

Established in 1936

# The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot  
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## THE GLOBAL BIG DAY

An activity you can engage in from your balconies!

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## OBITUARY

Commemorating the lives of two actors who passed away recently.

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## एक दुःस्वप्न

कोविड-19 को इतिहास की सबसे विनाशकारी घटनाओं से तुलनीय बनाने वाले प्रमुख कारण।

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## You, a Room, and an Ugly Face

Varen Talwar

Today I was stuck in a locked room with a very ugly face. I could not tell if it was male or female, only that it was human. I couldn't put my finger to its complexion either, for it seemed as if the face were colourless, like water. Nor could I estimate its age, for some places had deep, folding wrinkles, while other regions were bursting with adolescent warts. There was no innocence in the face, but then there wasn't any guilt either. Its eyes ran haphazardly, following imaginary objects in the air. I could see lust in them, but without the usual devilish glow that accompanies such lust. I guessed it couldn't make tears, but then I saw faint tear-marks on its ragged cheeks. Its mouth remained open the whole time. I couldn't see any teeth or tongue inside – only darkness.

I don't know how I ended up

**It seemed as if doing anything with it would pollute me also – make me as ugly as the face. I didn't want to have anything to do with it.**

in a locked room with such an ugly face. I couldn't remember much from earlier, but the room looked somewhat familiar. There were empty lockers lined up against one wall of the room. There was an empty desk lying in another dark corner. Apart from that, the face, and me, the room was empty, which was surprising, since the room was pretty big. What were just the two of us doing alone in such a large room? Surely there were other people who could have been there. It was a clean, spacious room – must have been safer than whatever lay outside. I think I had heard sounds from outside. They seemed like faint, incessant knocks, floating in like a helpless murmur – as if someone were begging the wall to open up from the outside.

The locked door seemed to be the only entrance or exit to the room. I hoped it would open, so I could either escape the presence of that ugly face, or at least have the company of someone apart from it. I couldn't look at the face, and I surely couldn't make conversation with it. One has to be able to close one's mouth in order to talk, and by the way the face had its mouth gaping wide open, I was sure it was incapable of movement. So I tried to bang at the door to see if anyone would come and open it. No one came, but the sounds coming from outside did not stop. I tried to communicate with them,

**Nobody should have to put up with such ugliness, yet there I was. I wondered if there were others locked in rooms with such ugly faces.**

but they continued to just knock and talk to the wall. I think we didn't speak the same language, for I couldn't comprehend anything from their murmurs.

I realised that all I could do was wait, so I just sat against the wall, and looked around the empty room – anywhere except the face. But then, it spoke. It was the worst sound I had ever heard. Like the face, I could not classify it. It was as if it was screeching, screaming, crying, and laughing all at once – as if there were different, independent parts inside it that did different things simultaneously, perpetually confused and discordant. I thought that it was just a senseless sound, but I soon realised that it was actually speaking. I tried to understand what it was saying, but the voice was too hoarse for me to comprehend. The face seemed to have assumed a devilish

(Continued on Page 2)

(Continued from Page 1)

expression, which surprised me, for it had been hard to imagine a face more repulsive than what I had previously seen.

I couldn't understand what it was saying, but it seemed to be saying something that I anyway did not want to know. There was something very evil in that guttural sound – something even uglier than the face, something more desperate for reconciliation. But then there was something overpoweringly brazen about it too – something that immunised the face from all empathy.

The cacophony continued. I wished for the earlier silence to be back, but to no avail. The face kept on going. It angered me. People say that you learn to live with the worst when it is your only companion. I didn't. The face was so ugly in all its aspects that I wanted to kill it, even if it were my only company. There was something so repulsive about it that it felt that there was no circumstance under which it

deserved to exist. Nobody should have to put up with such ugliness, yet there I was. I wondered if there were others locked in rooms with such ugly faces. What were they doing? Had they killed it? Had they befriended it? Or had they just learnt to live with the noise? It seemed impossible to do so, but then so was imagining such ugliness.

I tried living with it. It would have to stop eventually, I thought. But it didn't. Hours passed, but the cacophony continued. I had to do something, but the face was so ugly that I could not get myself to even come close to it, let alone touch it. It seemed as if doing anything with it would pollute me also – make me as ugly as the face. I didn't want to have anything to do with it. I banged against the doors and walls. The sounds coming from outside had drowned in the dissonance. I sat down, quietly losing my mind, waiting for someone to rescue me.

At that moment, the noise

suddenly became louder. I looked up, and saw the face jumping around on the lockers stacked to the long end of the room. It seemed to be dancing to the discordant rhythm of its noise. That was it. I got up, paced furiously across the room, picked up the ugly, sneering face by its ropy hair and smashed it against the metal lockers.

The noise stopped. The face fell to the floor with a bland thump, and started to dissolve. The layers of wrinkles and dead skin fell off and merged with the sparkling white floor, until all that was left was a smiling face with the most tender, infantile skin I had ever seen. The door opened with a slight creak. I went outside, and found myself in a large, sparkling white compound of similar locked rooms, stretching across into the horizon. I guessed there were people like me in them, stuck with ugly faces that represented the worst in the world. All they had to do was end it – not put up with it – and the cacophony would stop.

“

Sometimes carrying on, just carrying on, is the superhuman achievement.

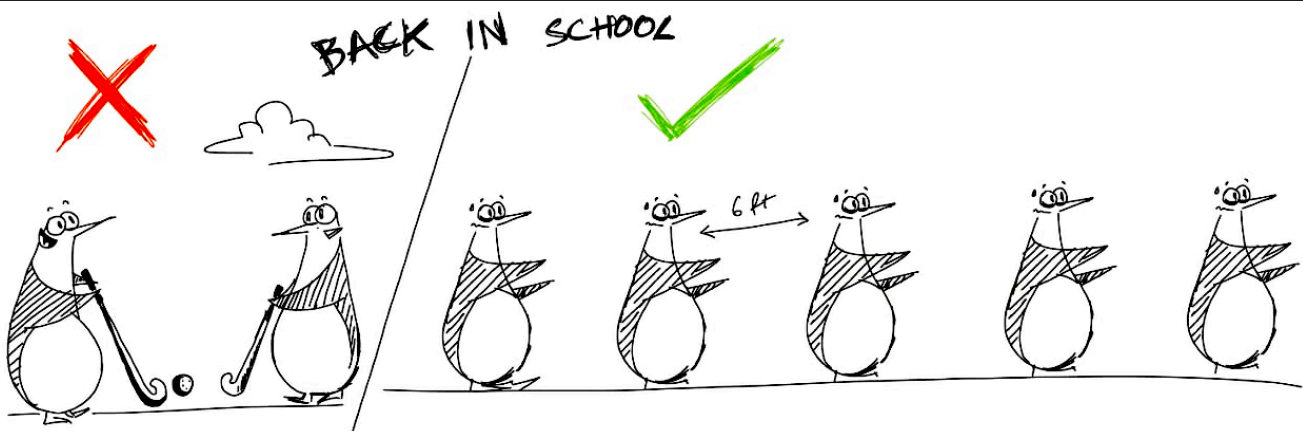
—  
Albert Camus

## Around the World in 80 Words

The number of COVID-19 cases in India crossed the 55,000 mark. The European Union faced the worst recession since its formation. A deadly gas leak in the Visakhapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh left more than 350 people hospitalised and thirteen dead. Karnataka stopped special trains that had been organised for migrant workers attempting to return home due to concerns over shortage of labour. The Israel Institute for Biological Research has reportedly isolated an antibody that can aid in curing COVID-19.

Do Sco Doodle

The Social Distancing Sport  
Saatrik Anand



# The Global Big Day

**Vedant Gattani** *talks about birding in School.*

The Global Big Day is an annual celebration of the birds around us. It was initially organised by The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology as an American competition to spot the maximum number of birds in a day. The competition provided an incentive to people to document the birds they saw while helping scientists collect bird data from around the world. The Big Day eventually evolved into a global event where birders report the birds they spot in 24 hours while also helping to raise money for bird conservation and research. The data collected during the event is compiled by researchers who use it to analyse trends in bird populations around the world. Last year, 35,209 eBirders from 174 countries collected an astounding 92,284 checklists in a single day. This data is essential for the conservation of birds across the globe. Since 1970 the global bird population has fallen by nearly 29% which has raised an alarm for environmentalists. Birds are crucial for maintaining the biodiversity of global ecosystems and it is our responsibility to help preserve them.

How can you help on this year's Global Big Day? On the May 9, log onto the eBird app, a free online program by the Cornell Lab and National Audubon Society, and record the birds you spot around you, becoming a part of the global birding community. While we may not be able to venture out from our homes to look for these winged creatures this year, we can be sure to check in on them from our balconies! All are welcome to participate as citizen scientists and contribute to the intense data collection process by sharing their bird sightings.

Declaring school an eBird hotspot required

consistent work. I uploaded the School's historic bird checklists dating back to 2016 that had been compiled by Vijayaditya S. Rathore (Ex 577-J) and me. We continue to keep a detailed record of the avifauna on campus concerning eBird. I then requested authorities to review the data collected. It turned out that the campus was fit to be designated as an official eBird hotspot! Being an eBird hotspot brings certain privileges. A birder of the location can now acquire the tools necessary to find the trend in individual species population such as abundance, frequency, high and average count. In the near future, I expect to see a rich and accessible database emerging in our school through eBird. This will not only help to identify the course of the bird population in school (which is plummeting, as a frequent observer may notice) but also help the student-master bodies inclined toward nature conservation, such as the NEST society and the Environment Committee, reflect upon the work they have been doing towards the betterment of the situation. I strongly believe that we will be successful in reviving the unique biodiversity of Chandbagh. Events such as Global Big day are particularly important to support efforts like ours and help identify declines and growths in the bird populations across the globe.

This Global Big Day, I would urge the school community to become a part of the brimming global birding network, while adhering to all local safety guidelines. Given the prevailing circumstances, more and more species of birds are now visible, making birding from home a whole lot more fun. Happy Birding!





# Obituary

**Nand Dahiya** pays homage to two influential Bollywood actors who passed away recently.

Irrfan Khan and Rishi Kapoor both had been battling cancer for a long time. They had also openly talked about their diagnoses. But when the two actors passed away this week, I was shaken. Being the more contemporary of the two, the loss of Khan hit me especially hard. A veteran of nearly 80 films, Irrfan Khan was one of the Indian Cinema's finest actors and among its most popular exports to Hollywood. Khan lacked the chocolatey looks for a typical matinee idol, but he won hearts with the mere simplicity and great conviction his acts carried. I had never met the actor, but from any of his roles one could easily distinguish the value he brought to the industry.

Minutes after the news of his departure, my social media feeds were flooded with posts mourning his loss. Naseeruddin Shah, while writing for *The Indian Express*, said, 'Irrfan's legacy is like a constellation of stars for every actor to take inspirations from.' He also shared Khan's words from one of their phone calls while he was undergoing treatment in London: "How many people have the chance to observe death coming at them? I'm lucky that I can see this thing approaching me and I can greet it."

Khan continued to inspire people till the end. He came from a small village in Rajasthan without any links in the industry. The struggle gave him both positive experience and setbacks, yet he did whatever it took to stay afloat. When he finally got his first breakthrough in 2001 in the British-Indian film *The Warrior*, Asif Kapadia's first feature film, he never looked back. Khan went on to give some stunning performances in, *Paan Singh Tomar*, *The Namesake*, *The Lunchbox*, and *Maqbool*. In 2011, Khan was decorated with the prestigious honour of the Padma Bhushan. He projected that life is all about simplicity and positivity.

24 hours after I got the news of Khan's death, my feed was once again full of condolences for Rishi Kapoor, yet another Bollywood veteran. Kapoor

came from an illustrious family of four generations of stars, all of whom were said to be born to adorn the silver screen.

Kapoor is said to have steered the course of Bollywood in his prime. While the other stars of the '70s focused more on the 'masculinity' and the so-called 'macho' element of acting, Kapoor brought romantic musicals to the table. He turned Bollywood into something more colourful with his songs (famous till date) and on-screen romance. He made a huge splash in 1973 with his first lead role in *Bobby* – a teenage love story. It opened another window for the industry and became a template for teen romances throughout the late 1970s and 1980s. A 1973 *New York Times* review noted that Bobby's "accent on youth is relatively new to Indian movies, whose performers are often older than the characters they portray."

Kapoor played romantic leads in dozens of films for over two decades. Later, around the turn of the century he made a smooth transition into character roles. He was awarded the Filmfare Lifetime Award for his striking performance in *Do Dooni Char*.

I personally admire both the actors. Kapoor had a very rich career. He had perfected every scope of acting, starting from *Bobby*, a musical romance, to dramas like *Mulk*; always, he explored the soul of the genre. He was successful in bridging the distance between the screen and the audience by moulding his acting to the interests of his audience. He was a classic Bollywood actor. He started off at an early age of seventeen and stayed true to his passion till he lay on his deathbed. His portrayals allowed the audience to escape their own realities. On the other hand, Khan was more of a method actor who would hold a mirror to the audience in the most organic form: it was so natural that you could feel the connect.

The Indian film industry will feel the loss of these two veterans for a long time to come...



# एक दुःस्वप्न

अमृत अग्रवाल

मनुष्य आज एक वैश्विक युद्ध लड़ रहा है जो अब तक मानवता को ज्ञात ही नहीं है। शत्रु अदृश्य है, बिन हथियार है और इसका निशाना कोई भी जीवित प्राणी है। चमगादड़ के बाद, कोरोनावायरस ने अब मानव को लक्षित किया है। संक्रमण का वाहक, वायरस शारीरिक संपर्क के माध्यम से छींक या यहां तक कि ख़ाँसी के माध्यम से तेजी से फैल रहा है। किसी कोरोना प्रभावित व्यक्ति की एक मात्र छींक में कोरोनावायरस के पर्याप्त अणु होते हैं जो एक पूर्ण समुदाय को संक्रमित कर सकते हैं। इतिहासकार २०२० को विनाशकारी भयानक वर्ष के रूप में दर्ज करेंगे, एक असीम दुःस्वप्न, जिसके पैमाने और परिणाम अभूतपूर्व हैं।

यह बताया गया है कि घातक वायरस का स्रोत चीन के वुहान जिले की गुफाओं के चमगादड़ थे। पूरी दुनिया में इसकी आसान पहुँच है और आखरी वाहक मनुष्य हैं। सम्भावना है कि यह चीन में एक प्रयोगशाला प्रयोग का उत्पाद है जो विफल हो गया। हो सकता यह राज़ सदा गुप्त रहे। अगर लेखा-चित्र पर नज़र डाली जाए तो ज्ञात होता है की विश्व में पीड़ित लोगों की संख्या घातक रूप से बढ़ रही है। इसका स्थूल रूप से अर्थ है कि संख्या हर दो से तीन दिन में दुगुनी हो रही

है। यह परिदृश्य वास्तव में चिकित्सा की दृष्टि में सुलझाना असंभव है। भाग्यवश यद्यपि यह लेख लिखे जाने तक भारत इन कठिन परिस्थितियों से सुरक्षित है। कुछ संस्थाओं ने इस महामारी की तुलना दूसरे विश्व युद्ध से की है। मेरे अनुसार यह अनुचित है। युद्ध के दौरान कमज़ोर दिल एक जगह से भाग कर किसी तटस्थ जगह पर सुरक्षित रह सकता है परन्तु वर्तमान परिदृश्य में ऐसा कोई स्थल ही नहीं है जो सुरक्षित हो। मनुष्य कोविड महामारी के कैदी बन चुके हैं और हमारी पृथ्वी इसका कारागार। स्थिति की तुलना यहूदियों के द्वारा सामना किये जाने वाले प्रलय से भी की जा सकती है। बस अंतर इतना है कि अब हिटलर की संख्या करोड़ों में है।

एक बार अगर यह अणु के माध्यम से मानव शरीर में प्रवेश कर ले तो शरीर की गर्माहट में यह स्वयं की संख्या-वृद्धि कर अपनी प्रबलता बढ़ाता है। अगर इसकी अतुलित संख्या हो जाए और इसकी जांच न हो तो इसका परिणाम घातक होता है। सबसे बड़ी बात तो यह है कि इस बीमारी की कोई दवा नहीं है।

स्पष्ट रूप से, हम अभी भी अंधेरे में टटोल रहे हैं।

## क्या हुआ आखिर इस जहाँ को

पारस अग्रवाल

क्या हुआ आखिर इस जहाँ को,  
पूरी दुनिया जैसे पिंजरे में बंद।  
दुआ उनको, फंसे इस महामारी की वजह से जो,  
लग रहा है कुदरत दे रही इंसान को दंड।  
पहले जिस सड़क पर चलती थी गाड़ियाँ,  
आज वहीं जानवर लहरा रहे झंडा।  
फिर हरी भरी हो चुकी हैं पहाड़ियाँ,  
वापस साफ हो गई नदियाँ।  
पूरी दुनिया में छाया महामारी का कहर,  
मानों फैल चुका हवा में जहर।  
हाथ मिलाने से भी अब हम डरते,  
मास्क और साइटिजेर के लिए लड़ते।  
जानवर इंसान ने कर ली अदला-बदली ,  
जानवर आज़ाद, इंसान बंदी।  
किसी ने न सोचा कि ऐसा हो पायेगा  
किसे पता था कि सब बदल जाएगा।  
समय है कि कुदरत से हम मांगें माफ़ी,  
मानव ने कर ली गलतियाँ काफ़ी।  
क्या हुआ आखिर इस जहाँ को,  
क्या पता था सब बदल जाएगा।

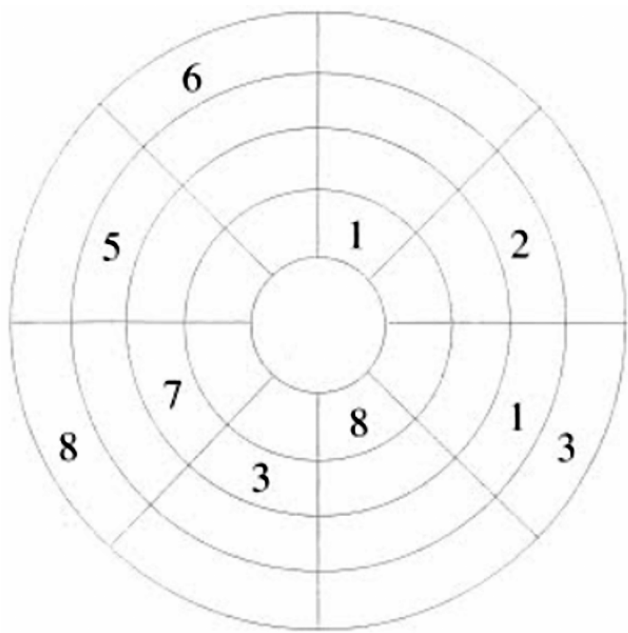
## कमरे से आवाज़

युवराज सारडा

नज़रों के सामने रहते हुए भी  
अनसुनी रह गई इस कमरे की आवाज़  
शायद लोग जानते नहीं  
या जानने वालों में दिलचस्पी नहीं  
या फिर बंद अलमारियों को देख  
कभी कुछ किया नहीं।  
कभी इन्हें खोला होता  
तो आज 'यूरेका' चिल्ला रहे होतेय  
आखिर छोटे-छोटे टुकड़े जोड़कर,  
घंटों तक सोचकर  
होता है आविष्कार।  
इन टुकड़ों की दुनिया कुछ ऐसी ही है  
एक बार घुस गए तो विचारों की बौछार  
कुछ बनाए बिना आपको जाने नहीं देती  
नए आविष्कारों की जड़ यहीं पर जमती हैं  
लेकिन फिर भी अनसुनी रह गई है  
इस कमरे की आवाज़।

# Problems of the Week

Place the numbers 1-8 so that one of each appears in the four concentric rings and in the eight different quarter circles.



Albert and Bernard just became friends with Cheryl, and they want to know when her birthday is. Cheryl gives them a list of 10 possible dates.

May 15 | 16 | 19

June 17 | 18

July 14 | 16

August 14 | 15 | 17

Cheryl then tells Albert and Bernard separately the month and the day of her birthday, respectively.

Albert: I don't know when Cheryl's birthday is, but I know that Bernard does not know, too.

Bernard: At first, I didn't know when Cheryl's birthday is, but I know now.

Albert: Then I also know when Cheryl's birthday is. When is Cheryl's birthday?

Source: The Guardian

## What Have You Been Reading During the Lockdown?

**Raag Darbari**

**Author: Sri Lal Shukla**

Talking of satirical novels, *Raag Darbari* always finds its position at the top of my list. Written by Sri Lal Shukla, this book takes a humorous jibe at the dystopian situation created post independence. The story evolves in a village named Shivpalganj, a synecdoche of the then-India. The novel is a ridiculing take on the plight of the common man as society is made subservient by the corruption of the people in power. Though written in the late '60s, this book still retains its essence — a must-read book to understand the Indian democratic ideals, the hollow notion of rural innocence, and beauty from the common man's perspective.

- Mr. Devendra Mishra

## What Have You Been Watching During the Lockdown?

**Prison Break (Age Rating: 15+) (TV Show)**

**Cast: Dominic Purcell, Robin Tunney**

"First, it was a prison. Now it's a nation."

This dangerously misleading title led me to think little of the show's plot, my binger's instinct telling me that this was a mundane story about prisoners' sedition. I couldn't have been more wrong. The story is so full of twists and turns, you may expect it to get endearing after the first season. It doesn't. It just gets better. There's always action around every corner in this show, never failing to surprise the viewer. Nonetheless, those searching for a way to 'break' out of this lockdown boredom may always watch this show. It certainly helps turn day into night faster than light itself.

- Yash Adalti

The views expressed in articles printed are their authors' own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Weekly or its editorial policy.

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