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Regulars

2

The Union
Budget

3

Oscars

4

Under The
Scanner

6

#StandWithJNU

Chaitanya Kediya writes about the recent protests in the Jawaharlal Nehru University.

A silent revolution sweeps across the nation, and Chandbagh, as the cornerstone of our democracy begins to fade: the freedom of speech and expression. In School, most of us take our freedom to express our thoughts and opinions as a given, whether they be on a platform like the Weekly, on the School Council, over lunch or in our rooms. We realise that there will always exist a difference between our opinions, but we welcome an opposition so that we can further our own arguments, examine issues more carefully and understand an alternative perspective. However what we take for a given within our 70 acres is actually a struggle in public universities around this country.

I will consciously avoid using the word right for a while, because in such a disputed matter there can be no right and wrong, but simply different sides and arguments. The truth is that one cannot even be sure what the truth is today. In such a scenario, perceptions arising from the media become equivalent to proof and this is what we are seeing around us. Suddenly, every student is a revolutionary in the making and before you know it they are treated as if they actually were one. However, this isn't a rant on journalism, because at least today we know what is happening at JNU, thirty years ago nobody knew what happened to numerous students at Jadavpur University, Kolkata and other such institutions.

Today, it has become difficult to draw a line between sedition and freedom of speech; the rule of law is being broken by some of those practising the law; students who dare participate in the political process are being labelled terrorists, anti-nationals and revolutionaries. Our penal code uses the very same law for sedition that was first implemented 150 years ago and used to prosecute our martyrs like Bhagat Singh and Chandrashekhar Azad, it might be time that this nation reviews what it considers 'anti-national'. Sedition as defined by 'us' is when one "brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards the Government established by law in India". So whether they held a rally or memorial for Afzal Guru is not what is important but rather, what the effect of this rally was is important.

The arrest of the JNUSU President showed not only the nation but also the world that India might not actually have the Liberty of thought and expression that is enshrined in its very Preamble. Many have claimed that Kanhaiya's actions weren't aligned with the spirit of the nation, or that he wasn't patriotic, but as Swaminathan Aiyar articulated very powerfully, when he wrote "Patriotism is not merely the last refuge, but the first refuge of many scoundrels." It is time that the government is answerable for its actions, or at least stop this incessant abuse of students. Even if they actually raised slogans against this nation and hurled abuses on their motherland, their arrest is still illegitimate, simply because causality has not been established between what they said, and any actions that were taken.

The speeches made by these students weren't aimed at removing or overthrowing the State, but rather pointing out its flaws. In a speech made by Umar Khalid, one of the students who allegedly raised 'anti-national' banners, he talks about how his words were not pointed at the nation, but rather the nation that is projected by the RSS or BJP. Whether what the BJP and RSS represent is nationalistic or not is a separate debate; however, what needs to be highlighted is that Umar's sentiments in no way undermine the nation of India. While they are definitely critical of the government, that is neither seditious nor illegitimate.

While there are numerous accounts and testimonies from people at JNU claiming that the statements of Kanhaiya Kumar weren't seditious, thousands of people think he shouldn't belong to this country. Amidst such conflicting views and beliefs it becomes difficult as a bystander to know who to trust. While the media sheds light on numerous issues and incidents throughout the country, it is also responsible for presenting these



Regulars

Junior Blasters

The School **Junior Cricket Team** played a match against **Little Masters Academy** on **28th February 2016**. The School team won by **one wicket**. **Little Masters Academy** scored **135 runs** in **25 overs**. The School team made **136 runs** for **nine wickets** in **24.3 overs**. Manan Agarwal scored **35 runs** and took **two wickets**. Dhanvi Shukla scored **21 runs**.

Kudos!

Appointments

The following are the appointments for the year **2016-2017**:

School Chess Captain: Atharva Shukla
Library Council Secretary: Ananay Sethi

Srijan Prayas

Editor –in-Chief: Rudra Srivastava
Chief of Production: Anirudh Batra

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

Around the World in 80 Words

Clinton and Trump both bagged 7 states for their presidential campaigns on Super Tuesday. Philippine officials said China blocked access to disputed South China Sea reefs. Meanwhile, former Al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden left \$29 million dollars in inheritance to be used for 'Jihad'. Apple and the FBI clashed in the US congress over iPhone encryption on Tuesday. Militants attacked Indian consulate in Jalalabad while US astronaut Scott Kelly and Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko returned to Earth on Wednesday.

"A successful man is one who can lay a foundation with the bricks other people throw at him." - David Brinkley

Reading Awards

The following have been awarded the **reading awards** in their respective categories:

Mediums

Silver: Jashan Kalra
Bronze: Advait Ganpathy, Aayush Chowdhry, Zoraver Mehta

Juniors

Gold: Divyansh Nautiyal
Silver: Shourya Agarwal, Sachin Gautam, Amulya Agarwal, Rubin Rastogi, Suyash Chandok, Bhavya Rajgharia, Aarsh Ashdir, Rishabh Raj Verma
Bronze: Aryaman Kakkar, Prabhaav Swarup, Raghav Kapoor, Divy Kavadiya, Payas Hasteer, Teghbir Singh Chandok

Well Done!

Declamation

Inter House Hindi Declamation Competition for **Juniors** took place on **27th February 2016**. The following students won awards:

- 1st:** Suyash Chandak
- 2nd:** Nevedita Ghughthyal
- 3rd:** Dhanvi Shukla

House positions are as follows:

- 1st:** Oberoi House
- 2nd:** Kashmir House
- 3rd:** Hyderabad House
- 4th:** Tata House
- 5th:** Jaipur House

Congratulations!

Dosco Doodle

Board or Bored? Shaurya Jain



(Contd. from page 1)

events through 'coloured' lenses. It would be highly naïve for me to believe that all sources media could be neutral, and so the burden falls upon the individual. We must be careful when consuming media, and irrespective of where we stand we should at least acknowledge the bias and then formulate our own opinions from what is presented. In a free society, that we claim to be, it is necessary to be critical. Unchecked, the possibility of corruption, oppression or persecution is significantly higher. However, the JNU case doesn't merely challenge the notion of an opposition but also that of students and the intelligentsia.

Union Budget '16: BJP Revamped?

Atrey Bhargava writes about the this year's Budget.

The Union Budget presented by the current BJP government has not failed to fulfill expectations. The government's budget, spearheaded by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has endeavoured to please all sections of society. Despite being deemed as a pro-village, pro-farmer and a pro-poor budget, this financial blueprint for the forthcoming year has its perks for the corporate sector too. However, this is not to say that the Modi Government, through its various schemes and policies has not strived to change its image of being a pro-opulent party. Schemes such as the MGNREGA and Aadhar of the erstwhile UPA have not only been endorsed, but have also received greater impetus. For instance, Rs. 38,500 Crores (the highest ever) have been allocated to the MGNREGA scheme and even farmer income security has been guaranteed to a greater extent. The Railway budget which was discussed on the 25th of February holds promises for the future. An aim to enhance Railway infrastructure, provide quota for women and senior citizens and provide wifi to over 100 Railway stations has been established. Contrary to expectations, the fares haven't been hiked, but one can expect a mid-year rise if the revenues are to materialise.

Another notable feature of the budget is its emphasis on agricultural and infrastructural development. The government, in trying to incentivize organic farming has aimed at acquiring five lakh acres of land for the same over a three-year period. There has been an attempt to ensure farmer income security and Rs. 87,500 Crores have been allocated by the Government to look into rural credit and agriculture. Additionally, the government aims to provide for 100% electrification of rural villages by 2018 and an attempt to double the farmer's income by 2022 has been initiated. Considering the increasing number of suicides over the past months and the unchecked urbanization, this step is a very crucial one to keep agriculture as one of the strongholds of the economy, especially when around 60% of the population works in this sector.

Last year the Government focused on "smart city" development; the thrust in this year's budget has been on transport. The government plans to upgrade 50,000 km of State Highways into National highways and revive 160 airports and airstrips across the country. This infrastructural development in turn will increase the purchasing power of a consumer and will be beneficial for the economy in the longer run. However, it is important to note that no attention has been paid to enhance the current machinery and infrastructure in the agricultural set-up and rural areas. This goes to show the lack of methodical planning from the side of the government in tackling a growing crisis in the agricultural sector.

As mentioned earlier, the corporate sector has also benefited. The corporate tax has reduced from 30% to 29%, a seemingly insignificant change to most of us, but a very radical one if seen from the perspective of a corporate. The income tax slabs have remained the same, much in line with the wants of the corporate sector. The service tax has increased from 14.5% to 15% (in heed of the Krishi Kalyan cess) and has in turn made for an increase in price of a lot luxuries. Be it a meal in 'The President', a ticket to "Silver City", a flight from Dehradun to Delhi, or the decision to buy a car of over 10 lakhs, one will now have to pay more. Although this might create for a certain outcry amongst the upper-middle and higher classes (and the rule-obedient Dosco with a meagre Rs. 700 as his budget), the opportunity cost for the BJP government is not that much. Even excise duty for tobacco products has been raised from 10-15% in an effort to curb the rising number of smokers in the country. Through these allocations, the government has strived to secure its development-centric image and consequently attempted to capture rural votes

The budget, much in line with the Prime Minister's "Make in India" program has portrayed support for 'Start Up' and 'Stand Up' India. The effort to make the field of entrepreneurship available to the backward classes too has been shown by giving them a three year tax exemption. A rather controversial amnesty scheme by the BJP government to eradicate black money from the country has not been taken in good stead by

(Contd. on page 6)

'Spotlight' on the Red Carpet

Rudra Srivastva writes about the Academy Awards.

"We like you, Ronda, but you're not a Kappa."

Chris Rock kick started the 88th Academy Awards satirizing the lack of diversity in the nominations, categorizing it as an "all-white event". The glamorous Smith couple was not seen at the event and was termed by Rock as "high profile boycotters". However, the agitation and disturbance created seemed to have calmed down after fan-favourite Leonardo DiCaprio was finally awarded his long due 'Best Actor' for *The Revenant*. Spectators expected the Oscars to be characterized by jokes and levity, unencumbered by gravity and deep thought. Contrary to expectations, the ceremony etched its importance in people's hearts as award winners addressed Environmentalism, LGBT rights and child abuse by the Catholic Church, and not to forget, Lady Gaga touched hearts through her stirring rendition of *Til It Happens To You*.



The nominations for the 88th Academy Awards did not come as a surprise. Features such as *The Revenant*, *Spotlight*, *The Big Short* and *The Martian* were on the list due to their novel plots and cohesive demonstration of ideas. Personalities such as Leonardo DiCaprio, Sylvester Stallone, Alicia Vikander and Michael Fassbender were seen walking the red carpet as the crowd cheered on. The competition for all twenty-four categories was stiff as each film had a shot at winning through the preferential ballot system.

Even though George Miller's *Mad Max: Fury Road* possessed a seemingly weak and linear plot, it bagged six awards, mostly in the technical categories with stellar visuals and special effects. Tom Hardy and Theron gave average performances as they journeyed across a limitless desert, however, the visual and acoustic virtuosity of the feature boosted its performance on the whole. The film is a treat to the eyes and ears, with flamboyant choreography, rustic costumes and grueling action scenes. However, despite the litany of technical awards procured by the film, *Ex Machina* managed to whip away the award for the 'Best Visual Effects' which came as a subtle victory for the low budget sci-fi.

The last on the list and the most contentious, the award for the 'Best Picture' was picked up by *Spotlight*, beating analysts to their plot. Zauzmer's prediction model known as "Oscarlytics" had backed Iñárritu's *The Revenant* with a 51.5% chance of winning along with brilliant reviews and other awards such as the 'Director's Guild prize'. *The Big Short* was also in the running having received the 'Producers Guild prize', and a cast that epitomized versatility, including celebrities such as Ryan Gosling, Brad Pitt, Steve Carrell and Christian Bale. However, one never knows what is spinning in the mind of an Oscar voter. *Spotlight* subtly gathered a number of votes and the Michael Sugar masterpiece emerged victorious. Metacritic would no longer be undervalued as an inept yardstick for judgement, placing the victor way above the other contestants. *Spotlight* also managed to procure the award for the 'Best Original Screenplay' as Singer and McCarthy recounted the story of the Boston Globe team that unearthed the wretched ploy at play among clergymen. A contingency including Singer, McCarthy and Ruffalo joined SNAP (Social Network of those abused by Priests) members to protest at a Cathedral prior to the event.

Folks backing *The Revenant* and *The Big Short* did not go home all that disappointed. DiCaprio was finally awarded the 'Best Actor' award on his fifth nomination. The voter pool succumbed to pressure by the actor's fan following and his exceptional, lifelike performance as Hugh Glass. We see Leo sporting an unkempt beard and navigating through the

treacherous American outback in search of his nemesis Fitzgerald (Tom Hardy). Inárritu bagged his second consecutive directing trophy for *The Revenant*, idealizing the amalgamation of the terror and beauty of the natural world, surpassing even his work on the Oscar winning *Birdman*. The “emotionally stunted” epic also took away the award for the ‘Best Cinematography’ with Lubezki’s creeping camera movements and the optimal utilization of the *Alexa 65*. The film has been noted for its superior visual effects, especially for the scene where Glass wrestles with a bear and the avalanche scenes. Fan favourite - *The Big Short* on the other hand walked away with the ‘Best Adapted Screenplay’ for its innovative plot based on the financial collapse of 2008 over mortgage securities in the housing market.

The award for the ‘Best Supporting Actor’ came as a blow to a majority of fans who had placed their bets on Sylvester Stallone playing the tough Rocky Balboa in *Creed*. However, Mark Rylance nonetheless deserved the award, having given a stellar performance as the KGB agent Abel in Spielberg’s *Bridge of Spies*. Brie Larson procured the ‘Best Actress’ award for her touching performance in the *Room* alongside young Jacob Tremblay, while Alicia Vikander won the ‘Best Supporting Actress’ trophy for her chemistry with Eddie Redmayne in *The Danish Girl*. Kapadia’s *Amy* deserves special mention as it gives the spectators an alternative view of the singer and portrays her human facet.

Yet another year went by without an Indian nomination in the ‘Foreign Language Film’ category. The Academy Award was given to *Son of Saul*, a Hungarian film about the Holocaust that forces the spectators to delve into the crevices of their minds. In the history of the Academy Awards, Bollywood films have only appeared in the nominations thrice with *Mother India* coming the closest to winning the award in its year. One can argue that the awards are Euro-centric with nearly eighty percent of all the nominations going to European countries, however, the question that stands is - do the commercialized flicks generated by the Bollywood industry annually deserve to be bestowed with prestigious awards such as the Academy Awards? Even though there have been quality films that have come out of the Indian film industry such as *The Lunchbox* and *Court*, the voter pool for the Oscars continues to turn a blind eye to our dreamy, archetypal movies. However, the Oscars have gained a reputation of being not so big an affair in the minds of certain distinguished personalities. Naseeruddin Shah expressed his view for the prestigious awards when *Court* was chosen to represent India in the ‘Foreign Film’ category. He simply said “I don’t really care about the Oscars. I don’t know why we (Indian film industry) hanker after this Oscar business. I do feel *Court* is one of the finest films. It is the best film in recent times.” Let us now look to next year for yet another surprising litany of awards to be handed out as we sit and watch the show.

Letter To The Editor

Dear Weekly,

I would like to commend you on your constant forays in the world of Current Affairs. I would like to commend your correspondents for their views on Justice Scalia, FBI vs. Apple and the Grammy awards. Yet, India burns even as I write. I have been a strong believer that education encompasses everything. The Weekly, has been a critical organ of education beyond the confines of the Classroom. I would urge The Weekly to engage with issues of caste, gender, equality and freedom. The freedom of speech issue has set Universities across the world discussing student activism.

DOSCOS like Ramchandra Guha and Abhinav Kumar are writing about the issue of freedom of speech and the National Flag. Scholars like Noam Chomsky, Veena Das, Orhan Pamuk, Homi Bhabha, Diana. L Eck, Michael Fischer and Akeel Bilgrami are putting their weight behind the right of the University to discuss any issue, even if it be contrary to the opinions of the law. Eminent jurists like Soli Sorabjee and Fali Nariman are opining on antiquated laws like Macaulay’s “Act of Sedition”. Daily open lectures on Nationalism by eminent scholars and journalists like Prof. Gopal Guru, Prof. Tanika Sarkar, Prof. Achin Vinayak, Prof. Purushottam Agarwal and P. Sainath on J.N.U campus are burning the airwaves. To those who would object to the discussion of such issues, I can only say that let us not forget that no nation may progress without investment into fundamental research. If we are willing to rejoice at the discovery of Nano particles at CERN or gravitational waves, most of which is quite incomprehensible to the lay man, then why does it bother us when Universities raise issues of fundamental concern in Humanities, like issues of justice, rights and polity? If a taxpayer ought not to have qualms paying for fundamental research into black holes, why should s/he hold back when it comes to fundamental explorations into ideas of nation building?

I urge The Weekly to continue engaging with the issues of rights and freedoms, as its editors have done in the past. Words like “open-mindedness” and “risk-taking” must step out of the student profile of the School. As Doscocs and ‘trainee’ journalists, you ought to discuss all issues, ranging from minority rights to that of freedom of speech & privacy. You should aim not to merely emulate mainstream media, but have opinions on their reportage. As students, you ought to discuss Antigone’s arguments of gendered expression and freedom of rights in the context of Dalit rights. You must discuss Manto and why the burning city of Rohtak might well have been a dystopic setting for a Manto story. You could ask the community to discuss and debate the difference between a ‘country’ and a ‘nation’. You have the responsibility of both having a voice and voicing opinions. I do hope that you will live up to your mandate.

Best wishes,

Debasish Chakrabarty

(Contd. from page 3)

the opposition. Through this, taxpayers can disclose undisclosed income or asset and get immunity from prosecution by paying 45% of the income. The opposition has denounced the scheme as an inherently flawed one and has equated it with the Black money and imposition of Tax Act, 2015.

Moreover, the budget has tried to incentivize gas production by deep sea explorations showcasing its interests, not only in the present but also in the distant future.

Despite such positive signs to uplift the poor and reduce the disparity between the classes, one cannot look at the Budget in isolation. One needs to understand the political undertone to it. The upcoming elections in West Bengal, Kerala, Assam and Tamil Nadu in April have played their part in constructing the present budget. Elections in Uttar Pradesh (with a predominantly agrarian economy), just before the next budget, also show Government's interests in following this plan of action. However, this in no way should take away from the efforts of the government to propose a budget contrary to its popular image and with this, Prime Minister Modi's cornerstone promise of 'Acche Din' doesn't seem very far away. What now remains is how prudently the budget is implemented and to what extent the Government would be able to keep up with its promises.



Under the Scanner

BREXIT | Kanishkh Kanodia

Since the inception of the European Union (EU), Britain has been an outsider to the organization. Never having fully subscribed to the ideologies of the EU. Whether it be adopting a single-currency, or being a member of the Schengen passport free-travel zone. Britain has always remained on the periphery of the organization, leading many to question its participation, and its exit.

'Brexit' as the exit has been termed, has been an idea that has existed for a long time. Even in 1975, only two years after Britain's inclusion in the EU, a referendum was held regarding Britain's exit. Though, the British largely voted for staying in the EU, much has passed since then. The main change that has evolved today is

the ideological and the functional shift of EU from a trade bloc, as the EU was supposed to be, to a political front. The EU's original purpose had been to create a single market across Europe to uplift the impecunious nations in the bloc and help grow trade. However, the problem that has come up is that the EU today, has not confined itself to its ambit of just being a 'trade bloc', but has become something more. It has started to influence the political decisions and is being used as a forum for propaganda for member nations and has infringed their sovereignty by interfering in the matters of national security and law-making. This has led to the British agenda being sidelined and Britain being left out. The notion of linking immigration with EU membership had increased Britain's hostility towards the bloc. Over the past decade there has been a sizable influx of legal EU migrants entering Britain due to the benefits offered to them due to Britain's membership of the EU. Their arrival, the culture and activities of the natives of Britain are threatened. Natives have not been getting enough jobs and facilities. Due to this excessive influx and the change in the EU, Britain today, does not get much out of the EU, whereas the EU does seem to get a lot from it. This sense of being used, has enraged many. It is this that has pushed David Cameron, the British Prime Minister from the Conservative Party, promised the people a referendum during his campaign for the general election in 2015, which has been scheduled for June 2016.

Since the United Kingdom would be the first country to leave the European Union (if at all it does), there is no certainty as to what the exact consequences would be. If 'Brexit' does indeed become a reality, Britain will have to choose from five models. First, it can emulate the Norwegian model and become a part of the European Economic Area. In this case, it will have access to the single market but will be exempted from following the EU rules in areas like agriculture and justice. Second, it can follow suit of Switzerland and establish bilateral agreements with the EU. Thirdly, it can enter a custom union with the EU, like Turkey has. Fourth, it can dissociate completely from the EU and depend on the rest of the world and the World Trading Organization for its import-export. Fifth, it can negotiate its own terms with the EU and still remain a part of the single market on unique conditions. The Britons have an impending task up their ante to choose what mechanism will best fit in the demands of the citizens and the government to sustain the diverse country.

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