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IN OILY WATERS

-Ms. Ishita Malhotra, Department of Political Science

The Middle-East has been the focal point of global tensions amidst the shifting geopolitical landscape. Geopolitics took a new turn after Israel inked two historic diplomatic pacts with Gulf countries Bahrain and UAE in 2020. It has indeed marked ‘the dawn of a new Middle East’ making the Arab-Israel conflict a thing of the past. UAE had become the third Arab country after Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994 to normalize ties with Israel and the first Persian Gulf country to do so. It makes it pertinent to take into account the fact that Israel, once referred to as ‘enemy of the Arab countries’ in 1971 by the first President of UAE Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan ended up signing a Memorandum of Understanding with respect to transportation of oil with UAE after the normalization of Israel-UAE relations that culminated in the signing of Abraham Accord in August 2020.

Post- Abraham Accord, a major breakthrough was made in their relations when UAE decided to broaden its outreach and Israel in turn decided to help the former transport oil to Europe via a pipeline that connects the Red Sea city of Eilat and the Mediterranean port of Ashkelon. Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Israel’s state-owned Europe-Asia Pipeline Company (EAPC) and a new entity called MED-RED Land Bridge Limited—a joint venture between Abu Dhabi’s National Holding company and several Israeli firms. Along with UAE oil, the partners are pinning their hopes on the ‘land bridge’ which saves time, fuel and costs versus crossing the Suez Canal, to transport oil back and forth between other countries. It could provide quicker access for consumers in Asia to oil produced in the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions and there are

no qualms that this agreement is of pre-eminence to the Israeli market, both economically and strategically, with joint investments extending a decade into the future.

However Israeli environmentalists are warning that a UAE-Israeli oil pipeline deal imperils the unique Red Sea coral reefs and could lead to ‘the next ecological disaster’. With experts warning of possible leaks and spills at the ageing Eilat port and the Israeli environmental protection ministry demanding ‘urgent’ talks on the deal, activists have begun mobilizing. They held a protest in a parking lot overlooking Eilat’s oil jetty against what they see as a disaster waiting to happen, claiming that profits will be made at the expense of corals. The coral reefs are two hundred metres from where the oil will be unloaded. Needless to say, deals benefitting the fossil fuel industry at the expense of the environment are not in the spirit of our times. While coral populations around the world are under threat from bleaching caused by climate change, the reefs in Eilat have remained unaltered due to their unique heat resistance. Eilat’s coral beach reserve extends approximately a mile off the city’s coast, protecting reefs that are home to a rich variety of marine life. But their proximity to the EAPC port puts them at grave risk says Nadav Shashar, one of the experts who petitioned Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu against the deal. The infrastructure is not resilient enough to prevent accidents and only designed to treat pollution once it has already made its way into the water. With the spurt in shipments, the result will be a constant leak of oil pollution.

Israel closed all its Mediterranean beaches after an offshore oil spill deposited tonnes of tar across more than one hundred and sixty kilometres of coastline in

in what officials are calling one of the country's worst ecological disasters. Activists began reporting globs of black tar on Israel's coast after a heavy storm. The deposits have wreaked havoc on local wildlife, and the Israeli Agriculture Ministry ascertained that a dead young fin whale that washed up on a beach in southern Israel died from ingesting the viscous black liquid.

Israel's Nature and Parks Authority called the spill one of the most serious ecological disasters' in the country's history.

The repercussions are crystal clear because 'if you really think the environment is less important than the economy try holding your breath while you count your money'.

IN CONVERSATION

Marwati Imsong and Neelabh Kashyap, XII interviewed Ma'am Sahana Majumdar at the end of her brilliant innings of 17 years at AVS.



AVE – Of the many portfolios that you have held in this school in the 16 years of your tenure, which one have you come to enjoy the most?

SMJ – Oh, the answer is absolutely clear – the years that I was housemistress of Kopili – and that goes beyond comparison to any other post. The bonding and relationships that you develop while you are in a Housemaster or a Housemistress' position is phenomenal. That bonding will never go. Ever.

AVE – Of all the batches that you've mentored while you were the Housemistress of Kopili, which is your favourite and why?

SMJ – How can I possibly answer that? Does a parent ever say that they love this child more than the other? I have especially fond memories of all of them. Each one of them had their own unique identities, and strengths and weaknesses. Each one of them was especially affectionate, and they made my time in AVS all the more worthwhile.

AVE – What is the one thing that you want to be remembered for after you have stepped out of this school?

SMJ – When a person leaves, it's not about the work that he or she did. It's not about how many lives I've influenced; it's not about initiatives I started; it's nothing, none of that really matters. What matters is how I've treated each individual. And when I go away I want people to remember me as a person who always gave them respect, always spoke to them with respect. I don't remember ever having with a fight with any of my colleagues. I may have been stern but never abusive. So I want them to remember me as a woman of success and a woman who treated everybody with love and respect. Work? Immaterial.

AVE – If your life was a book, the chapter known as AVS can be said to have formally come to an end. What title do you want to give the next chapter?

SMJ – I haven't thought of a title yet, but that life is going to be a very exciting life. There I shall not have alarm clocks in the house, I shall not have deadlines to meet, I shall be master of my own time and I shall have no schedules to adhere to. So many books in the wish-list need to come out of the wish-list and need to be read. So many types of music went unheard because I didn't have the time. Those need to be visited. Perhaps I'll learn a new skill. I loved painting at one time and I never really got down to learning it. Maybe I'll get down to doing that. So, it's all about doing new things in your own time, where you are absolutely free to manage your own time.

AVE – Perhaps, when you are taking a walk down the memory lane in your reverie in the future, which AVS haunt would you most likely find yourself in?

SMJ – The corridors of Kopili House, for reasons obvious.

AVE – How did the strings of fate manage to draw you to AVS?

SMJ – There is a theory that everything that happens, happens for a reason. In January, 2006, immediately after I joined AVS, I lost my husband. At that point of time, I started having this guilt complex that why did I leave him in Kolkata and why did I come to a boarding school. It started from there as to how I justified and overcame that guilt and how I came to believe that everything that happens, happens for a reason. On this, I will expand and write to AVE someday.



Ma'am Chainika worked for 4 years in Sunnyside, and was dearly loved by everyone. When she walked into a room, the atmosphere of the room would instantly get energized. Her unique style of interacting with the students will never be forgotten. She will be deeply missed by all. We wish her the very best with her future endeavours.



Mr Rakshit has been at AVS for over 3 years, and each day with him has been a different experience. Being a renowned musician, he has performed across the country. His classes with their anecdotal lessons and the dash of philosophy will be sorely missed by everyone. We would like to wish him the very best for all of his future plans.



Ms. Jean Melanie Vincent Haymo recently joined the community as the new volleyball coach. Lavanya Adhikari from grade X caught up with her in a short conversation.

AVE- What struck you the most when you first came to AVS?

JMV- The campus struck the most because of its beauty and also because it is the first thing one notices when entering this campus.

AVE- What sports do you enjoy other than volleyball and tennis?

JMV- Other than volleyball and tennis, I enjoy badminton a lot.

AVE- How has your AVS experience been so far?

JMV- The fact that I just joined restricts my answer. It has been really good so far and there are many things to learn.

AVE- What are your expectations from AVS?

JMV- My expectations from AVS would be that it should help me become wiser, more thoughtful, help me become more skilled and improve in my field. Also, to help me communicate better with students and become a better instructor.



Ms. Sreejita Banerjee recently joined the community in the Department Of Geography. Lavanya Adhikari from grade X caught up with her in a short conversation.

AVE- What has been keeping you busy in AVS?

SRB- What has not been keeping me busy in AVS. Haha. Learning new things, preparing for my classes both online and offline, assigning preps. These things have been keeping me quite busy.

AVE- What activities would you like to be inclined towards in AVS?

SRB- Apart from teaching, I would like to be inclined towards media, dramatics and especially dance. I doubt they'll let me do all these. Haha.

AVE- What was your life before AVS?

SRB- I was a student before coming to AVS. I studied a lot and now since I am a teacher, I have got to study more. I try new resources and new techniques of teaching. My approach towards teaching is different.

AVE- In what ways would you like to contribute to the AVS family?

SRB- I have neither been allotted a house nor have I been allotted a tutee group yet but after I am allotted one, I would like to take charge of them, guide them, teach them things apart from studies and prepare them for life.



3RD INTRA SCHOOL ROUND SQUARE

-Donovan Figg, XI

This was the 3rd Intra-School Round Square Conference to be held at AVS. Social distancing and COVID guidelines were followed to a T. Being held wholly on-campus, the risk of transmission of infections was negated as everyone on campus had tested negative.

On day one, ice breaking sessions were held in each working group, during which the members of each group introduced themselves to their colleagues in the group. Some popular ice breaking activities were Truth and Dare, Charades, “What would I take to an island/escape/holiday”

After the 2-hour long icebreakers (the groups were quite large), there was a short break followed by the opening ceremony.

The opening ceremony included information about The Round Square, mostly for the benefit of the first-timers; seeing as how AVS is a veteran round square institution. The house and school flags were mounted, after which the keynote speakers took the stage and put forward their views on leadership. The next speaker was none other than the headmaster, who made his speech lively with the use of multimedia.

The second day was when the actual fun started, with many working groups deciding to merge into one to have better productivity. This “merger” was instigated by the children themselves, right from the ideation to

the actual execution — and it was pulled off flawlessly. The leaders of each group handled their tasks magnificently, and all the children that we spoke to said that they had a wonderful time, and many first-timers are already looking forward to their next conference.

The ideals worked upon were leadership and internationalism, and the motto was “The Boat Won’t Go Unless We All Row.”

Well, everyone did row, and they rowed with a vengeance. There was active discussion, deliberation and declamation upon almost every single issue and idea that was brought up in the sessions, and no one was excluded.

After two very tiring but very fun days, the resolution reached at the conference was- “A leader at AVS should be morally upright, cheerful, empathetic, kind, non-judgemental, understanding and somebody who is courageous to stand alone for the right cause we feel ‘right is right, even if no one is doing it. Wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it.’ We look forward to AVIATORS being globally responsible citizens of the world and thereby inculcating inclusiveness and tolerance.”

As was declared by a particularly zealous 9th grader, “Leadership is only learnt by practice, and boy did we get a lot of that.”



CAMPUS NEWS

A Gentleman's Game

As we know the importance of sports encompasses more than just the benefit of physical activity. It helps in enhancing self-esteem and mental alertness among students. Also, it teaches punctuality, discipline and teamwork.

AVS organized an Inter House Cricket Tournament for Upper and Lower School from 16th April to 22nd of April in the school cricket grounds. The matches were played between the four Houses-Lohit, Manas, Namdang and Dhansiri. The enthusiastic crowd experienced a thrilling performance between all teams exhibiting their best in the tournament.



RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Lower School (U-14)

- 1st Lohit House
- 2nd Dhansiri House
- 3rd Namdang House
- 4th Manas House

Upper School (U-19)

- 1st Namdang House
- 2nd Dhansiri House
- 3rd Lohit House
- 4th Manas House



OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Lower School

Best Bowler: Areen Agarwal (8 wkts) and Krishang Choudhury (8 wkts)

Best Batsmen: Anuran Paul

Upper School

Best Bowler: Gungming Phassang (7 wkts)

Best Batsmen: Nishanta Sharma



View from the Top

Meghna Dutta, ex Aviator who spent a gap year teaching Sociology here has completed her Mphil from Dublin and has been awarded a full scholarship and stipend for PhD at Wayne State University USA. We congratulate her on her success.



Ripple #159

- Raseen M. Shah, XII

The twinkling lights

dimmed

Silence settled for

another night

The wait drenched in

patience

For dreams and sleep,

both cost

Tongue Of Slip!!

1. "I shall eat it with a stab of my pingers"
-Neelabh Kashyap, XII (*Resorting to caveman tactics*)
2. "Dairy Melt is the easiest to milk"
-Shripriya Kajaria, XII (*No chocolate for you*)
3. "I don't break in between block classes"
-Mr. Thajeb Hazarika (*Our hands sure do, Sir*)
4. "You give them cafe cheques, and in return they give you snakes" -Mr. Devesh Prajapati (*Doesn't seem like a productive exchange*)
5. "I have a neck in my cramps" -Ayang Borang, XII (*That'd hurt your English teacher*)



Keep It Reel!

The Twelfth Man

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