

# Introducing the BNS Bill:

**Destroying remnants of the colonial past or a mere name-change exercise?**

*Krish Saini, BA Sem V*



Old Indian Parliament Building

Source: Google

The Union Government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has often emphasized the process of decolonizing the nation. Over the last few years, various steps have been taken to facilitate this objective, such as renaming the Rajpath as Kartavya Path, the construction of the Central Vista project, and more recently, the introduction of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) Bill. On August 11, the Minister of Home Affairs, Amit Shah, introduced the BNS Bill to replace the British-era Indian Penal Code (IPC). “The laws that are being

replaced were essentially aimed at safeguarding the continuation of the British administration, and their objective was to punish, not deliver justice,” said the Home Minister. However, a closer look at the new set of laws paints a different picture than what Shah has presented. While significant inclusions and omissions are a part of this major legal upheaval, a large section of the laws remains the same. In fact, according to online news portal *The Wire*, there is 83% overlap between the contents of IPC and BNS. One of the major talking points of the BNS bill is that it does away

with Section 124(a) of the IPC. The word “sedition” finds no mention in this new set of laws. However, Section 150 of the BNS Bill provides a legal definition that uses the phrase “endangering the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India” in its place. Not just that, the new definition does absolutely nothing to address one of the biggest concerns of legal and social activists with the original crime—an ambiguous definition that can be twisted and used according to the State’s will. The BNS does very little for gender justice and equality, too. There is still no provision for recognising marital rape as a crime, despite the government’s claim that the protection of women’s rights is a core principle of the new set of laws. A section for recognising men as victims of sexual assault is also missing, despite being a major talking point in legal circles for a long time now. An entire chapter is dedicated to ‘Offences against Women and Children’ which, despite being a step towards the protection of women, excludes non-binary people from its ambit. Opposition leaders, including Congress member and veteran lawyer Kapil Sibal, have criticized the Bill for containing provisions in Section 150 that permit the State to curb individual rights and freedom. A number of legal and social activists have called out the government by accusing it of a lack of transparency and consultation during the process of formulating the BNS. The manner in which the Bill was introduced in Parliament on the last day of the Monsoon session, allowing very limited time for discussions, has also raised a lot of eyebrows. While the BNS Bill does take a step in the right direction by formulating stricter laws on contemporary problems like mob lynching and cyber-terrorism, it mostly feels like

the same coffee in a different mug. It is hard to understand whether the aim is to simply Indianize the legal system by using a Hindi name for the legal codes (which is problematic in itself, given that it pushes for Hindi with a disregard for regional languages) or whether the government wants to adopt a gradual approach to modernize the legal system after their recent experiences, all while trying to enforce changes without giving people time to process and understand them in a proper manner. Whatever the case may be, it is quite evident that while the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita may have been introduced with the intention of modernizing the legal system by doing away with colonial laws, it still has a long way to go in order to achieve that objective. It is too similar to the IPC to bring about any real upheaval in the judicial system in its present state.

## Quote of the Month

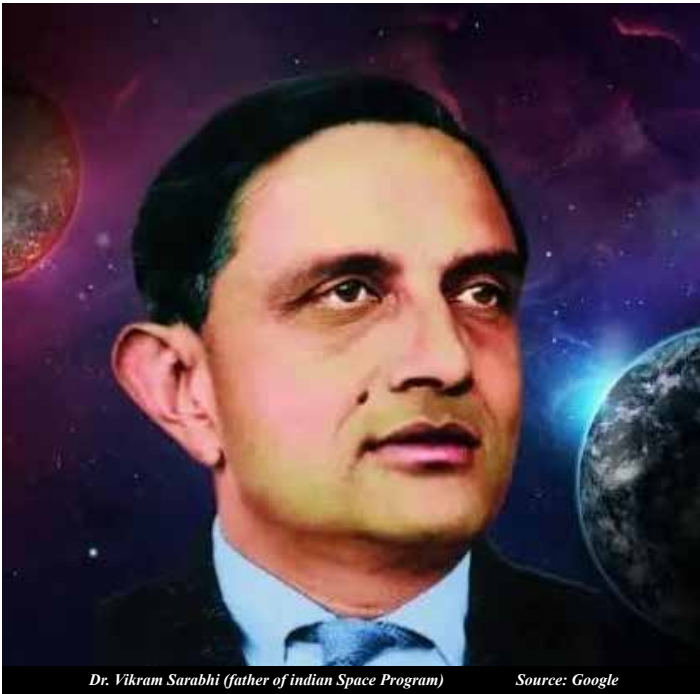
“

**Everyone has an inspirational story to tell, but sometimes it is not inspiring enough for themselves.**

—Farheen Halder

# Reaching for the Moon

*Mohul Sen, BA Sem 3*



*Dr. Vikram Sarabhi (father of Indian Space Program)*

*Source: Google*

As Vikram has now landed, here is the story of the man whose dreams took us to the moon.

Vikram Sarabhai was succeeded by brilliant and capable leaders, but it was his vision that continued to shape India's space programme long after his death.

Indians looking at the night sky on August 23 might have felt the moon shine brighter than it ever did before. The silver orb that hangs over us, waxing and waning every fortnight, acquired a sudden familiarity and proximity with the successful advance of the Chandrayaan-3 mission. The momentous occasion was the achievement of hundreds of scientists and engineers over many years. But it was also an opportune time to remember the man who started it all and whose name, since 1974, has graced a small, bowl-shaped crater (the Sarabhai crater) on the Mare Serenitatis

in the north-east quadrant of the Moon. The idea of a poor and newly independent country like India entering a field requiring technology and investment, such as space research, seemed unimaginably audacious. And the programme was equally so, with Vikram encouraging bright, young scientists and engineers such as Vasant Gowarikar and Abdul Kalam (among many) to join and setting them challenging tasks with threadbare resources on the beaches of Thumba, a fishing village in Kerala. Henri Cartier Bresson captured the slapdash energy of the enterprise in evocative black-and-white photographs, including an iconic one of two scientists casually transporting a nose cone on a bicycle.

The cheekiness was counterbalanced by a highly evolved vision. In 1963, when the Soviets had just launched

the world's first synchronous satellite, Vikram was already thinking of using satellites for communications. He envisaged applications for space in agriculture, forestry, oceanography, mineral prospecting, and cartography. And in a 1966 paper on 'Space Activity for Developing Countries', he hoped that space activity would stimulate growth in electronics and cybernetics and create a new culture of collaboration between countries and specialisations.

Vikram's dream was to link technology with development, serving the needs of the masses while nurturing a highly sophisticated work culture and scientific abilities. One of his favourite phrases was 'leapfrogging' which referred to his faith in the power of technology to enable developing countries to circumvent the long processes followed by the west. His ideas created a

'big sensation internationally', according to Japanese space scientist Hideo Itokawa, and birthed ambitious schemes such as the world's first experiment in direct broadcasting by satellite using an American ATS-6 on loan to transmit locally produced content to 2,400 backward Indian villages.

Here is what he had to say about the effects of science: "A person who has imbibed the ways of science injects into a situation a new way of looking at it, hopefully perhaps a degree of enlightenment."

Now that the talented and spirited people of the Indian Space Research Organisation have scaled a new horizon and made us proud and euphoric by taking us to the moon, it is tempting to speculate on how the visionary founder of the space programme might have viewed the potential impact of this achievement.



*Chandrayaan-3*

*Source: Google*

# Tale of Toto's Tune

*Abhirup Pal, MA Sem I*

**"Legi patong ma chamu ma pa  
Iyo go apa e patong legi e na legi  
Na mani ni dolenge dolenge nu do."**

*(Without Patong forest cannot be removed,  
with this patong our ancestors hashed  
the forest and hatched food for us)*

This Toto family has preserved the Toto culture and Toto songs (excerpt of one of the songs is mentioned in the beginning) for nearly seven decades. They are originally from Bhutan and, even further, from China and Mongolia. They set out crossing borders, ultimately reaching Salasabadi near the Samuktala border of Coochbehar in the realm of the Shamu kingdom. According to the 1901 census report by Mr. Milligan, their population was only 17. Who are they? They are the Japo.

They are the Huioaboys. They are the slave subjects. They are the 'Totos'. The road that ascends from Toto Para Bazar towards the mountain leads to the border with Bhutan; there, on the other side, lies the Boudube village. In that village, Soidari Toto and her husband Shukra Toto live in a house that is notably different

from the other houses, constructed using traditional Toto architectural techniques that are now fading into obscurity. The entire house is made of bamboo and local materials, and it seems like a part of the surrounding nature.

This Toto family has preserved the Toto culture and Toto songs for nearly seven decades. They vocalise songs about the plantation of 'Kaun' (a type of millet), Jhum cultivation, and traditional folk practices of collecting roots from forests and seeking forgiveness from the animals and birds to obtain their habitat for cultivation, as well as the changing practices due to the influence of mainstream culture. Their diet, relying on market-based food habits, has limited the diversity of their food list. The knowledge of collecting from the jungle and herbal remedies—everything now seems to be hinted



Members of Toto Community in India

Photo: Abhirup Pal

at being forgotten, perhaps in the wrath of this community's own public crisis.

Since the number of Totos in Topara is decreasing, the number of Nepali Biharis has tripled. As a result, vermilion coating is being applied to the Shivlinga in the natural shelter of the Totos today. The process of imposing the practices of Hinduism has erased their traditional folk culture. In the past, the Totos lived beyond the Sati River in Bhutan. However, their interaction was with the Doya tribe, whose language was not Jangkha but Doya. When even King Nalang imposed the Jangkha

language in Bhutan as an official one, the Toto were pushed outside Bhutan's borders. Kaliccharan Toto and Indrajit Toto are the kajji, or principal priests, in the Toto society. These two experienced individuals expressed their concerns differently. Primarily, they expressed sorrow over the mindset of the young generation of Totos, who neither want to learn nor listen to the old songs of the Totos. Dhuniram Toto and Satyajit Toto's initiative to revitalise their own language and cultural heritage faces the question of whether all Totos can be involved in their endeavour.

# The Soft Power of Bollywood

*Shruti Binani, MA Sem I*

The convergence of varied cultures across the globe has engendered a paradigm shift in the evolution of mankind. We are pacing towards a flourishing future that recognises the world as one cumulative entity, housing people from countless ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds. With the onset of the digital revolution and cultural globalisation, the avenues to express

and propagate Indian beliefs and interests have escalated. Bollywood is definitely one of the most prominent reasons India is establishing its niche in the global space. More often than not, films are associated with terms like limelight and glamour. Yet, they effortlessly impact viewers as they can melt our hearts, convey diverse perspectives, and establish a global

influence with every new release. One tends to seamlessly relate to the spirit of a movie, irrespective of how meaningfully he or she can decode its language. This is the profound power and potential that Bollywood holds; it can move the masses down a softer road without any need for coercion. It taps intangible resources such as culture to usher the true essence of Indian cinema into the international picture. Although opportunities in Bollywood are largely status-oriented, it hasn't failed to connect with audiences on a global scale. For instance, the legendary Raj Kapoor enjoyed a massive fan following in Russia during the 1950s and 1960s. The heartwarming love that his movie "Awaraz" won from

Russian audiences outlines the intensity with which he magnetised people from a completely different culture back then. Superstars such as Shah Rukh Khan and Amitabh Bachchan have garnered massive popularity in the West, clearly projecting them as global ambassadors. While we are cognizant of Indian cinema's success in foreign countries, there is a socio-political aspect that underlines the soft power of Bollywood. When even the hardest attempts to untangle strained international relations fail, Bollywood unfolds its influence. It is astonishing to see how incredibly well Aamir Khan's films do in China, contrary to the unstable trajectory of Indo-China relationships. Moreover, the worst of In-





Shah Rukh Khan (L) & Amitabh Bachchan (R)  
Source: Google

do-Pak tensions couldn't deprive a film like "Bajrangi Bhaijaan" of tasting massive success and positive reception from the audience across the border. This is the extraordinary impact that cinema can create and transcend nations. Films are not mere sources of entertainment but help propagate relevant messages across the world. Apart from films, Bollywood has

undoubtedly demarcated a unique way to propagate the nuances of Indian culture internationally. Whether it is seeing Deepika Padukone as the presenter for the 95th Academy Awards or Alia Bhatt serving as the house ambassador of a global fashion giant like Gucci, Bollywood stars are definitely carving niche spaces for themselves on international platforms. Furthermore, with Indian films gaining critical acclaim at the Cannes Film Festival and the Oscars, there is a sizable overseas market for exported films, leading to mutual economic benefits for the countries involved in the exchange. All in all, as communities continue to evolve and the world gets closer and smaller, Bollywood, a significant player on the block, has an immeasurable role to play in shaping global dynamics in the years to come.

exquisite traditional folk handicrafts, also known as Madhubani paintings. Additionally, nearby locations like Jetwarpur, Ranti, Rasidpur, Bacchi, and Ratangarh are renowned for their distinctive art. Since it is popular in the Mithila Region of Bihar, Madhubani painting is also known as Mithila art. It is distinguished by line drawings packed with vivid colours and contrasts or patterns.

This particular art form has many fascinating features; let's understand a few of them:

#### Relationship to legends:

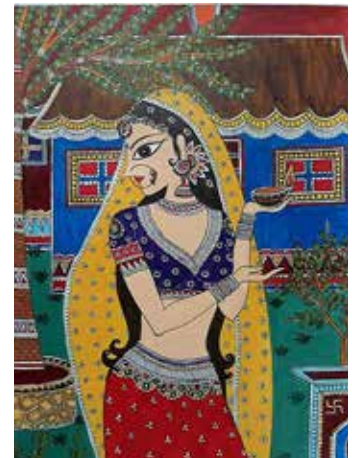
This art style has its roots in the Ramayana, which took place when Lord Rama was the ruler of Ayodhya in North India. According to mythology, Janak, the King of Mithila, hired a group of painters to create stunning works of art to decorate the wedding venue for the union of Ram and Sita.

#### Tradition and profession:

Both women in the countryside have long used madhubani painting as a way to decorate their huts, both inside and out, for special social and religious occasions. With the passage of time, it changed from a folk culture tradition to a well-known style of Indian art. In the past, the walls of the chambers where newlywed couples spent their first night as husband and wife were painted with signs and symbols of sexual pleasure. Women no longer hold the monopoly on Madhubani painting because men have started practicing it professionally in Bihar's rural communities.

Topics with a religious undertone: The religious symbols and ideals of Indians have a significant influence on the theme of Madhubani painting. The love of nature and devotion to the Hindu gods inspire both amateurs and experts in this traditional Indian art form. Through the use of a colour palette on both fabric and canvas, they depict the well-known myths of Rama, Krishna, Durga, Kali, Shiva, Lakshmi, Saraswati, and Indra, as well as abstract themes from the royal courts and everyday objects.

#### Close to the natural world:



Traditional Indian Beauty in Madhubani Paintings Source: Google

The painters of Madhubani Painting are known for their lively depictions of natural objects like the sun, moon, flowers, birds, and medicinal plants like tulsi. The artists of the past employed natural materials such as cow dung and charcoal, soot, turmeric, flowers, plants, leaves, rice powder, sandalwood, and indigo to create organic colours. The artwork on the walls and floors was neither sophisticated nor particularly simple. Even now, the mainstays of Madhubani art are the beauty of themes, the delicate sketching, and the flamboyance of colours.

#### Link with Tantra:

Although it is still up for debate, some art curators claim that Madhubani painting was connected to the tantric culture of ancient India. Tantric practices have been practiced by the Saiva and Sakti people in the Bihar region of Mithila. The literary works of the poet Vidyapati, who lived in the 12th century, make mention of the tantric relationship between Madhubani paintings.

In this fast-paced world of commercialization where our eyes can't see anything apart from the television screen, billboards, and advertisements, let's learn how to appreciate the finer details of life. Things that actually require hard work and talent. Having an eye for class and originality starts here. Such talent deserves a place at international fairs and markets.

# Bonding With the Roots

Diya Shah, MA Sem 3



Mithila Art of Bihar

Source: Google

These long-forgotten artistic traditions have endured. It's time to rekindle our roots by delving deep into them. It is important to preserve the history and culture of our country. India has a rich cultural legacy, and Madhubani is a tradi-

tional art form that demonstrates its originality. North Bihar's Madhubani, which translates to "Forest of Honey," is a location close to the Darbhanga district. These locations fall under the Mithilanchal region and are known for their

# Echoes of 'Taali' Heard Far and Wide

Saptarni Sarkar, MA Sem 1



Sushmita Sen as Shreegauri Sawant in 'Taali'

Source: Google

The web series "Taali," on Jio Cinema, directed by Ravi Jadhav and written by Kartik D Nishandar, traces the life of transgender activist Shreegauri Sawant. The series went on to become one of India's biggest original web series in just 10 days, with 2.5 crore views and an IMDb rating of 8.5. Shreegauri Sawant accomplished the seemingly unachievable: convincing the Supreme Court of India to recognise the existence of people who have always been marginalised by society, despised by their birth parents, and compelled to beg for a living.

A complete cinematic work devoted to the brave mother, activist, and social worker was long overdue after the Vicks campaign, "Touch of Care," which successfully fused two divisive topics: adoption and transgender rights.

The journey of a young and confused Ganesh to an enigmatic Gauri is an everyday story that we are often too oblivious to notice. Ganesh has conflicting ideas about his sexuality and tries to juggle the pressure from his "Dada" (father), who is merely disappointed with his existence. The sequences of

the little boy draping his mother's saree, putting lipstick and bindi on, followed by the glow of happiness on his face, strike a chord in every viewer's heart.

Although Krutika Deo's performance as Ganesh is a visual pleasure, the hasty writing struggles to hold the audience's attention in sensitive moments where Ganesh loses his mother or leaves his house with a radio in the pouring rain only to never come home again. One could barely start to ponder the analogies of rain and radio as desertion before being abruptly diverted by Susmita, the most delightful distraction.

Susmita's portrayal of Gauri is mostly "a one-woman show" and "a queen's play." The actor, a master of her craft, handles scenes of the hardship of a sex change procedure and the repercussions that result in unbearable pain with the highest wisdom and grace. The combination of husky voice and expressive eyes tied together with a look sporting a beautifully draped Maharashtrian saree and large Usha Uthup style 'Bindis' transports us to another world.

The narrative, however, loses its

strength in parts where it shows heartbreaking scenes and immediately moves on to cringe-fest the next chapter of Gauri's life without giving the audience time to process everything and sigh with grief. Childhood sequences, which were actually a quest for Ganesh to find Gauri within her, were hurriedly shown and treated as subplots.

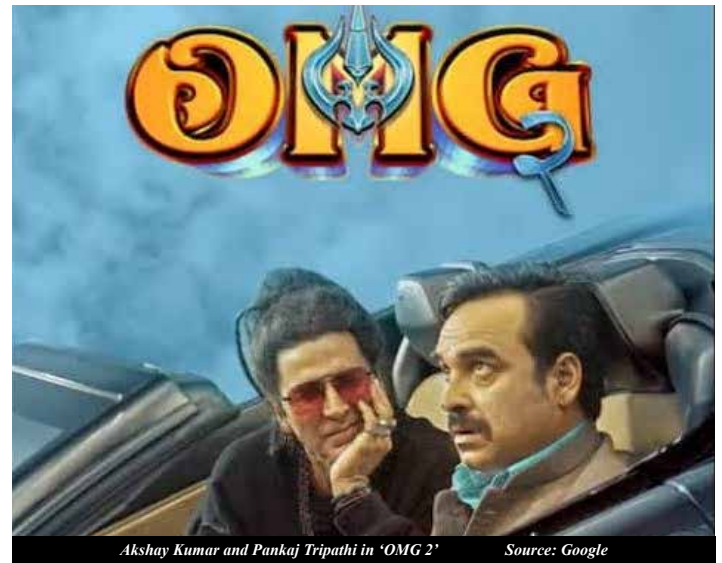
Gauri speaks in dialogues and rhymes as an adult. Susmita's flawless enunciation, though, helps her get through sequences that, for the filmy speech, might have been a cringe-fest. Hard-hitting lines like "Jiss desh mein kutton tak ka census hota hain par transgender ka nahi.. aisa desh mein aap

logon ke beech mein jeena that is scary" ("Living in a country that has a census for dogs but not transgenders...amidst people like you... that is scary") hit the soft spot of the audience. The creators deserve extra points for the unpredictable and powerful climax sequence when Gauri, steadfast in her approach and crouched in a position to disrupt the authorities' snoozing, claps, shrieks, and squeals to demand the right to be treated with dignity after the death of one of her deceased friends. Such exquisitely written, nuanced scenes make Taali all-in-all a must-watch for anyone wanting to binge on heartfelt quality content over the weekends.

# Oh My God 2

## A MOVIE REVIEW

Shrimantika Chatterjee & Leon David, MA Sem 3



Akshay Kumar and Pankaj Tripathi in 'OMG 2'

Source: Google

Akshay Kumar, Pankaj Tripathi and Yami Gautam starrer 'OMG 2 – Oh My God 2' gives emphasis on the importance of Sex Education. Amit Rai, known for his storytelling prowess through films like 'Road to Sangam' and 'Ting-

ya', takes the helm of 'OMG 2', delivering a more polished and impactful narrative centered on family dynamics and the need for sex education. The film delves into India's persisting taboo around sex education, successfully breaking



free from societal constraints to convey its message effectively.

'OMG 2' follows the journey of Kanti Sharan Mudgal (Pankaj Tripathi), a devout follower of Lord Shiva and a dedicated father and husband. His story encapsulates the complexities of parent-child relationships, offering a fresh perspective on society's dynamics. Overwhelmed by grief and societal shame, Kanti realizes his son has been misguided due to a lack of proper sex education. In a divine twist of fate, a messenger of Lord Shiva, played by Akshay Kumar, intervenes to guide him toward courage and truth.

Motivated by this celestial guidance, Kanti challenges the school for failing to provide his child with the necessary education on the topic. The film's climactic courtroom showdown, in its latter half, introduces Yami Gautam as Kamini Maheshwari, who skilfully defends the school's stance.

The legal battle between Yami Gautam's Kamini Maheshwari and Pankaj Tripathi's Kanti Sharan



Akshay Kumar and Pankaj Tripathi in 'OMG 2' Source: Google

Mudgal serves as the narrative's focal point. Through compelling arguments from Kamini and powerful counterpoints from Kanti, the film navigates a riveting and thought-provoking path. Within this courtroom drama, 'OMG 2' adeptly mirrors a society grappling with deeply ingrained taboos surrounding sex education. The interplay between these characters not only captivates but also reflects broader societal challenges.

Akshay Kumar, as Lord Shiva's messenger, aids and counsels Kanti. The film fundamentally advocates for a sensible and responsible approach to sex education within schools, as students otherwise rely on potentially misguided external sources.

The cast, featuring Pawan Malhotra as the Judge, Govind Namdev as a Pujari, Arun Govil as the Principal, and Brijendra Kala as a Doctor, collectively contributes to the

story's progression through stellar performances. Enhanced by spirited background music and catchy songs like 'Har Har Mahadev' and 'Oonchi Oonchi Waadi', the film effortlessly merges entertainment with the crucial discourse on sex education. The result is an experience that blends subtle humour and well-crafted dialogues, making it suitable for family viewing.

In conclusion, 'OMG 2' transcends conventional cinema boundaries, emerging as a thought-provoking and engaging endeavour. It skilfully intertwines entertainment with essential educational themes, addressing pertinent subjects and societal stigmas with a balanced mix of sensitivity and profundity.

This cinematic undertaking bridges the gap between entertainment and indispensable education, urging audiences to contemplate and engage with its profound social message. As the credits roll, it becomes evident that 'OMG 2' strongly encourages the youth to embrace the responsibility of shaping a more informed and enlightened future.

## SONGS RECOMMENDATIONS



**Je veux**  
Zaz



**Classic**  
MKTO



**Drive By**  
Train



**Les Oiseaux**  
Pomme



**Let Me Move You**  
Mario



**Parallel**  
G.E.M

# From the Abyss to the Spotlight

*Sanya Bagaria, BA Sem 1*



*The Rising Star: Naman Chandak*

*Source: Google*

**“Dil na umeed nahi, nakaam hee toh hai,  
Lambi hai gham ki sham magar kya, sham  
hee toh hai!”**

***(The heart is not hopeless; it has just failed  
once. The evening of sorrow might be long,  
but it's just an evening).***

**-Naman Chandak, B.M.S Sem 3**

In just one year, I've participated in 45 competitions, securing a position in 42 of them, including national competitions. I've written two books and several poems. I've even had the privilege of judging competitions and being a guest of honour at events, despite being an 18-year-old. I've done over 10 shows and 60 open mics, college shows, and opening acts for renowned comics. Forgive me

if you think that I am gloating, but I've also escaped an abyss of despair. This is my journey, a testament to resilience, hope, and the unwavering spirit to turn darkness into light.

We have often heard that it takes one moment to change our lives. Well, in my case, there have been multiple. For any student, the Class 12 board examination is a significant milestone. However,

academics became the last of my priorities when my closest friend abandoned me during this crucial period. It may seem trivial, but loneliness can be fatal, especially when you have no one to turn to while experiencing debilitating panic attacks that leave you struggling to breathe. Initially, I thought time would heal these wounds, but it didn't. Finding solace in cigarettes, sleeping pills, and other substances led me down a dangerous path of addiction. My health deteriorated rapidly, and I began vomiting blood.

The final nail in the coffin was when, after three sleepless nights, I couldn't bear it anymore. In a desperate attempt to end my pain, I decided to end my life. Waking up two days later seemed like a miracle, a second chance at life that I knew I had to seize.

Embarking on a path of recovery is easier said than done. Society treated me with disdain, compounding my mental anguish. However, I was determined to prove myself and turn my life around. I channelled all the pain and anger within me to become a better person. I had learned a valuable lesson from my survival: life was worth living.

With nothing to lose, my journey truly began on July 20, 2022, marking the start of the second chapter of my life. Despite the ongoing battle with PTSD, health issues, panic attacks, anxiety, and depression, I persevered. Unfortunately, it was a battle fought alone.

As a journalist for The Telegraph in Schools for the past 7 years now, writing articles, reports, and interviewing famous personalities have been part of my job, and I have always enjoyed the process. During my toughest days last year,

writing helped me heal. When there was no one to lend an ear or a shoulder to lean on, it helped me express my inner thoughts and made me the person that I am today.

Emotions are an integral part of what I write, so poetry came naturally to me. Stand-up comedy was something that I was intrigued by but had no plans to pursue. All of it changed, perhaps for the better, when I won my first competition at St. Xavier's University, Kolkata, and later went on to be awarded 'Star of Umang' at The Bhawanipur Education Society College, Kolkata.

Making someone laugh is a difficult job, but it's incredibly rewarding. When my jokes elicit a smile, I feel grateful for the opportunity to be the person who makes someone's day, even though there was a time when I couldn't brighten his own life. This is the reason that I established the "Mic Drop Comedy Club," hosting at least two to three shows every month, which are mostly sold out.

The smiles that I cherish the most, though, belong to my family. When I was honoured by our Vice Chancellor, Reverend Father Felix Raj, and was presented the Surrendra Paul Memorial Award for Courage at the Telegraph School awards in front of more than 2000 people at Science City Auditorium, they were over the moon.

Today, as my journey gets featured on platforms such as *The Telegraph*, I know that it will inspire countless individuals going through similar challenges. From being called a loser to being a survivor and now in the spotlight, I think I've made the class 8 boy in me proud by becoming the artist he always wanted to be.

# Behind The Limelight

Swastika Roy, BA Sem 1

She is a content creator, an actor, an Instagram sensation, and one of the 101 top influencers around the nation for the year 2023 for *Lutopia Magazine*, but who is she? Suhani Kapoor, a student of St. Xavier's University, Kolkata, pursuing a Bachelor's in Mass Communication, is our next star to keep an eye out for.

She was 12 years old when she began creating content and has been growing in the field ever since. In the month of February, she featured in her first musical video alongside singer Rangon, which hit around 8.4K views within a few months. Social media has given Suhani a new identity—the identity of a content creator, an actor, and an artist.

However, do we really know what lies behind the lens and the limelight? An 18-year-old who is just as sensitive and caring as any of us.

The difference is that her glamorous profession often undermines and eclipses her struggles, as well as the years of sweat and tears that she has put into building her life. Her journey has been inspirational for not only content creators but for this generation at large. Currently, she has a following of 127K followers on Instagram and even had an impressive number of followers on 'TikTok' (previously known as 'Musical.ly') before it got banned. That being said, all that glitters is not gold. Being a public figure, she is often exposed to trolls and severely harsh comments that have the power to shatter a person's confidence. Trolls like "Why are you so thin", and "Go work in the kitchen; this is not where you belong", are the decent ones that she mentioned, let alone the abuse that is subjected to on a regular basis. However, this strong young girl



Suhani Kapoor (BA Sem 1)

Source: Instagram



Suhani Kapoor (BA Sem 1)

Source: Instagram

has the power to conquer the world with her talent and never lets people behind screens demoralise her. Being a social media star comes with further complications. Lack of privacy and security is a vulnerability that every content creator has to witness on a daily basis. Pictures could be misused, your identity may be stolen or worse, someone might hack your account and destroy everything that you've been working hard for. It was one fine morning when she woke up to losing her Instagram account with 50k followers. With repeated emails to the Instagram help center, her account remained irretrievable. However, as the powerful saying goes, "hard work will always pay; if not today, then some other day". Her optimism helped her regain her followers, and her consistent effort has made her successful today. As the saying goes, It is not as easy as it seems. While having a conversation, she casually mentioned her work schedule. She wakes up at 8.30 in the morning, attends college, completes assignments, does content creation in the evening, and then her collaborations at times extend to 3 in the morning. Though

her sleep schedule can barely be called one, she puts up with everything since this is her passion.

Where does the motivation and love for her work come from? It is strange that we judge a book by its cover and often tag people as being too arrogant, too polite, or too snobbish. Suhani suffered through her childhood days, as her friends always judged her. As a result, she hardly had anyone to confide in. The camera thus became her best friend, and content creation gave her a much-needed confidence boost.

Suhani strives to create her own unique style, not just in her career as an actor but as a person behind the camera. She aspires to spread love and give strength to young girls of her generation, just like her inspiration, Bollywood star Deepika Padukone. After all, what keeps her going is the love she receives from strangers through Instagram messages and their kindness towards her.

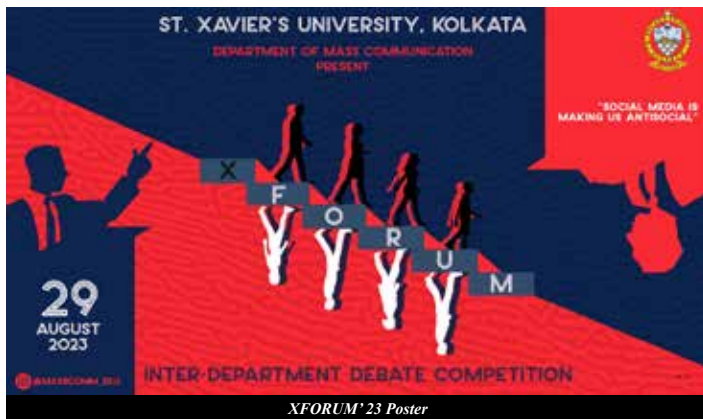
We hope Suhani reaches the highest form of success that she desires and deserves and continues to make our entire Xaverian family proud!



## XFORUM 2023

# Debate Competition Organised By the Department of Mass Communication

Debdyuti Sarkar, BA Sem 3



XFORUM'23 Poster

On August 29, 2023, the students of BA Mass Communication, Semester 5, organised XFORUM, an inter-departmental debate. The Dean of Arts and Social Studies, Dr. Achyut Chetan, graced the event along with other faculty members of the departments. The participants included two students from each department. They were divided into teams and asked to present their stances for and against the motion, 'Social Media is Making Us Anti-social'.

XFORUM 1.0 was the initiative of Semester 5 students Krish Saini and Aishwarya Iyerr. Dr. Ashok Kumar Mohapatra from the English Department and Dr. Srenwantee Bhattacharjee from the Social Work Department were the esteemed judges. Upon interviewing the participants across the different departments and asking them to share their experiences, each of them expressed how they felt that

the motion was very relevant and relatable in today's time. At first glance, it might have seemed that the topic was too simplistic, but the organisers from the Department of Mass Communication opined that there were many layers to the topic waiting to be peeled off and analysed.

Dr. Chetan expressed his views on the topic, stating the importance of the psychological aspects of being addicted to social media and how this addiction leads to self-isolation. Aryayan Bhowmik and Gokul Nair from the English department emerged as the Best Team in the debate. Gokul Nair was awarded the Best Speaker. All of the arguments they brought to the table were very coherent. The debate emerged as a landmark event for the upcoming events of the Department of Mass Communication, with the presence and support of faculty members, students, and able leaders.

## Xphoria 3.0

Shivangi Basu, MA Sem 3



MASEM 1 & 3

Source: File Photo

From 'Meenamma' (*Chennai Express*) to 'Robin' (*How I Met Your Mother*), some of our beloved characters graced the red carpet of Xphoria 3.0, organised by the Department of Mass Communication under the guidance of Dr. Harish Kumar, Head of the Department. The Postgraduate Semester 1 students were given a warm welcome by their seniors on September 13, 2023, at Room 323, Academic Building, while the undergraduate students put on a great show for their juniors on September 14, 2023, at Arrupe Hall.

The themes this year were 'Roll, Camera, Action!' (PG) and 'Sit-coms' (UG), which allowed the students to put their best foot forward and dress up as characters who have entertained us with their iconic dialogues and tickled our funny bones. Since social media and its privacy concerns are pertinent issues that we are grappling with, the Master Degree students

participated in a panel discussion and opined on various aspects such as microtargeting by intermediary platforms, privacy policy loops, the Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2023, and the ethical considerations associated with social media privacy breaches. In the second half, renditions of popular songs and dance performances by seniors were met with loud cheers from the juniors. The UG students organised a jamming session to build camaraderie with their juniors, followed by another segment, 'A Minute to Fame', during which the juniors demonstrated their talents and skills. The event concluded with students from all semesters coming together and dancing their hearts out.

All in all, both events brought students closer as members of the Xaverian family and created an atmosphere that is conducive to mutual learning and collaboration in the coming days.



BASM 1, 3 & 5

Source: File Photo

## India is Winning Big Not Just in Cricket



Neeraj Chopra Source: Google

### World Athletics Championship, 2023

Neeraj Chopra wins gold at the men's javelin throw event.



Indian Men's Relay Team Source: Google

### World Athletics Championship 2023

The Indian men's 4×400m relay team breaks the Asian record of 2:59:51 and finishes second at 2:59:05 to secure a place in the finals.



Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa Source: Google

### FIDE Chess World Cup, 2023

Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa bags the second place and secures his position in the Candidates Tournament, 2024.



Indian Men's Hockey Team Source: Google

### Asian Championship Trophy, 2023

Indian Men's Hockey Team defeats Malaysia in the finals.

## Mohun Bagan vs East Bengal: A Tale of Two Rivals

Erica Roy, MA Sem 3



Mohun Bagan vs East Bengal Source: Google

Although cricket dominates India's sports scene, football fans in Kolkata may beg to differ. A match between Mohun Bagan and East Bengal, popularly known as the Kolkata Derby, is so much more than just that. With the capability of causing curfews and family rifts, it is an emotion and a sentiment rich in history. The rivalry between these two giants dates back a century, rooted in our colonial past. After the partition, Bengalis from the west of the region came to be known as "Ghotis" and those from the east (Bangladesh) were called "Bangals". This cultural association is the fuel that stokes the strife between these two teams and their staunch supporters,

taking the feud beyond the field to as far as the fish market. One of the oldest clubs in Asia, Mohun Bagan, established in 1889, gained popularity after beating East Yorkshire Regiment in the 1911 IFA Shield final (while playing barefoot). In its early days, even though Mohun Bagan's players were a mix of both communities, the club was predominantly run by the Ghotis. In 1920, a milestone event occurred that shaped the course of Bengal's football history. That year, Mohun Bagan was set to play against another Kolkata club, Jora Bagan, in the Cooch Behar Cup. During the same match, Jora Bagan opted not to field their star



player, Sailesh Bose, for some unknown reason. Suresh Chandra Chaudhuri, an industrialist and the then vice president of Jora Bagan, was perplexed by the decision and tried to argue with the other club officials for Bose's inclusion. His pleas, though, fell on deaf ears, and during the heated interaction, it was implied that Bose was being held back because he hailed from Bangladesh (then East Bengal). Chaudhuri, flabbergasted, stormed off with Bose by his side. And a few days later, on August 1, 1920, Chaudhuri established East Bengal along with Manmatha Nath Chaudhuri (Raja of Santosh, after whom the Santosh Trophy was named), Sailesh Bose, Ramesh Chandra (Nasha) Sen, and Aurobindo Ghosh. As the name suggests, the club began to be emblematic of the immigrant population in Kolkata coming from East Bengal (across the river Padma, now in Bangladesh). Thus, East Bengal began to symbolise the millions of immigrants, often treated as outsiders at the time, while Mohun Bagan

represented the established bastion of the affluent Ghotis, both on and off the football pitch.

Since 1925, these archenemies have faced off several times, and each time the match has been as nail-biting an affair as it is today. The Durand Cup 2023 bore witness to this iconic rivalry not once but twice. Once in the group stage match, in which East Bengal FC defeated Mohun Bagan SG 1-0 after 4 years. And once again in the finale, teams battled each other, although this time a solitary goal by Dimitri Petratos in the 71st minute sealed the fate of Mohun Bagan, leading to their victory against their arch-nemesis.

Notwithstanding the match results, it is undeniable that it is the very essence of competitiveness between these two favourites that keeps the football scenario in Bengal alive and kicking. And even though both the teams and their supporters have undergone massive changes over the years, the emotional connection is still the same; it is still deeply personal.

# Not a Level Playing Field

Shivangi Basu, MA Sem 3

*“Hamari choriya choro se kam hai kya?”  
(Our daughters are no less than our sons)*

Aamir Khan's dialogue from the movie “Dangal” is often used as a celebratory caption when female athletes from India excel in international events. It is indeed ironic yet incredibly appalling that Vinesh Phogat, niece of wrestling coach Mahavir Singh Phogat, is one of the many women sportspersons who have been subjected to the throes of patriarchy and are currently exposing the virulent subculture that governs the sphere of sports in India. Let me be fair to my country, though; the condition is equally deplorable in other nations as well.

Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh and Luis Rubiales are like two peas in a pod. Debatable? Yes, if you are thinking along the lines of language, nationality, physical appearance, career trajectories, and other objective parameters. However, they are both

entitled men at the helm of affairs in one of the highest sports bodies in their respective countries. At least they were until sexual allegations were made against Singh, the former head of the Wrestling Federation of India. Rubiales, the then President of the Spanish Football Federation, found himself in the weeds over the World Cup kiss controversy involving Spanish Forward, Jennifer Hermoso. It got progressively worse as they blamed third parties for false concoctions. The Indian Chief was crying wolf over political opponents, while his Spanish counterpart and his mother on a hunger strike were accusing fake feminists of a witch hunt. Therefore, not only are they sexual offenders, but they had refused to shoulder any responsibility and had shown no remorse in their token public apology. These perpetrators will make



Indian wrestlers at Jantar Mantar

Source: Google

you believe that they are not at fault, and unfortunately, they are partially right.

We need to view these instances through the lenses of power and gender imbalances. Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh is a Member of Parliament representing the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and a devout champion of Hindutva politics. He can be a formidable opponent for anyone, especially for young girls who rarely have a safety net to fall back upon. Renowned World Champions like Sakshi Malik and Vinesh Phogat have come forward and spoken about his misdemeanours after years of silence. From within the comforts of our homes, we often resort to blaming the victim by commenting that they should have taken action much earlier, but it is easier said than done. Not only were their careers, for which they must have sacrificed the world, at stake, but given the political climate of our nation, they might have been prosecuted like other dissenters in recent times. The power dynamics are completely skewed and not conducive to the proper delivery of justice. Add to this the vulnerability often associated with women, and you will find yourself surrounded by horrific instances of female subjugation. Rubiales, a notable figure in the Spanish football scene, referred to his forced kiss as ‘consensual’,

refused to hand in his resignation, and was at the receiving end of thunderous applause by a room full of officials, with the audience being predominantly men who, at best, do not understand the concept of consent, or at worst, simply do not care. This invisible ownership over women players needs to be identified, addressed, and dismantled.

Then, who is at fault? The silent victims, the audacious perpetrators, or the unbothered government bodies? Have we, as ignorant spectators, normalised and, in many ways, propagated this toxic culture? All of us are to blame. We have been conditioned in a way that we are compliant with authority and seldom have the courage to confront those in power. As a society, we fail when we value gold medals more than the well-being of the medalist; we fail when we do not hold the government accountable; and most importantly, we fail when we question the character of the victim and instil in them a fear of social ostracization. The introduction of a code of conduct and stringent laws has no merit unless accompanied by a paradigm shift in our treatment of women sportspersons. Only then will we realise that there is a long way to go, beyond a semblance of pay parity and basic respect, when it comes to levelling the playing field.



Vinesh Phogat, Bajrang Punia & Sakshi Malik at Protest Site

Source: Google

# Homecoming

Aparajita Roy, MA Sem 3



Potters in Kumartuli

Source: Google

While I sit at home watching across my window with a cup of tea and a novel in hand, a familiar and pleasing noise interrupts my time. I look over only to realize that my favourite time of the year is right around the corner. When the first bamboo is dropped on the ground to spread the whiff of 'Pujo Asche', our vexation with the constant noise magically transforms into sheer happiness and excitement. Every corner of Kolkata is dressed like a newlywed bride every year around this time, but the place that witnesses the greatest amount of preparation is Kumartuli. The name Kumartuli literally means potter's abode (Kumar-potter, tuli-abode). On the day of the *Rath Yatra*, the kumars begin with the preparatory rituals for idol-making, which commence with the formation of the wooden structure. The second stage is the application of mud. There are myriad social connotations associated with this step. The potter is required to mix mud from the banks of the sacred River Ganga, cow dung and, most importantly, mud from a brothel's courtyard. The religious bearings are evident, but the '*punya mati*' (sacred soil) from the brothels celebrates the

essence of womanhood. With this, the potters proceed to the third stage of moulding and shaping the colossal idols of 10-handed Durga along with her children. Finally, it never fails to amaze me how the mortal hands of kumars paint the epitome of divinity in the middle of a bustling city. The onset of pujo is marked with '*Khuti pujo*'- the first bamboo which is layed on the ground is worshipped. The old lanes of North Kolkata embrace the abode of *Bonedi Baris* ( the old traditional households of bengal). Before the mud is laid on the wooden structure, the '*kathamo*'- ( the wooden structure on which the idol is created), is worshipped on the day of Rath. It's a respect that is extended to the kathamo post, which, it is believed, will allow the mud to be shaped by itself. In clubs and other pujos, the first bamboo is worshipped as the 'khuti', and the same process is repeated with the khuti too. The day that I hold closest to my heart is that of Mahalaya. Waking up to the voice of Birendra Krishna Bhadra is a yearly ritual followed in almost every Bengali household. This day is also an integral part of the entire festivities, with the

'*Chokkhudan*'- ( the drawing of the goddess's eyes) striking the completion of the idol. This is the day when the lanes are as quiet as a curfew, and the silence is maintained by whoever visits Kumartuli on Mahalaya. The beautifully shaped eyes of the goddess are drawn on this day, and the idol is finally ready to move to the thinnest of lanes in this city. It is said that people in Kolkata do not sleep for these 10 days because they prepare for the homecoming of their beloved daughter. There is an old saying in Bengal: "*Maa Goena Poren Shib Krishna Daw Barite... Bhojon Koren*

**Kumortoli R Abhaycharan Mitrer Barite... Ar Raat Jege Nach Dekhen Shobhabazaar Raj Barite...**"

(The goddess wears her jewellery in Shib Krishna Daw Bari. She eats her meal at the residence of Abhaycharan Mittr and enjoys watching a dance performance at Shobhabazaar Raaj Bari.) The intangible cultural heritage that the festival has been awarded with, only recognizes the tiniest of pieces of the magnanimous occasion. The tradition, the preparation, and the history make it a feeling and not just a mere festival.



Idol of Goddess Durga

Source: Google

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