

Established in 1936

# The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot  
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## The Whole Story

**Raghav Kediya** sketches the story of the historical causes behind the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 has brought its own bout of mass hysteria. From people believing gaumutra is an adequate cure to tacky videos depicting the 'proper' way to wash hands, humanity clearly has its hands full with the Coronavirus. However, what is often overlooked is the actual story behind what is happening. At its core, the pandemic is the outcome of several historical factors. To start at the very beginning, it showcases the inability of the Chinese government to act on its past mistakes and alter its position.

Between 1959 and 1961, China had fallen prey to the Great Chinese Famine, a result of Mao Zedong's overambitious and drastic 'Great Leap Forward'. Under this, farm ownership was prohibited, and hence, there was over-procurement and mass disparity in distribution of food within the economy. Somewhere between 15 and 45 million people died due to the government's negligence. While it was envisaged as a revolutionary policy, the 'Great Leap Forward' is generally accepted to have been a colossal failure. In the 1970s, the new government under Deng Xiaoping was facing numerous difficulties, especially with regard to agriculture and food production in the country. These staggering failures and weaknesses led to the government's decision to privatise both the agricultural

and food production industry in 1978. This went a long way in providing sufficient amounts of food for the vast majority of the public. However, the poorest people were still under-nourished. Thus, they took to unconventional means of procuring food. Unable to purchase conventional meats, these people began harvesting and eating meats such as turtle, snake and bat. Despite this diversion from conventional dietary norms, the government was just elated that the people were being able to feed themselves and maintain a stable and steady livelihood, hence the government openly supported such operations being conducted by the peasants.

Matters changed drastically in 1988 when the government passed the 'Protection of Wildlife Law'. In essence, this act made wild animals resources of the state and also supported individuals who developed or utilised these wildlife resources. This made it abundantly clear that humans could use any and all wildlife animals should they have any importance or utility for humans, despite any ecological impact the practice might have. Furthermore, the law encouraged the domestication and breeding of wildlife. This allowed for individuals to be able to virtually amass entire species of preserved and exotic animals with no form of repercussion from the

government. Thus, an industry of wildlife farming was created.

Across the country, people began harvesting animals which had never before been harvested. From bears to peacocks, a lot more species were now available. Even endangered animals like tigers and rhinos were introduced illegally into this wildlife market. What used to be home-run and operated outlets were soon converted to proper industrial stations and units; such as entire farms and storage warehouses. The population of such animals grew, and as a chain reaction, so did the chance of the spreading of diseases. The most intuitive way to store and sell these animals was in what is called a 'wet market'. In China, this is a type of market where live animals are stored in horrible conditions. They are then killed and sold as demanded. Being stacked one on top of the other, bodily fluids such as urine, feces, and saliva constantly flow from animal to animal. This creates a direct means of infectious transmission.

In 2002, catastrophe struck when there was a SARS virus outbreak in a wet market in Foshan, Guangdong. This was traced to civet cats, a variety of wildlife mammal that were sold in the market for consumption by humans. The government was quick to shut down wet markets

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and ban the farming of wildlife. However, only a few months after the outbreak, the Chinese lifted all bans and restrictions that had been placed, and yet again it was legal to breed, poach and trade in wildlife, including civet cats. It was clear that the industry was significant to the economy, as well as polity, and therefore the government could not let it go. In recent years, the industry has been valued at 148

billion Yuan, and is known to have immense lobbying power. These antics go by completely unchecked due to the unorganised and unregulated nature of the industry. Thus, since China was unable to tap and effectively control the growing wildlife trade industry, the inevitable happened again in late 2019. Within a span of four months, this Coronavirus, having initially transferred from a bat to

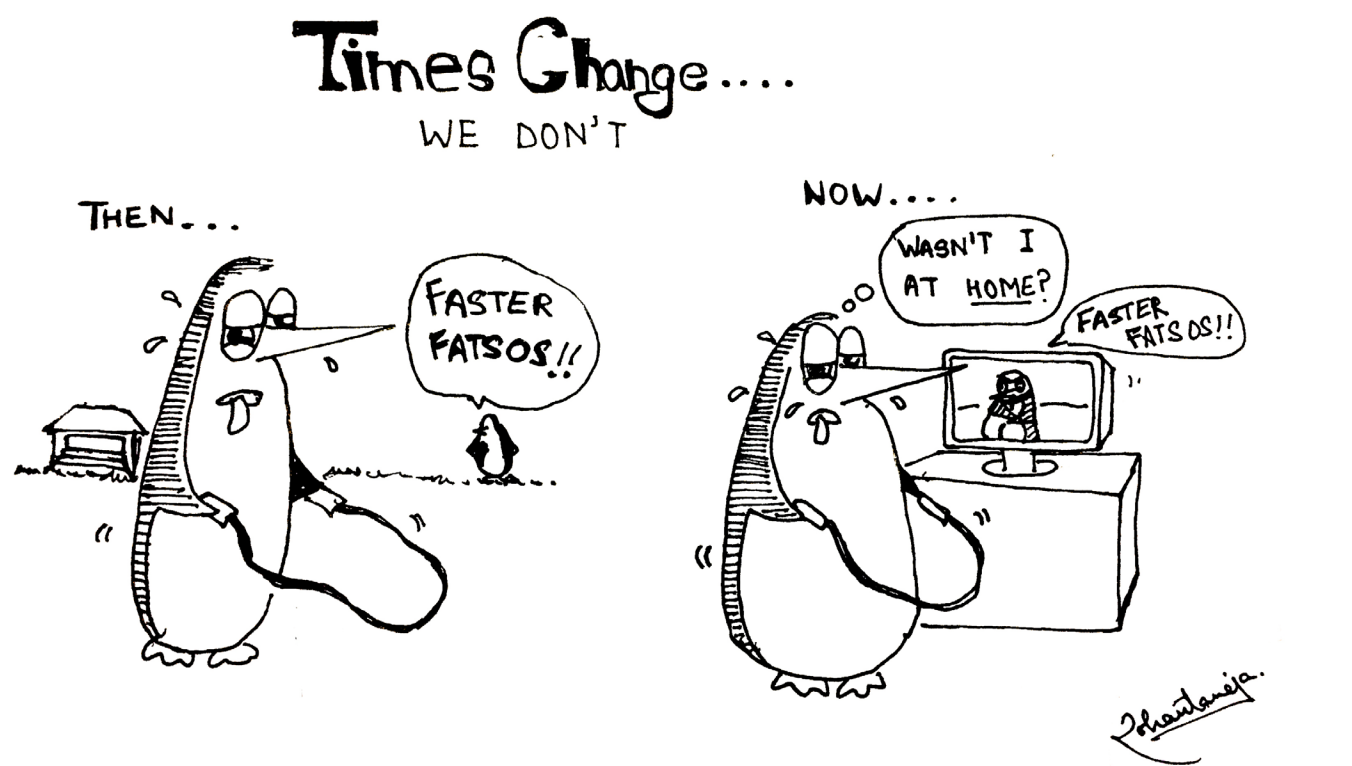
a pangolin, and eventually into a human in the Wuhan wet market, has gone on to infect more than twenty lakh people and has taken over 1,35,000 lives. It is also leaving a grave mark on the global market, as stock markets plummet in an unprecedented manner. Furthermore, there are acute shortages of basic utility goods and even crucial medical goods like masks and gloves.

After all this, the Chinese government has passed another act prohibiting actions within the wildlife industry. However, like the daunting image of 2002, it is uncertain how binding or concrete this decision is. The only certainty is that action needs to be taken to permanently prohibit the inhumane Chinese wet markets that have become an ecosystem teeming with fatal diseases and viruses which threaten the future of humanity.

*Adapted from [www.vox.com/videos/2020/3/6/21168006/coronavirus-covid19-china-pandemic](http://www.vox.com/videos/2020/3/6/21168006/coronavirus-covid19-china-pandemic)*



Evergreen  
Roban Taneja



**Editor's Note:** The above cartoon is not by an official Weekly Board member. We hope to receive cartoons like this from other members of the School community for our issues.

## What are your views on the efficacy of online classes?

My first impression of the online classes was that they were yet another substitute to the Instagram chats with the addition of background music. Taking advantage of the masters being physically absent became a hobby among the boys. However, these classes turned out to be a good substitute for the 'socially distant' school classrooms. In my opinion, the step is worthy of applause, though the optimum outcome is not being met due to a multitude of reasons. From connection problems to software issues to people arriving late, the sessions aren't nearly as productive as compared to classes in School. An immense portion of the interaction is also squandered away due to the time lag between speaking and hearing. In contrast, masters are able to amalgamate their teachings with videos and reference guides to deepen our understanding. This combination truly enriches the learning which takes place. Recording the sessions allows us to revisit the material, something impossible during regular classes. The sessions have been extremely helpful. However, there is always room for improvement.

- Gurmehar Bedi

I think online classes deviate from what we as an educational institute fundamentally want Doscors to do: engage in discourse. More often than not, online classes are becoming monologues where students find themselves not actively engaging, just completing assignments without a proper grasp on the topic that they are studying. This is partially because online classes lack a conducive environment involving coordinated discussion, something that could otherwise be found in a classroom. For instance, there are fewer questions being asked in these classes, and while this may mean that material coverage happens smoothly, it doesn't happen effectively. Online classes are necessary, and they might be the closest we can get to physical interaction, but they are not comparable to a classroom.

- Agam Bhatia

As we now see ourselves adapting to a completely different platform of learning, we need to acknowledge the fact that this is the best possible way out in these tough times, even though it can never be a substitute for classroom learning. Masters have been trying very hard to make the classes as effective as possible with interactive videos, lecture notes, and doubt sessions. However, it always boils down to how well we students make use of it. In the past three weeks, I have seen several incidents of some members of the class being absent and many not submitting their assignments on time. As a result, there is a need for stricter actions by the school against this 'care-free' attitude. The community needs to start taking it more seriously as online interactions are the way for the next few months.

- Keshaw Singhania

The situation we are experiencing is truly historic and unprecedented. Such unprecedented times call for unprecedented measures. The introduction of online classes into our timetable is one of these measures. These classes ensure one thing above all: the sense of community is not lost as we get to see and hear each other every morning. As for the academic aspect, online classes have helped us continue with our coursework as smoothly as possible. Of course, it is not as effective as classroom teaching, but the true success of these classes lies in our hands. It depends on whether we are disciplined, diligent, and punctual in our work. We must act as a community to ensure the effectiveness of these classes, because after all, we all are in this together.

- Aarnav Sethy

Online classes are a flexible platform for learning and are extremely important to mitigate the damage done by the virus on our future. Although the fact that the number of teaching hours is still less than half of our normal school teaching hours is a cause of concern, some form of adjustment during this global crisis is necessary. The classes are usually quite effective allowing people to interact with each other and accommodating up to 50 people at one time. They are the perfect fora for discussion and debates, something that both IGCSE and IB require. However, these classes also come with problems like internet connectivity issues. Another huge blow to the effectiveness of these classes is that the teacher is never sure if the students are listening to them as they can easily turn off their cameras. These problems are a part of the trade-off that COVID-19 has forced us to make, and while online education can never replace physical classrooms, it is a welcome change, and one that is necessary for our growth and development.

- Saksham Makin



# A Digital Entrance

**Harshil Makin** *reflects on his experience joining School as a D Former during the lockdown.*

On a cold December evening, I sat in my room cozily snuggled in a blanket bingeing on my favourite TV series. What would follow would change my life forever. My brother came in jubilantly, waving a letter from The Doon School as if it were a flag of victory before, of course, throwing it right at my face with almost impeccable aim. I ran my fingers up the glossy cover of the post and carefully opened it, hoping not to ruin anything inside. While the grin on my brother's face gave the result away, I still decided to confirm the news myself. As I read the letter, I realised that I would be studying in one of the most prestigious schools in India and was over the moon to be a part of the dream I had dreamt for long.

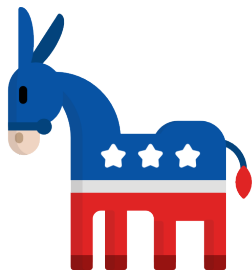
We wasted no time in getting all the necessities for School, and I was pondering all the time on what being a Dosco would be like. I started picturing myself in Chandbagh: in the classes, on the fields playing sports, bonding with my batchmates who would always be by my side. I was also filled with enthusiasm to meet my new teachers who would teach me all about a school that I was not that familiar with. I was also keen to take part in extracurricular activities like drama, improving my game at tennis, and trying my hand

at Art, something that I am interested in but not so good at. I was also hoping to have an induction as grand and spectacular as my brother's.

But then COVID-19 spread in India and all my expectations of starting my life at Doon vanished before my eyes. Instead, all D Formers had an online induction, which was not how I envisioned the start of this new chapter of my life. Our first classes would be conducted online and online courses would replace extra-curricular activities. Sports would be replaced by indoor activities and the first interactions with my batchmates would be through the screen of my laptop.

Still, there are a lot of positive sides to this as well. Our batch would get to be a part of something new, being the first and, hopefully, the last D Formers to have started such an important part of their lives through a digital platform, a far cry from the start experienced by most of you reading this. Lastly, we would also get to tell our juniors how we were the batch that started their journey as a Dosco sitting in front of their laptops in the comfort and safety of their homes during a grim time that the world was going through...

## NOT THE PANDEMIC



### Senator Bernie Sanders endorses Vice President Joe Biden's campaign

Following the end of his campaign, former democratic candidate Bernie Sanders endorsed ex-rival Joe Biden's campaign against Donald Trump, calling Trump "the most dangerous president in the modern history of this country."

### World Oil Prices Plummet

A deal between OPEC and its allies is set to cut global oil production by almost 10%, the largest cut in history, thus ending the 2020 oil price wars, which threatened to cut WTI crude oil prices by 67% and aggravate the economic situation during the pandemic.



### Disney captures the online streaming industry

The Disney streaming service Disney Plus has racked up 50 million subscribers in just 5 months, which it was projected to reach only in 2022. By comparison, the American service Hulu has gained only 30 million subscribers in 13 years.

# The Economist's Perspective

**Mr. Samik Das** *comments on how the COVID-19 pandemic might affect the global economy.*

COVID-19 has brought in a sense of collective uncertainty, fear of loss of life, money, and jobs. Bill Gates, in a TED talk he delivered in 2015, spoke about our unpreparedness for an outbreak of this nature. Coincidentally, his talks began with a picture of a virus that looks like the scary one doing rounds in everyone's mind nowadays.

While we are currently unsure about everything, including our lives, it is interesting to note the power of hope. Hope of a better tomorrow is our fuel for life now.

The economy and finance sector are no different. The world has witnessed World Wars and many other pandemics repeatedly, but the economy has always bounced back on track. However, there have been a lot of "collateral damages" too. Such damages have taken shape of famine, malnutrition, high death rate and resultantly widening inequality. The distance between the haves and the have-nots has only widened after such disasters of a global nature. Globalisation has added to inequalities of wages in a relatively rich country by importing manufactured goods using pre-dominantly low skilled labour from developing

countries. It has created a lifestyle fueled by consumer expenditure that has contributed to relative poverty, and now we have COVID 19 pushing automation as a way of life. Dr Kaushik Basu, Professor of Economics at the Cornell University in the US and the former Chief Economic Adviser to Government of India, believes that income inequalities will rise after the Coronavirus episode. This is because of the increasing dependence on automation post the COVID 19 pandemic world may make a number of products and services redundant. While work-from-home and shared office spaces had already become a part of life before the pandemic, this situation is likely to cause a jump in our level of comfort and provide space for more automation. Such automation is likely to impact the poor adversely.

However, despite all such threats, humanity has always been innovative and adaptive. While some jobs may lose relevance, others will gain traction. Innovation and imagination will provide solution to all such problems, once COVID 19 leaves us for good.

## | Poetry |

### Ambition

**Samayak Jain**

Who doesn't have an ambition  
To be the greatest, the richest  
Or the happiest  
One needs to work  
To make it come true  
Everyone sees the result  
Not the hard work  
Just like an iceberg  
The tip is seen  
Not what is beneath  
Beneath the berg there is  
Failure, hard work  
Patience, determination  
Then all just slowly  
Forms the tip  
Which is to be maintained  
An ambition is not easy to achieve  
One must not give up  
While yet on the journey  
Your action needs to  
Match your ambition  
Match your ambition

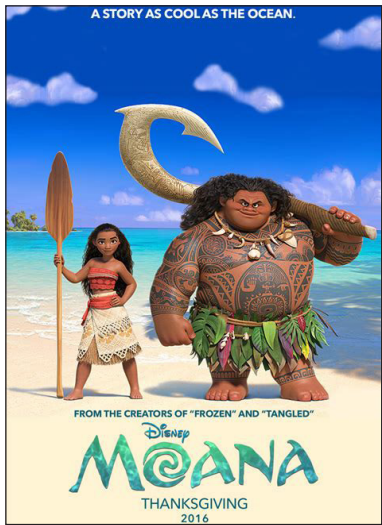
### Life's Canvas

**Arjun Prakash**

Who is He who paints our destiny,  
And pulls the strings of life,  
Who gets caught in temptation,  
to shower some delight.  
  
The artist with the magic hand,  
The one with the special eyes,  
Who crawls into utter darkness,  
Before day shows its light.  
  
His frustration can be seen,  
As He looks outside.  
Pleading for a better world,  
As a portrait in his mind.  
  
Yet His canvas remains to be seen.  
And where could He even be,  
Lurking around life's true colors,  
Waiting for His chance to peep...

# Quiz | Voices Behind Famous Animated Characters

1. This famous singer with multiple ‘Top 100’ hits was the voice of the protagonist in Rio 2.
2. Known for her hit songs such as ‘Dark Horse’ and ‘Roar’, this music artist was the voice of Smurfette in *The Smurfs*.
3. This wrestler-turned-actor was the voice of Maui in *Moana*.
4. This renowned female singer was the voice of Tim in the animated movie *Home*.
5. The voice of Lightning McQueen in *Cars* was provided by this American actor.
6. This artist, also known as JLO, was the voice of Shira in *Ice Age: Continental Drift*.
7. This famous actor who played Captain Jack Sparrow was the voice of Rango in the film *Rango*.
8. This famous singer/actor, better known for portraying Hannah Montana, was the voice of Penny in *Bolt*.
9. This actor who was the voice of Gru in *Despicable Me* has starred in lead roles in multiple hit sitcoms such as *The Office*.
10. The singer of ‘Cry Me A River’ also voiced Branch in the movie *Trolls*.
11. Having starred in multiple films such as *Jurassic World* and *Guardians of the Galaxy*, this personality was the voice of Emmet in *The Lego Movie*.
12. Known for singing the anthem of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the character Gazelle from *Zootopia* is based on this singer and even has her voice.
13. This renowned actor was the voice of Po in *Kung Fu Panda*.
14. This famous personality, who was previously a child actor and played Alex Russo on *Wizards of Waverly Place*, was the voice of Mavis in *Hotel Transylvania*.
15. This famous singer, also referred to as Queen B, was the voice of Queen Tara in *Epic*.



- Answers to This Week's Quiz:
1. Bruno Mars
  2. Katy Perry
  3. Dwayne Johnson
  4. Rihanna
  5. Owen Wilson
  6. Jennifer Lopez
  7. Johnny Depp
  8. Miley Cyrus
  9. Steve Carell
  10. Justin Timberlake
  11. Chris Pratt
  12. Shakira
  13. Jack Black
  14. Selena Gomez
  15. Beyonce

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