



COSMOPOLITICAL



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EDITORIAL

The democratic foundations of the Indian republic are deeply rooted in the history of the subcontinent, contrary to the widely-held belief that it was a feature unique to Western civilisation. In fact, the ancient Rig Veda mentions the existence of two types of democratic structures. The first such structure consisted of elected kings, a form of government which arguably served as a precursor to the contemporary format of democracy. The second structure did not involve any monarch, with power vested in councils or sabhas whose criteria for membership was based on merit. Whilst some of the institutions which characterise modern democracies may have been absent in the past, this detail must not be allowed to dilute India's historically democratic credentials. The ancient Greeks are widely accredited for bringing the democratic style of government into the mainstream, but the exclusionary nature of their take on the subject is well documented owing to the discrimination faced by Greek women and slaves in obtaining the most basic rights. This is in stark contrast to the system practiced in ancient India which encouraged the involvement of both men and women in the governmental process.

73 years have passed since the provisions of our Constitution came into force on the 26th of January, 1950. Thus started the journey of awakening India from her great slumber, and today she stands well-poised to become the world leader of tomorrow. We are indebted to the wisdom of the makers of our Constitution, for they operated with the utmost foresight in a volatile post-colonial environment where India was at the brink of civil war. The intervention of leaders such as Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel played a crucial role in preventing mini-partitions across the country along the lines of Pakistan. At the same time, the Constitution provided a plethora of rights for all Indian citizens without any religious, linguistic or caste-based discrimination. The provision of amendments has ensured that the Constitution remains a living, breathing document that seamlessly adapts itself to changes in time while keeping its essence intact. The correct implementation of this document has the potential to propel India to previously unknown heights, both economically and socially. As an example, one of independent India's first foreign policy successes was the abolition of Apartheid in South Africa, a practice which the country had vehemently opposed for decades prior due to her own past discriminatory experience at the hands of colonialists. In fact, India even snapped ties with South Africa in 1954 as a form of protest against the draconian policy. This was during a time when most "liberal" democracies of today maintained amicable relations with the South African government without issuing as much as a condemnation for this practice.

It is the responsibility of the present generation to ensure that the lofty ideals which characterised India's freedom struggle continue to live on in our minds as a source of inspiration for us to work towards a better India. Our duty is to uphold the values enshrined in our Constitution, for these ideals give shape to the very idea of India.

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INDIAN POLITICS: POORNA SAMANT & DEVANSHI SHAH

SOCIAL: PAYAL GHOGRE FOREIGN CULTURE:HAMSIKA JASWAL

ART & COMPILATION- KUMARSINH DABHI CONVENOR: DR. VRUTTANT MANWATKAR



Lost Spirit of Cooperative Federalism - Proposed Amendments to the IAS Cadre rules, 1954

Poorna Samant, F.Y.B.A.

In light of recent developments, the Central government of India has recommended changes to the IAS Cadre Rules regarding the central deputation of officers. The State governments would be required to make certain officers available for central delegation under the proposal. The Central government's plan stems from a decrease in the number of officers at the Centre, despite the fact that the state was obligated to do so. Since officers play a major role in creating policies and implementing various plans for the country's development, this downward tendency has had an impact on the government's ability to function. IAS officers contribute significantly to the planning and implementation of numerous policies. This idea has triggered a conflict between various Indian states and the Central government. States such as West Bengal, Kerala, and Jharkhand have all expressed strong resistance to such a proposal.

The amendments would give the Centre a strong hold on the deputation of civil servants from the All India Services. Furthermore, without the influence or consent of the states, the Central government would be allowed to delegate officers to central ministries. As a result, numerous states have spoken out against the initiative, calling it a political move. It is against the spirit of cooperative federalism, according to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. Hemant Soren, Jharkhand's Chief Minister, has also stated that the proposed modification appears to be draconian. Many states have questioned the central government's position on the country's federal system. The changes would give the central government the upper hand in disputes over officer deputation, which would alter the federal framework of India. It would be regarded as an attempt to undermine the state's authority over its bureaucracy, with repercussions on state planning and administration. The Centre's proposal has sparked a dispute between them and the states, disrupting their previously cordial working relationship. The suggested amendments maintain a unilateral approach of functioning of the government. Officers have traditionally been caught in the middle of disagreements between the federal government and the states. The officers work for the development of our country, and no ownership by the state or Centre is justified.

Being an Indian First and Last - Dr B.R. Ambedkar

Poorna Samant, F.Y.B.A.

The Constitution of India is a reflection of the tremendous efforts taken by our leaders to foster a feeling of oneness in a diverse country like India. Stepping into the 73rd year of the coming into force of our Constitution, every citizen of India needs to revive the devotion towards our country and stand together despite our cultural diversification.

Tendencies of communal violence and the profound hatred implanted into people's minds about one another is a portrayal of our lost constitutional spirit. The great visionaries of the Constituent Assembly enumerated every aspect required for India's development. The Preamble of the Constitution is a precise illustration of their ideals. The creators of our nation's Constitution have embellished human rights to the citizens of our country through the due process of law. India has a multicultural nature and the Constitution is a detail-oriented framework of laws to incorporate the existing cultures, castes, class etc. Our Constitution is an effort to abrogate certain social constructs of discrimination and biases emanating in our society. As stated by the Member of Parliament and public intellectual, Shashi Tharoor, India is a land embracing many. Every distinct culture was given representation through our constitution. The concept of acceptance and tolerance towards every religion and caste has not been understood by a majority of the country and communal violence still poses a menace to the very idea of India. Even after numerous efforts taken by Ambedkar and the entire drafting committee towards the development of the overlooked and marginalised sections of society, the issues have not been resolved.

Every year we celebrate 26th January with the utmost respect and pride. People from every caste, religion, culture, come together to celebrate this day. The Constitution of India guarantees every citizen their basic fundamental rights and has no doubt helped create a sense of unity amongst the citizens of India. As stated by Ambedkar, all citizens of India need to keep their differences aside and develop the emotion of being an Indian first and last.



Assembly Elections 2022

Devanshi Shah - F.Y.B.A.

Five states in India are set for elections in the next two months. The states of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur are going to contest elections starting from 10th February till 7th March. The elections will be held in various phases. Results of all the assembly polls will be declared on 10th March.

The Election Commission obstructed physical rallies and meetings till 30th January due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Digital political rallies have taken the place of physical rallies ahead of the upcoming Uttar Pradesh elections. The following is a brief overview of the strategy of each major contender in the Uttar Pradesh elections.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP):

- •It is not going to be an easy fight for BJP in UP.
- •There exists resentment against the Yogi Adityanath regime for COVID mismanagement, lack of hospitals, medical infrastructure and the Lakhimpur Kheri incident.
- •The Yogi government tried to undo the damage by preparing for the 3rd wave, organising a free vaccination programme in the State and inaugurating numerous key projects in the State.
- •BJP will be putting out all the stops to attain victory in 2022 UP elections as it is aware of the possible impact it may have on 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Samajwadi Party (SP):

- •Akhilesh Yadav may receive the support of the Yadav community in terms of votes but he also needs to look beyond his own community. Efforts are underway to acquire support from the Dalits.
- •He is trying to woo the Brahmin and Muslim community.
- •Mamata Banerjee is set to campaign for Samajwadi party of Uttar Pradesh.
- •If SP wins in UP, it's going to be a huge setback for BJP.

Indian National Congress (INC):

- •Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has spent a lot of time campaigning in Lucknow and various other parts of UP.
- •The Party's campaign follows a women-centric approach.
- •The Pratigya Yatra launched by Priyanka in UP reveals seven promises for UP elections. It may be a game changer for the upcoming polls.
- •Priyanka's women outreach programme, 40% tickets for women candidates, free e-scooty and mobile phones for school girls, farm loan waiver, financial relief to poor families and relief on electricity bills, her presence during the Hathras and Lakhimpur Kheri cases, her promise for the development of health sector may be counted in her favour during the elections.

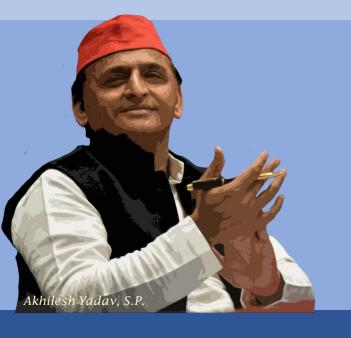




U.P., U.P. AND U.P.!

ELEPHANTINE ISSUES





ON THE WHEELS

LADY LUCK



India-United Kingdom Free Trade Agreement

Aditi Prasad, F.Y.B.A.

India and the United Kingdom began formal discussions for a Free Trade Agreement on January 13, 2022, with the goal of achieving an early harvest trade agreement within the next few months. The early harvest trade agreement is expected to focus on low-hanging fruits, leaving the more challenging goods and services for later. India is a member of ten free trade agreements (FTAs) and six preferential trade agreements (PTAs), and is currently negotiating 16 new deals and expanding seven existing ones. The FTA between the two countries seeks to benefit both countries immensely and is anticipated to boost total trade by up to euro 28 billion per year by 2035. It will increase bilateral cooperation in a variety of areas, including technology, tourism, education, start-ups, and climate change. The deal will establish a multidimensional economic partnership between India and the United Kingdom, as both countries have thriving democracies, cultural linkages, and a rich history.

India intends to establish a massive new market for British producers and manufacturers in a variety of industries, from food and drink to automotive and services. The agreement will benefit the UK's green industry since the Indian government plans to install 175 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2022 and much more in the coming decades, where the UK's world-leading renewables industry looks set to benefit from a deal that removes barriers like import tariffs of up to 15% on wind turbine parts from the UK. A deal with India would be a significant step forward in the United Kingdom's goal to refocus trade on the Indo-Pacific region, which is home to half of the world's population and accounts for half of global economic growth. India's exports of leather, textiles, jewelry, and processed agricultural products are likely to expand as a result of the FTA negotiations with the United Kingdom. The registration of 56 Indian marine units is also projected to result in a quantum jump in India's export of marine products.

Banking on Electric Vehicles

Aditi Prasad, F.Y.B.A.

The recently announced first-loss risk-sharing instrument, led by NITI Aayog and the World Bank, has the ability to bridge the gap between higher liquidity and reduced cost of capital for Electrical Vehicle assets and infrastructure. A report titled 'Banking on Electric Vehicles (EV) in India- A framework to include EVs in Priority Sector Lending Guidelines' was released by the National Institution for Transforming India Aayog (NITI) in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI). The report states that the government should include EVs in the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) priority-sector lending (PSL) guidelines to enhance retail lending for EVs and help road transport decarbonization. Inclusion of retail lending to electric vehicles has the power to strengthen investor confidence by delivering a signal to the market of the government's continued commitment to the sector. The RBI's action appears to be promising considering this will not only address the funding issues, but it will also address a number of long-standing dangers associated with EV financing. By 2025, banks and non-banking financial organisations (NBFCs) could have a market for electric vehicles worth Rs 40,000 crore, and Rs 3.7 lakh crore by 2030. EV buyers are currently unable to obtain low-interest rates and long-term loans due to the concern of banks regarding the resale value and product quality.

However, if the RBI uses its PSL mandate to interfere, the supply of formal credit to areas of national importance will improve. The report also suggests that the RBI should assess various EV segments and use cases based on five parameters: socio-economic potential, livelihood generation potential, scalability, techno-economic viability, and stakeholder acceptance. The research also advised that the Ministry of Finance recognise EVs as an infrastructure sub-sector. The report's proposals would undoubtedly help India achieve its net-zero goals by 2070. In addition, the PSL intends to improve financial access and job opportunities in India.



India- Asia's 2nd Largest Economy by 2030

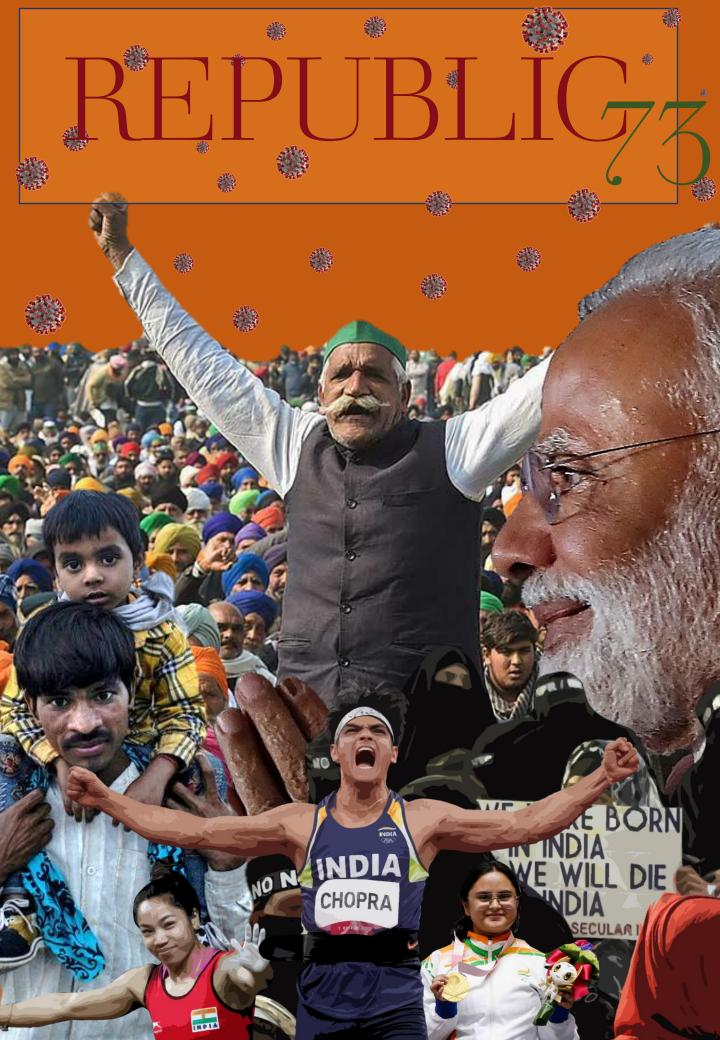
Aditi Prasad, F.Y.B.A.

India is the 6th largest economy after the United States, China, Japan, Germany and the U.K. According to the Information Handling Services (IHS) Markit report, a global leader in information, analytics, and solutions for the key sectors and markets it has been projected that India is likely to overtake Japan as Asia's second-largest economy by 2030. From its current size of USD 2.7 trillion, the Indian economy is predicted to rise to USD 8.4 trillion by 2030. By 2030, this growth will have surpassed Japan's economy, making it the second largest economy in the Asia-Pacific region. The expansion of e-commerce and digitalization will drive the economy towards expansion. The manufacturing, infrastructural, and services sectors, as well as the e-commerce sector, are expected to play a significant role in boosting India's economy. Consumer expenditure is expected to double in the next decade, from USD 1.5 trillion in 2020 to USD 3 trillion in 2030, as it is one of the most consistent supports of the Indian economy.

Inflows of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to India are observed to be continuing with strong momentum since 2020. Vast infusions of investment into India's large domestic consumer market have been aided by multinational technological giants such as Google and Facebook. India has the world's fourth-largest unicorn base, with over 21 unicorns worth a total of USD 73.2 billion. Some government schemes, such as the Production-Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) applied to various sectors, the rationalisation of bank guarantees (BGs), and the encouragement of spectrum sharing, are examples of major reforms to boost the economy. The government approved the Deep Ocean Mission (DOM) in August 2021 with a budget outlay of Rs 4,077 crore to support the Blue Economy, which refers to the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and the health of the ocean ecosystem. Infrastructure, manufacturing, increased ease of doing business, and improved quality of life are the pillars that should be utilized to drive structural growth.







Indian Culture

Tanushree Menon, F.Y.B.A.

India is a nation with rich culture, heritage, cuisine, architecture, customs and traditions, beliefs, norms, language and symbolism as well as an amalgamation of various cultures. As a diverse nation, Indian culture also has a broad variety of languages. There are 22 official languages and a total of 121 languages and 270 mother tongues. There are also changes in the dialects after every few kilometres. India's culture spans more than 4,500 years. The foundation of the Hindu philosophy, mythology, astika and nastika concepts, Puranas, Upanishads, etc were laid during the Vedic Period. Beliefs and practices such as Dharma, Karma, Yoga and Moksha are still prevalent and practiced by a majority of Indians. Indian religions have also contributed to the making of the culture. Religions like Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Sikhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, etc have found a place in Indian society. The tradition of Namaste (greeting) a Sanskrit word is an integral part of the Indian culture. It means 'I bow to the divine in you.' Most Indians are taught to greet and seek the blessings of their elders with Namaste, bowing or touching their legs.

Indian Culture also has a lot of symbolism like the Swastika, Namaste, Lotus, Om, etc. Each of these symbols have a certain idea or belief behind them along with a scientific reason. The four arms of the Swastika symbolize the four Vedas, the four constellations, and the four primary aims of mankind. Eating with your hands is considered normal and is one of the distinct features of the country. The concept of Arranged Marriage and Fasting originates from the Vedic period. 'Swayamvar' means choosing one's own groom was followed by the royals of India and has continued till date. Traditional clothing of India changes from state to state as well as climate but the most common is Sari or draped cloth for women and Dhoti for men. Later on, the tradition of sewed clothes such as Shalwar Kameez, Kurta for women and Sherwani for men were brought by the Mughals.

India is filled with thousands of traditions and cultures, and maybe some of them would leave outsiders somewhat curious. But the essence of Indian culture is being polite, well-mannered, and respecting others as well as being partners in progress.

Indian Arts and Literature

Tanushree Menon, F.Y.B.A.

Art

The art of a culture is the physical manifestation of the community's values, beliefs, and practices through their drawings, paintings, carvings, body adornments, and folklore. Art allows us to understand cultures we otherwise may not be able to understand since it connects with people emotionally. Besides varying widely between cultures, art can also serve as a medium that bridges those gaps. It can represent the core beliefs of a society. Art is often a vehicle for social change.

Art can be divided into 2 parts: performing arts and visual arts.

Dance – India has a total of eight classical dance forms. Bharatanatyam from Tamil Nadu, Kathakali and Mohiniattam from Kerala, Kathak from North, West and Central India, Kuchipudi from Andhra Pradesh, Odissi from Odisha, Manipuri from Manipur and Sattriya from Assam. In addition to the formal arts of dance, Indian regions have a strong folk dance tradition such as Bhangra, Bihu, Zeliang, Gotipua, Lavani, etc.

Theatre/Drama - Aside from dance and music, Indian drama has a long history. Kalidasa's Shakuntala and Meghadoota are some of the older dramas. Kutiyattam follows the Natya Shastra strictly and is the only surviving specimen of the ancient Sanskrit theatre, believed to have originated somewhere around the beginning of the Common Era. Kutiyattam is officially recognized by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Literature

Epics and Scriptures – Ramayana and Mahabharata are the two well-known epics of Indian culture. Besides the great Indian epics, there are also The Five Great Epics of Tamil Literature: Manimegalai, Cīvaka Cintāmaṇi, Silappadikaram, Valayapathi and Kundalakesi. It is said that the Vedas were composed between 1500 and 900 B.C.E. and were passed from teacher to student orally. There are four Vedas: the Rig Veda (the oldest; 1028 sacred hymns to go with sacrifices to the gods), the Sama Veda (verses arranged for ritual purposes), the Yajur Veda (sacrificial formulas), and the Atharva Veda (magic spells). Other Vedic scriptures are the Brahmanas (theological treatises on the details and symbolic significance of Vedic ritual).

Indian Cuisine

Hamsika Jaiswal, F.Y.B.A.

History

Indian cuisine dates back over 8000 years. Indian food has been influenced by many countries together with Mongolia, Persia, and China, among all. The common thread throughout the centuries remains the distinct mixing of spices that consistently give Indian Cuisine its flavour and aroma.

Indian cuisine consists of a variety of regional and traditional cuisines inherent to the Indian Subcontinent. Given the variety in soil, climate, ethnic clusters, and occupations, these cuisines differ substantially and use locally available spices, herbs, vegetables, and fruits. Historical proceedings such as invasions, trade relations, and colonialism have played a role in the introduction of certain foods to this country. Later, trade with British and Portuguese influence added to the diverse Indian cuisine. They, during their rule, introduced new cooking techniques such as baking and different other foods from the New World and Europe. The British introduced Cauliflower in the year 1822. The oldest record of Indian cuisine in the United Kingdom is in the autobiography of a Scot, Robert Lindsay, which mentions a man called Saeed Ullah cooking a curry for Lindsay's family.

Ingredients

The staple food of Indian cuisine includes bajra (pearl millet), rice, atta (whole wheat flour), and a variety of dals. Many Indian dishes are cooked in vegetable oil, peanut oil is popular in northern and western India, mustard oil in the east, and coconut oil in the western coast of the subcontinent. Each region has its distinctive garam masala blend. Goda masala is popular in Maharashtra.

Regional Cuisines

Every region in the country has its distinctive cuisines for which it is famed. With 29 states in India, each state and city has a variety of popular food items. It varies seasonally, geographically, and even economy-wise.

The most popular and common food items of North India are Aloo Tikki, Daulat Chaat (in old Delhi) Butter Chicken & Naan, Kashmiri Pulao, Laal Maans, and Mughlai Dum Biryani. From the west, we have Locho & Idada, Zunka, Puran modak, and Tandoori Lemonfish fry. Plantain Dumplings, Lucchi Alur Torkari, Bamboo Steam Rice are famous in the east, and Idli Vada, Dosa, Khotto, Prawn Biryani are the delicacies of the south.

Desserts

Almost all Indian desserts are fried foods made with sugar, milk, or condensed milk. The ingredients vary by region. The most popular Indian desserts are Gulab Jamun, Ras Malai, laddu, Rasogolla amongst all.

The Entitlement of #MarriageStrike

Payal Ghogre, F.Y.B.A.

It is 2022 and marital rape is still legal in India. Consent remains a foreign concept for some Indian men. In the second week of January, the Delhi High court was hearing pleas for criminalising marital rape. Following this, some men started calling for a marriage strike and trending #MarriageStrike on Twitter. They did not want their legal right to rape their wives without any consequences getting struck down. On the other hand, many women were happy as a clam as they believed that the men who did not understand consent should not get married either.

In a survey by Unscripted News, numerous men were found defending marital rape, making statements such as "Irrespective of who he has raped it's a badge of manliness", "I will thrash my wife if she doesn't give her consent". Even a woman said, "If the woman is not in the mood and the guy wants it, she has to give in". The marital rape exception says "sexual intercourse by a man with his wife, the wife not being under fifteen years of age, is not rape." Even though the age of consent in India is 18 years, marital rape is allowed if the wife is above 15 years of age. Not only does this legalise marital rape but it also ignores the concept of age of consent and child marriage. Moreover, even live-in-relationships come under Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code.

After a few days, the Court said that criminalising marital rape will destabilise marriage as an institution. Do we need rape to keep our marriages stable? The Centre stated that marital rape involves "family issues" and completed by saying that "It can't be seen from a microscopic angle." Merely 36 countries have not criminalised marital rape around the world and India is one of them. We need to move ahead from such a regressive concept especially when half the population of our country comprises of women.

Udupi Hijab Controversy

Payal Ghogre, F.Y.B.A.

Since the beginning of 2022, six girls students of the Government PU College for Girls in Udupi, Karnataka have been protesting for the right to enter their classrooms. Several days before their protest, they were asked to enter the College without a hijab. The suffering of Muslim women owing to the rising incidence of Islamophobia is becoming increasingly evident on a global scale. In March, an amendment to French law proposed banning the Hijab for girls under 18. They also banned the Hijab in televised sports and burkinis in public beaches. Islam is not the oppressor. The French government is. This decision was met with outrage, and #HandsOffMyHijab became a trending hashtag in response. In 2019, Canada passed a law that restricted people from wearing any kind of religious symbols like Hijabs, veils, and turbans while working as public servants.

This is not the first time Hijabis have been restricted from entering certain places in India. In another instance, a girl was not allowed to enter a restaurant in Hyderabad as she was wearing a Hijab. It is one's fundamental right to practice their faith. In a secular country like India, if turbans are allowed in educational institutes then why not Hijabs? The Hijab has been unfairly reduced to a form of oppression. It is unfortunate that some women do get forced to wear hijabs. However, there are many who wear it by their own choice. Incidents such as these take away an individual's right to choose, thereby going against the very spirit of democracy.

Recently, in retort to the protest, the administration of the Karnataka college continued with their Islamophobia and replied "Muslim girls can not wear Hijab but can wear a shawl to cover their head." This in itself is an admission of their prejudiced belief that Muslim girls can cover their heads with any article of clothing other than a Hijab.



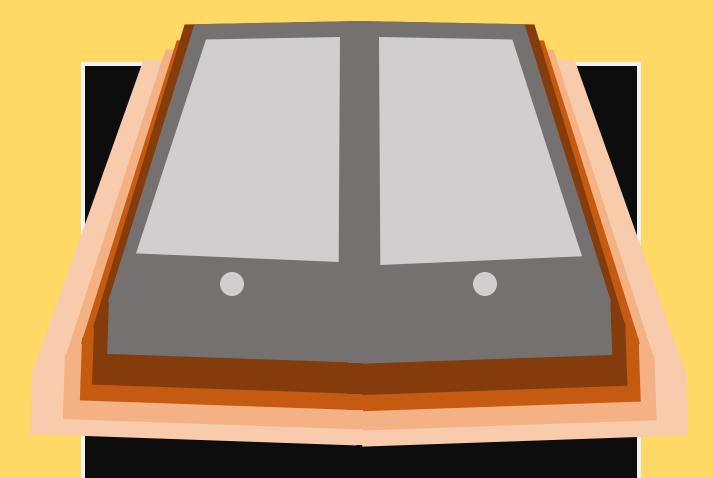
Our Privacy is on Thin Ice

Payal Ghogre, F.Y.B.A.

In the year 2020, a person tweeted that the ruling BJP controlled IT cells that had created some secret apps only for the IT cell workers. They mentioned how the app can auto-share and auto-text, leading to trending hashtags in mass numbers, promotion of rightwing propaganda, and harassment of people. On the 6th of January, according to a recent investigation conducted by The Wire, this app is used to harass some individuals and communities by having the power to trend anything on any social media platform. Through this app, it is very easy to trend any hashtag as it also provides the facility of auto-retweet. It was prominently used to spread communal hate.

Not only can the app hack just one account, but it can also hack inactive WhatsApp accounts. This is in gross violation of the right to privacy. It does not stop here, as the app also has a legitimate database of citizens according to their age, gender, sexuality, skin tone, body shape, and every possible aspect of an individual. By selecting a keyword, it can generate texts in bulk and send them to the targeted group. Some of the groups were categorised as 'Lesbians', 'Men above 40'', 'Women with large breasts', 'Girls with fair skin'. Female journalists witnessed an increasing amount of harassment and threatening messages. The operators of the app can target individuals and reply to them with any kind of detail. It can send auto-replies to a group of people from racial slurs to abusive sexist comments.

This year, the Pegasus spyware developed by NSO Group, an Israeli surveillance firm, grabbed the limelight among a series of revealing investigations. The target individuals of this spyware were famous political leaders, journalists, and activists. The spyware has the potential to steal all kinds of data including an individual's videos and photos, browsing history, passwords, contacts, conversations, call logs, and much more. Evidently, our privacy is skating on thin ice.







India-Sri Lanka Oil Deal

Vishesh Singh, S.Y.B.A.

Sri Lanka has signed an agreement to develop the Trincomalee oil tank farm with a subsidiary of Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) in Lanka, a move that will improve both nations' energy security and pave the way for future economic cooperation. Discussions on the project began after the signing of the India-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987, but there has been no substantial development due to a variety of factors, including Sri Lankan resistance to leasing out the Trincomalee facility entirely to India. On Thursday, the Sri Lankan government, Indian Oil Corporation subsidiary Lanka IOC (LIOC), Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC), and a joint venture inked three agreements to refurbish and develop the 850-acre oil storage facility, which has a capacity of approximately one million tonnes.

According to the deal, 16 tanks developed by LIOC since 2003 will be leased to them, 61 tanks will be leased to the joint venture, and 24 tanks will be leased to CPC. The lease is valid for 50 years, and the agreements include provisions to protect investments, according to sources familiar with the situation.

These agreements represent yet another significant step in widening the scope of mutually beneficial economic partnership. It will assist Sri Lanka to establish Trincomalee as an energy and transportation hub, bolstering the country's energy security, according to one of the deal's persons involved.

According to the individual, energy security cooperation is an important aspect of the two countries' partnership under India's "Neighbourhood First" policy. "India looks forward to full implementation of bilateral understandings reached within agreed timelines," the source added.

At the same time, the Sri Lankan side anticipates that success on the Trincomalee oil tank farm project will result in progress on its urgent financial assistance request. Sri Lanka is seeking a \$500 million line of credit from India's Exim Bank to purchase petrol and diesel from Indian suppliers, as well as a \$400 million currency swap under the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) facility.

India: Defence Importer to Exporter?

Vishesh Singh, S.Y.B.A.

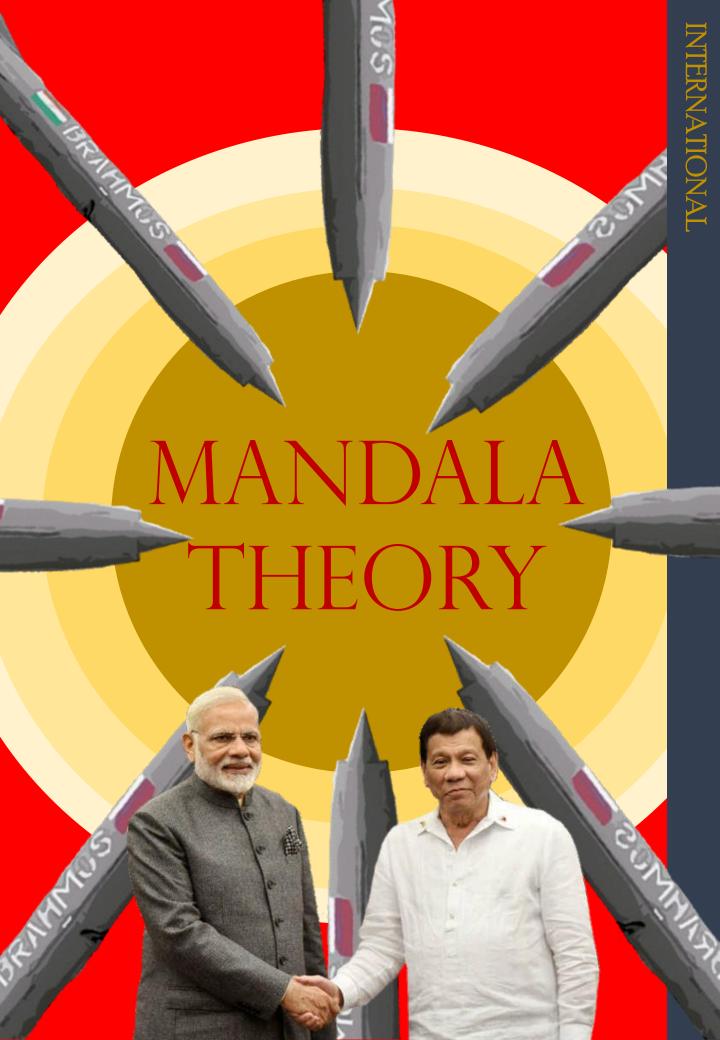
The Philippines is prepared to acquire India's anti-ship missile 'BrahMos.' It has allocated 2.8 billion pesos (55.5 million USD) for the weapon system's initial funding. This is seen as the first step toward India's goal of becoming a major exporter of defence hardware. The Philippines' defence secretary approved India's proposal to supply the BrahMos to its navy on January 14th. The deal is approximately \$374 million, or 72779 crores, for three BrahMos batteries with a range of 290 kilometres. In December, a team from the Philippine Navy paid a visit to BrahMos Aerospace's production facility in Hyderabad as part of the purchase process. Indian delegates are set to be in the Philippines this week to sign the paperwork.

BrahMos is a medium-range supersonic cruise missile with a maximum range of 400-500 kilometres. It is the only supersonic cruise missile that can fly nearly three times the speed of sound. It was created as a joint venture between India's Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Russia's Defense Organization (NPOM). The BrahMos missile, in various versions, may be launched from submarines, ships, fighter planes, and land, in theory from everywhere.

Since China is seen as a major threat in the South China Sea region, the Philippines is trying to strengthen its defence via the Philippines armed forces modernisation initiative. China claims the majority of the South China Sea territory, clearly infringing on the Philippines' exclusive economic zone. This argument puts them at odds with the majority of Southeast Asian nations. Chinese fighter jets and ships often violate their territorial integrity.

India has been in talks with a number of countries, including Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates, to export the BrahMos missile, which will enhance India's reputation as a significant defence exporter.





Are we really independent?

Saadiya Shaikh, F.Y.B.A.

A range of factors including ethnicity, age, and occupational groups may affect how people experience conflict, more so than differences between men and women. A girl is far more likely to be denied her rights, kept from school, forced to marry and subjected to violence - her voice undervalued, if it is heard at all.

The very conflict that all of us face everyday is about how the roles change in our own household. At the workplace, women are often paid less and not taken seriously by their male co-workers. Women are needed at home because the lack of sophistication in society basically relegated most men and women into the roles which they had to fulfil: men = physical-power/social-manager and women = home power/child-bearer.

We always swear on how feminist we are, but when it comes down to women in our own lives, do we actually treat them equally? The conflict not only arises from the other gender but our own gender as well. As women, we have been mentally deliberated to hate each other and see one another as competition. Internalised misogyny is the prejudiced behaviour women project upon themselves and other women. This manifests in statements that claim, "I am not like other girls" due to the need to cater to the male gaze.

All of us can name at least one moment where we as women have been assaulted either physically or mentally. The most prevalent in our day-to-day life is rape. The way masculinity has been constructed in our society, men find it easy to use rape as a tool to exercise their power. Even during rapes - take the 2012 Nirbhaya case for instance - the main motive behind rape is to oppress the other gender, to show them that men are more powerful in society. Most women and girls live in fear of rape. Men, in general, do not. Whether it be clothes, places, language, behaviour, appearance or education, women have been and are still facing inequalities either because they are not "modestly" dressed or because they are too educated or outspoken or stupid. No matter what women do, we will always be objectified. This needs to end, YOU and I can do this.

Cyberspace and Cybercrimes

Sejal Gohil, F.Y.B.SC.

Social media platforms have various pros and cons, and the basic purpose of their use is the inherent need for people to interact and share their thoughts and ideas with others. However, social media has a very negative side to it. I recently read an article on Mid-day about this subject which I am going to summarise.

There was a 22-year old woman who approached the Vasai police station with her mom who was harassed on a social media platform by the accused named Abu Ansari. The accused had somehow got a nude video of the victim and had asked her to pay him cash and spend a night with him. The accused had booked a cab to pick her up and the cops asked her to take the cab where a head constable named Sunil Malavkar explained the situation to the cab driver and asked him to help execute the plan. After the girl boarded the cab, the accused video called her to check if she was alone. The driver (head constable) was told to park at a particular place and after 10 minutes, Abu Ansari arrived and as he was making the payment for the cab, Malavkar came out and nabbed him.

The accused had been stalking women on Instagram and would look at accounts of women with lesser followers as an advantage since he could send a direct message. Then he would impersonate a senior executive of an international sports brand who needed a few girls for modelling. After women heard such lucrative offers, he would switch to WhatsApp chats and ask them to send their modelling photographs. Later he would video call the victim and keeping his camera off the whole time he would record the call and later blackmail the victim to continue with the video calls. He would ask them to remove their clothes, and record those videos as well and later demand money and sexual favours in return of the recorded tape. More such women who he tried to prey on had already blocked him on WhatsApp.

Today, I am not trying to scare you but make you aware of the dark side of social media. Interacting with people is fine until you feel that the person's intentions are sketchy. Many such cyber crimes are never even reported because of the stigma attached to them. However, the victims of such crimes must not be made to feel ashamed. The perpetrators of such crimes must be subjected to strict action by the judicial system. Cyber crimes include bullying, harassing and illegally impersonating another person's identity on any social media platform like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter. Beware of whom you talk to online and never share your passwords or personal credentials with others.



Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy in India

Kalyani Yadav, F.Y.B.A.

The phenomenon of child marriage is deeply rooted in India as it has been practiced for centuries. In fact, the Manusmriti contains a detailed account of a woman's duties and her subservience to her husband. This problem persists till this day, as according to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data of 2020, a total of 785 cases were registered under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act. An increase in the number of such cases is a reflection of the failure of successive governments. Rural areas are badly affected by it because girls of age 15-16 are major victims of child marriage.

Child marriage has long-term negative consequences for both boys and girls in terms of educational outcomes as well as transitions to the labour market and family formation. The adverse effect of child marriage on girls is grave. This includes early pregnancy, maternal and neonatal mortality, educational setbacks, lower employment prospects, exposure to violence and abuse - leading to negative physical and psychological outcomes.

In India, child marriage has been declining slowly over time, but the number of girls and boys getting married before their respective legal ages remain large with 12.1 million child marriages reported by Census 2011. Causes of child marriage are complex and varied based on various customs and traditions across several contexts and are deeply rooted in existing socio-cultural norms with economic and regional factors playing a significant role in determining child marriages. NFHS-4 data (2015-16) showed the prevalence of child marriage and teenage pregnancy amongst girls in the age group 15-19 years and 20-24 years in India.

Women's educational level is also found to be negatively affected with the prevalence of child marriage for both 15-19 years and 20-24 years age groups. The higher the level of education, the lower is the chance of child marriage. For example, the prevalence of child marriage among women with no education amongst 15-19 years and 20-24 years age groups is 30.8% and 49.3% respectively.

Budget 2022: A platform for India's growth

Avanti Kashikar, F.Y.B.A.

The Budget for the financial year is expected to boost the economy after a two-year long pandemic that led to a huge crisis. This resulted in increased issues in sectors of education, rural and urban unemployment, agriculture along with health care and medical infrastructure that are to be resolved in the Union Budget.

With various options for higher and technical education within as well as outside the country, it is high time that students are offered loans at an affordable rate. Due to lack of access to online education, students developed a gap in their education. To reduce this gap and encourage education to reach all sections of society, the budget should also accommodate designing courses that will help students in bridging the same. Taxes and prices of essential gadgets such as laptops, mobile phones, internet connections, etc should be reduced in order to encourage and ensure academic growth in all parts of the country.

There has been a tremendous recovery in the industrial sector but it was restricted mostly to the large-scale ones. This also increased inequality leading to a rise in unemployment. A rural/urban job guarantee scheme will help in tackling this issue, although the government should continue with its relief packages of providing free grains to the poor households and credit guarantee to small and medium enterprises. It is necessary to announce a new deal for agriculture that will ensure a rise in the farmers' income. This comes after the revocation of the farm laws. An increase in farm credit is also required to encourage cultivators, development of agro-tech equipment and machinery to boost revenue.

Lastly, the budget should help in developing a conducive environment for the private sector and encouraging entrepreneurship. It can give a boost to start-ups by offering incentives. This will help in enhancing the government's capital expenditure, emphasising on infrastructural development. This can be done by fewer new taxes, alteration of existing tax rates and boosting exemptions from the same.







