too small to make a change. But the change we have to make is not small. We are on the verge of an irreversible climate catastrophe but somehow, immersed in our self-absorbed lifestyle we tend to avoid acting upon this vicious cycle of consumerism and environmental degradation. Whereas, the truth is we need transformational action in order to safeguard the environment, the way we would say renovate our own homes. The aim of the Conference is to ensure that all delegates inculcate within themselves a certain commitment and belonging to the environment because

it is our responsibility at the end of the day. We hope that in more ways than one every, Aviator contributes to the IDEALS of Round Square at School. A sense of Internationalism, knowing that the world is vast and in need.

An idea of Democracy and ways to promote the necessary skills of teamwork. A deeper understanding of the environment and an appreciation of diversity.

A spirit of adventure that develops tenacity and ignites courage in all. Leadership, decisiveness and inventiveness and service, to this community and beyond, to the earth and finally to ourselves. Social service is not just an activity we do in School but ought to be our way of life. Each of us alone can make a significant difference in this regard however together, we can bring forth a revolutionary change in the course of not just this community but the wider world beyond it. At the core of this programme lies the words of Max Ehrmann, that we must all remember, *"You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here."*

The Intra-School Round Square, 2020 kicked off on the evening of March 6th on the theme - no one is too small to make a change.

The opening ceremony educated the community on the current global environmental concerns and how a single individual who dared to help our ailing planet, would make a change. The ceremony had three external Keynote Speakers from the Balipara Foundation, namely, Mr. Gautam Baruah, Ms. Rhea Hussain & Mr. Saurav Malhotra and Parthiv Gargo who was a Student Keynote Speaker. After the ceremony, the community dispersed to their designated barrazas where they were briefed about the next day's events. Day 2 began with

the One Nation Reading Together followed by Outdoor Activities where the barrazas participated in a range of tasks from 'Trash Monsters made from segregated waste', 'Treasure Hunt', 'Cleanliness Drive' to 'Bird Watching.' The day ended with a list of resolutions by each barraza which were then summed up into a final set of resolutions and a common pledge was taken by the student body during the closing ceremony on the morning of the 8th of March. In the 25th year of the School the resolution to conserve, preserve and protect the biodiversity that AVS boasts within its own campus will be the responsibility of every Aviator who forms a part of this community.











# DELHI BELLY

-Ojas Krish, X

When does a person know that they have gone too far in their use and abuse of the Freedom of Speech? Is it when the audience boos? Is it when a close friend urges you to be quiet? Is it when it triggers a massive, communal-fueled riot in the capital of India leaving 49 people six feet under and 200 more injured? Well, for BJP Leader Kapil Mishra, the last option seems to fit the best. The Delhi riots are one of the worst things to have happened to India in the past decade, undoing years of hard work by every government in charge. Over the course of the month of February, riots have plagued the state of Delhi, like a virus. The history of Delhi has been marked with rich culture and tradition as it has been scarred with violence. The dreaded fissures of communal distrust long drilled in by the British, have been dredged up.

The hate speeches from both ends have fueled polarization. While the initial cause seems to be the infamous Citizenship Amendment Bill proposed by the present BJP government and passed by the Parliament, the strategic movement against the Bill and the outrage across the country seem to be play at far more devious and dangerous ambitions. Whatever the hidden agenda and the political motive, it has cost both the communities a significant loss of lives and trade. The triggered mob violence seemed to revive memories of a past that is yet

to heal. Shops, houses and schools have been lost in the flames of religious sentiment and hatred. The theories for and against the CAA, the NRC and the NPR are plenty and are propounded well by lobbies both in the Left and the Right and the hypothetical, Center.

The Media, plays well the role of the Third Reich (apparently we are a Fascist country now) and what we have therefore on the ground is tragedy that could well have been avoided. The truth of the CAA lies hidden in the folds of Partition, the NRC and the NPR could well be the necessary defense against a silent invasion from across our borders in the form and shape of illegal migrants.

Whatever else they may bring or not, the solidarity of the people of this country lies in the spirit that binds this nation. To this, no harm can come and none should be spared, when it does. While the hate speeches of Mr. Kapil Mishra's could well have been a trigger, but it counters logic to assume that one such speech can wreck such havoc.

There seems to be far more at play and far too many invisible points wait to be joined by a discerning eye. There is a dark force at play and it is essential that it is identified and removed or we may have dug up more than we can handle from *Delhi belly*.

## CAMPUS NEWS

Mr. Tapash Das of the Department of Mathematics and his team of Aviators participated in multiple events held at InSCIgnis organised by the Tezpur University. The Team won the following awards:

**Best Quiz Team-** BARISKEM K. POHTI (7D) & HIMANSHU KHATUWALA (7B)

**3rd position in Mathletes-** Jahnabi Agarwal (6A)

Mr. Kuljeet Singh has been chosen by the Royal Society of Chemistry, UK to be a Teacher Developer for the teachers of the North-East.

The Western School Band comprising of Tushar Das, Kapinjal Sharma, Adit Ghosh, Areeq Imran and Shanmen Riddi, under the tutelage of Mr. Siddharth have attained Second Place at Yamaha Teens Rock 2019, Bangalore where they won 1.5 lakh rupees' worth of musical instruments. The Team has donated a keyboard to the school's music department. AVS congratulates them on their spectacular achievement, and wishes them a bright future in the music industry.



## Ripple #121

-Letminlun Haokip, XII

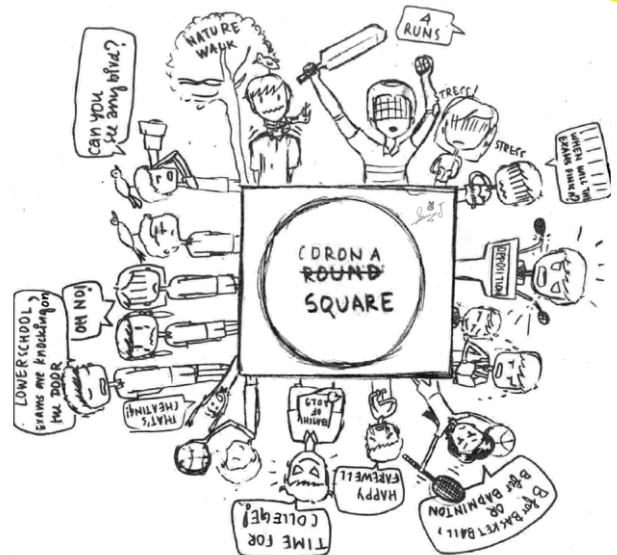
I was a butterfly  
Born to fly  
But you clipped my wings  
And left me to die  
But with the heavens  
as witness  
I learned to crawl.

## Tongue Of Slip!!

1. Do smart hard not work hard - Tarana Lama, XII [ISC 2020] (What a hard decision.)
2. Hair my oil - Ankita Sarkar, IX (Till it's deep-fried?)
3. Hipocrated I was - Anushka Adhikari, IX (Socrates is next)
4. Next we move on to the number next - Mr. Sanjay Sharma (There's no moving on from this, sir.)
5. You people didn't slept - Mrs. Rainee Modgil ()

## SQUARE OFF

-Ssara Jha, VIII



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