



In Memory.

Pg. 6

MARITAL PARANOIA

A story of deceit and deception , organized by the BBC.

An article by Keshav Bhati
Pg. 2



THIS WEEK'S THE QUARANTINE BINGELIST

Featuring:
Jojo Rabbit
Downtown Abbey
The Crown
House Of Cards



ON THE TIGER'S TRAIL

-Ojas Ayapilla, XI

As Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of the world's largest democracy, made his way onto the dais to give another one of his crowd-pleasing, memorable speeches, he was greeted by a female well-wisher, who bent down to touch his feet. The gesture, a sign of respect in several Asian countries. But what followed was far from respectful. It was a ruse; a suicide bombing that killed the Prime Minister and 14 bystanders. This horrible event took place on 21 May, 1991, and India would never be the same again. Rajiv Gandhi was what some would call a 'polarizing' figure. His job as Prime Minister stayed mired with controversy; such as the Bofors scandal, which tarnished his corruption-free image. For the entire duration of his political career, he was foiled by his own inexperience and reluctance. He can be compared to USA President Ulysses S. Grant; two outsiders reluctantly taking powerful positions, and placing their trust in power-hungry party members. Yet he remains a Prime Minister who sought to correct the wrong and usher in an age of peace and economic growth. His iconic speech at Capitol Hill, 'I am young and I too have a dream,' launched India's nuclear weaponisation programme. It was his stance to change India's image from the neighborhood bully to one of peacekeeper that would become the central reason behind his assassination. He was murdered in cold blood by a member of Tamil separatist group Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam or LTTE. To truly understand why he was killed, we must look into the Sri Lankan Civil War and this organization. The bloody civil war began in 1983, breaking out between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government, on counts of racism, persecution and overall apartheid of Sri Lankan Tamils by the Sinhalese government. This was a brewing issue, fueled by various anti-

Tamil pogroms and the burning of Jaffna public library, which radicalized many Tamils who signed up in droves to fight against the Sri Lankan State. Both sides are said to have committed various war crimes during their fighting; the LTTE being declared a terrorist organization in more than 32 countries (including India eventually.) The Indian Government intervened and what followed is a story of espionage replete with betrayal and turmoil. In the beginning, the Indian Government surreptitiously supported the Tamil insurgent groups; training, supplying, and funding them; even airdropping food parcels when they were under siege. However, Rajiv Gandhi took the definitive step of backing away from the operation and held negotiations with Sri Lankan President Jayewardene. The result was Indian withdrawal of support for the LTTE, and later, the deployment of the IPKF (Indian Peace-keeping force) to disarm the Tamil insurgent groups. As soon as the IPKF was involved, many insurgent groups surrendered, except the LTTE. In response, they commenced operations Poomalai and Pawan, which saw them engage in full-scale conflict with the LTTE. Together, the combined powers of the IPKF and Sri Lankan State drove them out of the Eastern part of the island. All this action did not rest well with the Tamil population in both Sri Lanka and India, who felt betrayed by the Prime Minister. What followed next is what we all remember now. 30 years have passed since then and the recently appointed CM of Kerala M.K Stalin have sought the pardon of seven LTTE members associated with the assassination of PM Rajiv Gandhi. Like they say, some things cannot be forgiven nor forgotten. For our country this must certainly be one such instance.

MARITAL PARANOIA

-Keshav Bhati, XI

“The good people suffer the most since honesty is less convincing.”, even if the year is 1995 and the person doing the good deed here is the wife, or rather the “first wife” of the Prince of Wales, Prince Charles. And it maybe that the BBC can be given credit for producing some great work in the past, it cannot justify their deceitful actions in securing the interview with Princess Diana, which anyways left her all “peaky” in the end, significantly contributing to her death. Princess Diana, born into British nobility who eventually became a member of the British Royal Family, was a woman with unprecedented popularity, unconventional work ethics and a symbol of beauty and glamour of her time. Diana remains one of the most popular members of the royal family throughout history. She was noted for her charisma, high-profile charity work, as well as her ill-fated marriage. A few years into the marriage, the incompatibility of the couple was fairly visible and the massive difference of 12 years only made things worse. Charles had started an extra-marital affair with his former girlfriend Camilla Parker Bowles and Diana started a relationship with Major James Hewitt. By the end of the 80s, the unhappiness of the couple the sordid details of their marriage was strewn all over the tabloids. In 1992, the couple announced their separation. In 1995, Diana appeared in a sit-down interview with Martin Bashir, a BBC journalist, on BBC’s investigative program, Panorama, to speak candidly about their relationship and her time in the palace. Diana, in that interview had shared revelations about the dissolution of her marriage to Prince Charles which shook the British Royals. Most notable was her response to Charles’s relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles. “Well, there were three of us in this marriage, so it was a bit crowded,” Diana famously said. A news report found that the BBC used “deceitful” measures to secure Princess Diana’s interview for the network’s Panorama program in 1995, during which she shared the revelations about the failure of her marriage with Prince Charles. Journalist Martin Bashir, who hosted the sit-down, showed fake bank statements to Diana’s brother, Charles

Spencer, which “deceived and induced him to arrange a meeting” with the Princess, according to the investigation. In what is speculated to be a planned act of deception on the part of the BBC to contribute to Diana’s problems and paranoia, Martin Bashir with a rather cunning play of words commercialized a false narrative of Diana as a weak and dependent Royal. The aim was probably to discredit Princess Diana in the public eye, and garner support for Prince Charles. On the contrary, it only established Diana as an inspirational figure and a woman of wisdom and compassion, indeed her true self.

Illustration: Harshita Kashyap



THE CORONAVIRUS

-Vasumann Lohia, Namdang House Prefect

Corona Virus Disease – 2019 has brought the world to its knees. It's been nearly eighteen months: millions of deaths, billions of upended lives and trillions of dollars. No one can prophesize its end but it is viable to probe how this catastrophe began. Anybody who isn't afraid of speaking the truth should be able to connect the dots. The political agendas have generated thick clouds of obfuscation, which the mainstream press seems helpless to dispel. No one is daring to draw attention to the fact that the work in Wuhan lab was funded by the US National Institutes of Health. One can visualize the behind-the-scenes conversation in which the Chinese say, 'If this research was so dangerous, why did you fund it, and on our territory too?' To which the US might reply, 'Looks like it was you who let it escape. But do we really need to have this discussion in public?' It's all very pally, a lot of money is involved and the end result? A virus out of hell, helping the Chinese as their economy shifts its weight comfortably. The heroic efforts by Chinese doctors to pinpoint the virus' origin as the Wuhan market, which soon proved to be off target, might have been stymied by the Chinese Communist Party. The lab-leak theory was quick to be spurned by the Chinese communities that were found to have stakes in the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), which has slowly and grudgingly revealed that it has been creating dangerous viruses, at least nine SARS-2 like, to prevent natural spillovers. Why have these sequences not been made public even in the context of the worst pandemic (hopefully)? After a lot of haggling, a team from the WHO was

allowed to visit the lab but was prohibited from investigating as the nonpareil Chinese authoritarian approach made it unfeasible. The WHO did not even allocate 5% of its resources to probe the lab-leak angle and provided no new information. The natural emergence has not gained a shred of supporting evidence till now. The lab-leak theory has two noteworthy publications containing robust circumstantial evidence and a long pattern of scientific misconduct by China-based researchers. Neither are written by sage scientists, but by analysts examining the sequence of events through the prism of intelligence. These efforts skip the big terms, and get to the facts. Add a little more of background colour, and you start to get the big picture. How did a virus, whose closest relatives all reside in Yunnan (South China), made its way up into Wuhan (Central China), a thousand miles, without leaving any trace of its 'natural' spillover into humans residing in Yunnan? The virus, when detected, was adapted to human beings and hence the possibility that the virus is genetically modified is possible. All told, the question remains as to why did China stop flights from Wuhan to the rest of the country after the COVID-19 outbreak, and yet allowed international flights to operate from Wuhan, thus facilitating the global spread of the virus? A corollary to the lab-leak theory - was this virus man-made to be used as a bio-weapon? Guess we'll never know. But can the world afford the lack of clarity on the true nature of COVID-19? Will we continue to live on disinformation? If we don't do the work, we're just sitting ducks for the next one.

STORYTELLER - THE WHITE TIGER

-Marwati Imsong, XII

The October rains were pouring heavily – pitter patter, pitter patter – establishing the pace of the oncoming winter. The rain resonated as it touched the stone tiles on the roof of the house. The house in question was a work of time. The thick gloomy posts holding it up had become brittle with the passing of the years. Father as usual was sitting on a mora and smoking his pipe. He was a mysterious man; with his towering height, dark chapped skin, a remarkably large head, broad face, misty eyes with thick swollen lips, heavy eye brows, body and limbs covered with black hair. He was someone whom the villagers both respected and feared. Father was

proficient in medicine and people from even the faraway plains would come in four-wheeled automobiles to seek his care. I recollect the owner of a successful tobacco factory who sought Father's help when the English doctors couldn't cure him. He was reed thin and one could tell he was dying from the look in his lost grayish eyes. Father used a variation of herbs and twigs collected painstakingly from the jungle on the man for the next two weeks. By the end of it, he was fully cured. As a token of appreciation, the man left a wad of cash and a box of rolled cigarettes made of the finest tobacco. Father returned the cash but kept the box of cigarettes which

he had taken a particular liking to, for some reason. One afternoon, father called me to tell me the story of our ancestors. "A millennium ago men and animals lived together in a village speaking a common language. Among the animals, the Tiger was closest to Man. One day, when Man was out hunting, the Tiger disguised himself as the Man to be with his wife out of which a boy cub was born. When Man came to learn of the affair, the Tiger was banished from the village. The tiger took the boy with him who boy grew to be a ferocious warrior who could harness the will of the Tiger. We are the descendants of the man-cub." Word was out that villages were gathering men to

hunt down a tiger who had been hunting livestock. Father was surprisingly quiet about this. One evening, he shouted my name as though in deep pain and asked me to go down to the well. I hurried there and found the tiger lying on the ground, dead. I rushed home to find father lying on the floor looking pale. I knew then that he too would not survive. I buried Father and the tiger in the garden under an ancient pine tree. The next few nights, I had dreams of being in a translucent form over which I had no control. On the third night, I had a dream of a tiger feasting on its prey. The next morning, I woke up and vomited hair and blood. I stepped out of the house and roared at the rising sun.

THE FICKLE MISTRESS

-Neelabh Kashyap, XII

Worn out by the dreary day, by the bank of a brook, he sat down;
"Another day wasted splendidly," John Cobbler mused with a frown,
"Oh, how I wish, by some wondrous magic, my life could be altered!"
And lo! Right in front of him – out of thin, fine air – she appeared.

"You are?" he questioned, with his eyes clouded by befuddlement;
"A spirit of fate, who has heard your wish," the lady made her statement.
"Put your life into my hands, dear," the spirit of fate made an offer,
"And I shall give you everything – everything that you desire!
Your luck will be the deciding factor, do remember that, though;
Cast this die, and the number you obtain will surely tell you so –

Six, and across the continents nine, you shall have unmatched glory;
Five, and bards will sing your songs and recount your heroic story;
Four, and land and women and gold – and you shall have them all;
Three, and you shall have lush, green fields – for food and alcohol;
Two, and your pitiful life will be the same – and nothing will have changed;
But one, and I shall have your soul – in my servitude you will be chained."

Blinded by greed, and lust and desire, John Cobbler grabbed hold of the die,
He cast it on the ground, while dreaming blissfully of his paradise.
The die turned round and round and round, and finally came to a stop,
His eager face distorted to a horrified one when he saw a single one on top.

"Your life now belongs to me," her glee, the fickle mistress chose not to hide.
"How?" at the end of his wits, the poor soul desperately enquired.
"A pity," with a malicious smile on her face, the spirit of fate replied,
"The die you cast had one," said she, "and only one, on all six sides."

We Remember.



The Telegraph in its tribute to Mr. Brij Mohan Khaitan mentioned how he rose from the heartland of Burra Bazaar, Kolkata to become the “Burra Sahib” of the Tea Industry. Known fondly as “Briju Babu” in his business circle and “BMK” to his friends, Mr. Khaitan turned McLeod Russell into the largest private tea producing company in the world. This was during a time when Indian dominance in the global market was a rare

phenomenon. As Chairman of the Williamson Magor Group he built a sprawling business empire ranging from tea production to battery microcell engineering. A visionary, he brought to the North East a world-class education for its people through The Assam Valley School. Loved and deeply respected, his visits to AVS marked celebration and achievement. A self-made man, he was evergreen his keen mind brimming with ideas unafraid to explore as it was determined to give back to the world around him. This month marks two years of his passing - Mr Khaitan left for his heavenly abode on the 1st of June, 2019. The AVS community remembers him with fond memories. While his earthly body may be gone, “Briju Babu” will remain in the hearts of all who have known him. His legacy will be remembered for generations to come, touching and shaping the lives of those who will pass through the arched gates of AVS.

“Brij Mohan Khaitan was a clear visionary, and one of the most humanitarian industrialists to have lived.”

-NDTV

THE OUTPOST

The Twitter storm raises questions about the Tech Giants branding them as the new East India Company even as the Government of India builds on taking a definite stand against them. Even as the curve of the second wave of the pandemic takes a slight dip the country readies itself for the third wave as the race for a vaccine for children intensifies. Lukashenko continues to enjoy the Putin’s favour despite countries raising their voice against the unethical hijacking of Ryanair making Belarus a pariah. The Central Vista project continues despite protests from the Opposition a respite amidst the lockdown.



Illustration: Tanisha Bhadra

Ripple #164

-Areeq Imran, Head Boy

*Silence proceeded
The thuds grew fainter
Tears bled warmth
Thawing her frozen
memories*

The Quarantine Bingelist

Feeling sick and tired of the same four walls at home? Well grab your popcorn and immerse yourself in the world of media, here is a list of some of our suggestions:

JOJO RABBIT: The film explores the theme of the notion that a even child may lead people out of ignorance.

DOWNTOWN ABBEY: A classic British series that tells the story of the Crawleys and their estate. The level of aristocracy and charm the characters exhibit is extraordinary.

THE CROWN: Based on a play called "The Audience", this series documents the life of Queen Elizabeth II from the 1940s onwards.

HOUSE OF CARDS: The series is based off of a similar 1990s BBC show, and reflects the politics of america in 72 thrilling episodes, spanning 6 seasons. Season two onwards, the show will keep you gripping the edge of your seat.



Keep It Reel!

Precious Memories.

AVS Archives.

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