



NEWSLETTER
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Content

- Moment of pride and honour for VESITians
- Farewell to spearhead of MCA
- Samadhan'20 : An Initiative Towards Innovation
- VESIT Voice
- Musings & Expressions
- Vesit Diaries

Moment of Pride & Honour for VESITians

-Tanya Dubey

It is a proud moment for all the students of VESIT as the college secures 1st rank in the state of Maharashtra in the 'state rankings of private engineering institutes for 2020' released by 'EducationWorld'.

These rankings are based on a score that is calculated by EW. VESIT earned a score of 1767, out of a total of 2300, which was the highest among all the private engineering institutes in Maharashtra. It modestly ranked 23rd on the charts when being ranked nationally. However, VESIT jumped a rank up in the national rankings this year. VESIT was nationally ranked 24th the previous year, but this year it has been ranked 23rd in the country. It is a moment of celebration for the faculty, non-teaching staff and students who made this possible.

A Farewell to the Spearhead of MCA

-Shivani Shenai

As the lockdown of COVID -19 set in, VESIT wore a sad demeanor as it bid goodbye to Mrs. Nishi Tikku, who retired as the Head of the Department of MCA on March 31, 2020. Now, after more than three decades of teaching, the always approachable and untiring Teacher now bids fond adieu to this institution to begin a new phase in her life.

Mrs. Tikku has been an exceptional teacher, mentor, guide and confidant; she was a person to whom, both students and colleagues, looked up to for support and guidance. As she retires this semester, she has shared her invaluable advice and insights which she has captured during her journey at VESIT for almost 33 years, from being a computer programming teacher for the first-year engineering students to the head of the department of MCA.

Q. How did you celebrate your last day in VESIT?

V.E.S.I.T has been my second home for almost 33 years, since 1986. It's been a long time though; it doesn't seem like that for me. I obtained my superannuation on the 31st of March 2020. Well, this day shall be etched in history, not because it's a special day to me but because of the COVID-19 lockdown that forced us all to be homebound. I went to college on the 15th of March last, after which the college was closed temporarily but permanently for me. The morning of 31st found me a bit low for not being in college (I had worked for all my working years) on this day which would have been my last working day.

To my surprise and happiness, I received a call from our Deputy Head of the Department Dr S.K. Goel asking me to be a part of the zoom meeting that the Staff Welfare Committee had arranged on behalf of the college. Woo! This was my virtual farewell meet with our Principal Dr. J.M. Nair, Vice Principal Dr. M. Vijayalakshmi, my friends and colleagues across

departments of our esteemed institution, who had joined in to bid me a fond adieu. I experienced a real rush of adrenaline flow to see my well-wishers gathered that afternoon talking about their impression about me and their experiences with me. It was a splendid moment indeed.

Q. What subjects did you teach? Which one of these was your favourite and why?

I have walked through many corridors of V.E.S.I.T, be it for subjects or the departments or for that matter, the buildings. I have taught more than thirty subjects to date across various departments in the college. Right from teaching computer programming to students of all the classes of first-year engineering soon after I joined, a herculean task then, as the subject was in its infancy of the curriculum of the University of Mumbai to teaching higher semesters of MCA, Computer and IT department subjects such as principles of programming languages (PPL), Design and Analysis of Algorithms (DAA), Distributed Operating System (DOS), Network and Information Security, Distributed Computing and Cloud Computing, Business Infrastructure Management to name a few.

Though I disliked all of these when I would go through the course contents of the subject the first time, my liking for the subject would grow as I would start preparing for the same. Incidentally, I have been a part of the syllabus committee and on the examiners' panel of the University for most of the above-mentioned subjects and many more. All said and done the subject that I have liked the most is distributed computing and cloud computing.

Q. Your proudest moment...

Well, there have been quite a few of them. A teacher's work does not involve only teaching, we also need to see how and when during a student's tenure in

Cover Story EW India Private Engineering Colleges Rankings 2020-21

Private engineering institutes: State rankings

Rank	India 2020	State 2020	Maharashtra	Total score (2300)
23	1		Vivekanand Education Society's Institute of Technology, Mumbai	1767
26	2		Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Sardar Patel College of Engineering, Mumbai	1757
27	3		Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune	1753
28	4		KJ Somaiya College of Engineering, Mumbai	1745
29	5		Laxminarayan Institute of Technology (LIT), Nagpur	1739
29	5		DJ Sanghvi College of Engineering, Mumbai	1739
36	6		Fr. Conceicao Rodrigues College of Engineering,	

EW India Private Engineering Colleges
Rankings 2020-21



The zoom video call conducted with teachers from different departments of VESIT to bid ma'am a fond adieu

a professional college, do we add to his/her overall growth as a professional, to be employable and to sustain that successfully and ethically. Putting forth such proposals and getting them started especially with an appreciation, for the benefit of students and staff always bring in happiness and pride.

One such moment is when a bunch of enthusiastic students and I approached the Principal seeking permission to start a few societies/groups like SPICE where she referred to me as their “Sarthak”. Likewise, an instance when an Ex-Student (very well placed) called me up to seek my guidance/advice for his son’s higher studies.

Q. Highlights of your time with your colleagues and students.

My time with them has been engaging and at times challenging. Actually, there has hardly been a day without a challenge. Let me mention here as Head of the Department, one is actually in a sandwich program between the higher-ups and staff, higher-ups and students, and staff and students which I think I have sailed through successfully to a larger extent.

Q. An experience in college that you would always cherish.

Responding to the bright faces every morning with an assuring “Good morning” and, of course, every year when our facts and figures showed that around 90% of our Department students were placed.

Q. Things you would miss the most about our college...

Being with my students and some of my friends. My tea breaks of course which I would look forward to, even though these breaks would also be a busy time.

Q. Message for all the students.

I look back with gratitude. I entered a profession dedicated to assisting young minds to achieve their potential, to revealing or finding their most authentic selves. As I leave, I am bearing you in my memories, I shall always remember what you taught me and the things we achieved together. Never forget to explore yourselves and to give life 100% of it, because that is what you are here for. There’s no time to regret later. Your future depends largely on what you achieve this time, take it head-on.

Q. Message for the upcoming teachers and your colleagues.

Working with a positive attitude and utmost dedication is the guru mantra. “If you think in terms of a year, plant a seed; if in terms of ten years, plant trees; if in terms of 100 years teach people” by Confucius. Lastly, I would like to thank my colleagues for their friendship, support and exemplars of what it is to serve faithfully, honestly and with humility. I will always remember our shared laughter as well as our joys and struggles, for your appreciation and encouragement, your sincerity and trust. Thank you for being my travelling companion along a large and important part of my journey and your enormous collection of shared experience indelibly imprinted on my mind.

by Confucius-
Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

Fond adieu by her colleagues:

Dear Nishi madam!
With a long association with you in the department, I learnt so many things from you. You are not only beautiful by appearance as all of us appreciate you with this, but you are beautiful by heart also. Your values towards family and friends are tremendous which makes you more adorable. People like you are unforgettable. I wish you all the very best for your future endeavours.

-Dr.Shivkumar Goel

Dear Nishi ma’am
We will miss your wisdom and experience, but most of all, we will miss the encouragement you have been to us. Wishing you a life full of success and happiness.

-Mona Deshmukhi

Dear Nishi ma’am,
Thank you for guidance throughout these many years. You were always kind and soft-spoken. I have learnt many things from you. I will always miss you, mam. Enjoy your next phase of life. Khosh Ruziv !!!!

-Indira Bhattacharya.

Thank you Nishi ma’am for inspiring us all to do our best. You are a very motivating and pleasant person to work with. Wishing you all the high-quality on your destiny adventure,
Thank you

-Dr.Ramesh Solanki

Dear Nishi Madam,
“Grace Personified” these two words describe your best mam. Since the day I started working with you, I know I learned a lot, that helped me to become a better person inside out. Thank you for guiding me in my professional life. Best wishes for your happiness, health and prosperity and good luck for your future endeavours.

-Ruchi Rautela

Not every teacher deserves to be called one, because that title is reserved for great ones like you! Thank you Mam for your wonderful, knowledgeable guidance you gave us.

-Monali Rajput

Dear Nishi ma’am,
Thanks for guiding us to the path of knowledge and wisdom. You impressed everyone not only by your good looks but also by communication skills. I learnt that “How we can keep things simple but elegant also”. Wishing you all the success and happiness in life.

-Meenakshi Garg

Dear Nishi madam,
Thank you for your guidance and blessings. Wishing you all the best for your future journey.

-Ameya Parkar

Dear Nishi madam,
Thank you for all your support to encourage us to do new things and guiding the correct path. Special thanks for making sure human values is a core part in each one of us. Thank you, madam. Best wishes to you madam in all aspect whether its health, happiness, family, success, peace and many more. Always be cheerful which you are. Thank you, madam, for being part of my life. All the best madam.

-Sunny Nahar



Nishi Tikumam

Dear Nishi madam,
I can’t forget the guidance and support you gave me in the earlier days of my career. A relationship blended with personal care and professionalism. Hope, I will be fortunate enough to continue it. Thanks a lot, madam for always being there for me.

-Geocey Shejy

Respected Nishi madam,
Please accept my sincere gratitude for all the support and motivation! You are so helpful, kind, and generous with your time and energy. Thank you so much madam for being an excellent mentor! Best wishes for your future endeavours.

-Dashrath Mane

Respected Nishi madam,
The time we spend together will always be cherished. Your guidance and support always motivate us to bring our best. Wish u a happy healthy and prosperous life ahead. Thanks for always been there for us we will miss you mam

-Sangeeta Oswal

Dear Nishi madam,
I am very fortunate to know a wonderful, passionate and kind person like you. Wish u a very happy and prosperous life. We treasure your support and guidance in our career, thanks for the wonderful memories and support.

-Vaishali Gatty

Let me start by Saying a big thank you to Nishi Madam for her encouragement, guidance and support as a HoD throughout these years in VESIT and I feel so proud to be associated with her. I met Nishi Madam in July 2006, soon after joining VESIT at Our old college Campus at Principal madam’s cabin. I was impressed and inspired at the very first instance, by the way she included me in her fold; with humbleness and care in her words that made me look up to her and want to imitate her, - follow her footsteps to be “good human being”. Since 2006, she had been supporting and encouraging me to do my best to the department, wherever my involvement was there. She guided, helped and motivated in many phases of my life; not only professional but also in personal life . She has been a great support to everyone in the department professionally and emotionally. Thank you madam for being there with me and supporting in all times. Definitely, we miss you in the department but, your words and affection you have shown to us will remain in our heart forever. I would like to describe Nishi Madam in my own words that she is Nice, Intelligent, Smart, Humble and Intuitive (NISHI). I wish you happy and healthy retired life madam.

-Ms. Dhanamma

Samadhan'20 : An Initiative towards Innovation

-Sneha Kartik

If the challenge exists, so must the solution.

-Rona Mlnarik

A crisis, A pandemic, and A virus was not going to stop young minds all over India to come up with solutions to solve this Challenge. The Samadhan Challenge was an online mega challenge organized by The Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India. This entire event took place between 14th April and 26th April 2020. The entire event revolved around giving an opportunity for students to come up with ways to tackle the pandemic.

This online mega event was divided into 4 rounds. In the round 0, every contestant had to come up with a solution to a problem statement of their choice. After they had come up with a solution, they had to design a video explaining their solution in less than

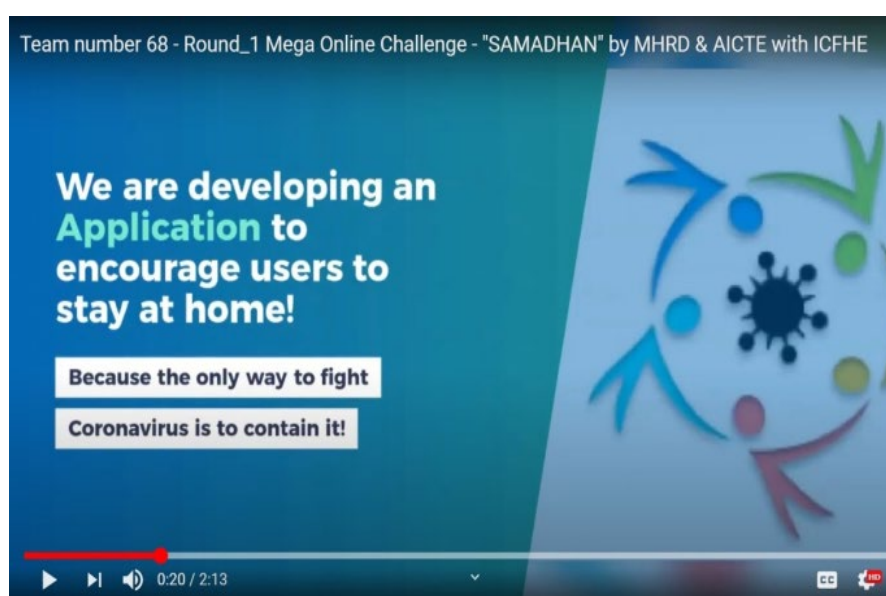
3 minutes. Once the videos were uploaded the Top 200 participants were decided based on the number of views, Likes, and Comments their videos received till the 16th of April 2020. In the Round 1 the top 200 participants were mentored to help the improve their idea and concepts. Again, based on public voting the Top 20 teams were selected. In Round 2, from 20, the participants were reduced to 10 and finally at the end of Round 3 the Top 3 Winners were announced.

Two teams from VESIT came up with ideas and took part in the Mega Challenge: Team Renaissance and Team Code Singularity. Members of Team Renaissance were Neeraj Patil, Aaryaa Padhyegurjar, Amey Sonje, Yogesh Tembe, Sayli Sawant, and Aditya Suryawanshi from Third Year Electronics Department made it to the Top 20. It was a rather

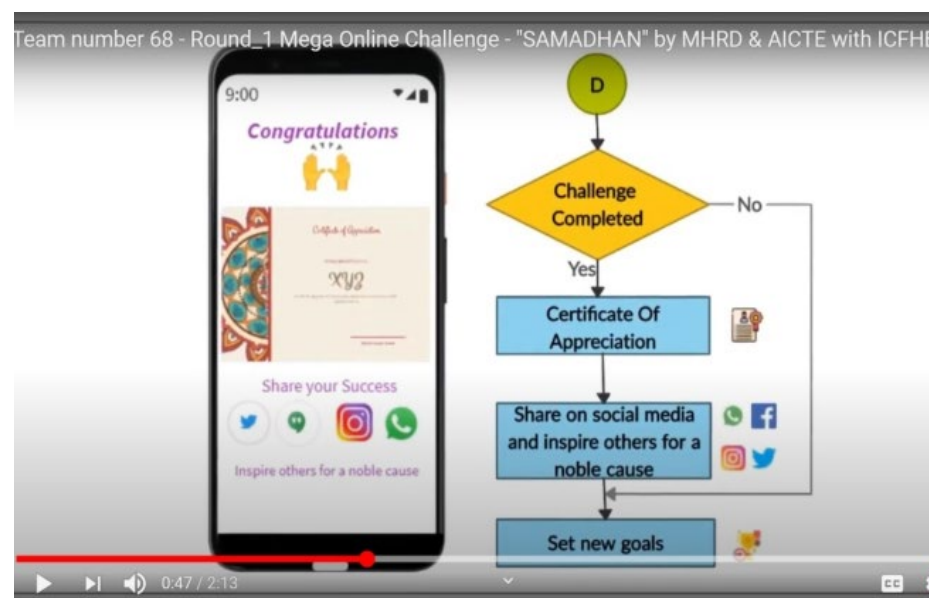
simple idea, which motivated people to follow the Social distancing norms. The idea mainly included a Mobile Applications that engage its users with challenges and rewards. It also gives the government an opportunity to keep an eye on the rule-breakers.

Team Code Singularity had Sneha Karthik, Advait Bansode, Garv Jhangiani and Ikjot Khurana from First Year Computer Science Department. They came up with an Application prototype that helps tackle Panic Buying.

In totality, this challenge without a doubt goes by the saying 'Sometimes you win, Sometimes you learn'. The challenge was a great learning experience to all the students who took part in the event.



Screenshot of Team No 68's video, consisting of Aaryaa, Neeraj, Amey, Yogesh, Sayli and Aditya from D11A



Team 68 encouraged spreading awareness by making it appealing to the people on the internet

VESIT Voice

-Gayatri Belapurkar

The college has been closed shut for more than a month now, and straight up, there is little to say apart from quarantine. There is, however, a highlight for this month as well! Education World Private Engineering Institute: State Rankings 2020 have, similar to last year, identified VESIT as numero uno in the state of Maharashtra. We all at VESIT are extremely thrilled and proud to be a part of the Number One Private Engineering Institute in the state. That said, just prior to the lockdown, the college bid farewell to one of its most valuable teachers, Mrs. Nishi Tiku, who retired as the Head of the MCA Department. We bring to you glimpses from her journey of 33 years in VESIT. This month, in the Diaries section, we have Mr. Nayan Jadeja from Batch of 1990, Electronics Department, President of COVIAM Technologies.

Coming back to quarantine times and what feels like house arrest, we have brought to you the experiences and views of different students and the way they are coping with it. In desperate times like these, where social distancing has become the new normal, it is all the more difficult to see the light at the end of the tunnel or to think that things shall return to 'normalcy'. With everything that is happening around us, it is almost implausible to not heed in to the negativity. The age of social media that we live in adds fuel to the fire. It is all the more evident now than ever before, that people compare themselves with others they see on social media platforms and beat themselves up, for they think they aren't good enough. But it is essential to remember that the way everyone copes with these uncertain conditions is different and it is OKAY to not be productive or to feel the way you are. Times like these are the ones that test us and compel us to look at the positives that life has to offer. The improving condition of mother nature everywhere, people spending more time with their loved ones and learning to really appreciate them, millions of people giving a helping hand to fight the pandemic on the frontline or the ones who are doing their part by being backstage, a million others who have tested positive and are struggling with all their might to overcome it: these instances are the ones that inspire and manage to keep that ray of hope within us burning at all times.

We at VESIT Connect hail all those who are doing whatever they can to beat these circumstances, from the ones acting on the frontlines to the ones who are sitting at home on the couch and binge watching. Remember, we all are in this together, and we shall emerge victorious.

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Musings & Expressions

Mahabharat 2.0

-Rohit Sreedhar(Alumnus)

This is a story about the trip that equally signs you off as a graduate as your degree in itself. The final year class trip to Shimla and an assortment of other neighboring touristy cities. There is a sense of liberating rebellion that these places have begun to offer with their natural beauty, that is either rolled in a camera or in a paper rested between your two fingers. January 2018 was the turn of my batch. Now what was supposed to be our exclusive college trip with a few guests eventually turned to be a glittery bandwagon to which we were casually attached. A classic case of Abdullah jeopardizing the begaani shaadi and hogging away all the starters. In no time we discovered that we were two factions on the same journey. Let's call faction 1, us, as Pandavas. And faction 2 as Kauravas. Pandavas because we had no clue that we were usurped and Kauravas as Kauravas because they claimed ours as theirs. Our little kingdom that was supposed to contain comfortable travel and accommodation. We Pandavas, however spent half of our lives crunching and scooting, clueless and in ecstasy. We probably would have just lived like that in entirety but the Kauravas themselves chose to open our eyes with their pompous accord. The cold war ensued and we kept putting up, until they set they chose to do away with our most priced possession, heat. By now our bandwagon had moved to Dalhousie, the last of the mountain interest. This was where heaters were denied to us by the ho-

tel staff, as if it was a commodity that didn't need to exist in the universe. More so, in the January of Dalhousie. If you look back at the story until now, you'd probably sense the absence of Krishna. Krishna to tactfully make it evident to the Pandavas that the Kauravas are peacefully snoring in temperature controlled suites while the Pandavas ground their teeth in the cold. This is where I decided to double role up as a junior artist Krishna, if I say so myself and make a cameo as the catalyst to fume up the blood of the Pandavas. I did not have the life changing enlightenment to offer. However. my phone call as a regular enquirer, to the hotel reception kind of tipped the patience curve off the quesicent point. The hotel's inviting response saying that they had the best heaters and service (rubbed in) led us marching to the battlefield. And there we were, the Kauravas and Pandavas now looking each other in the eye. And soon, the battle did ensue. Kicking off with allegations for war cries, glasses for swords and fists for maces. Our Arjun in the forefront, braving with a bloody nose. Bheem mincing their abuses with his choicest ones and Bheeshma pitching in with words of wisdom.

Everyone got roles to play and soon the war ended (with everyone alive of course). We strived, we got what we deserved. But what also happened was the aftermath of the war. Justice was necessary but we weren't walking this journey

for this. We had signed up for good times and perhaps action too but of the kind that excites your mind and not that shakes it. We had walked halfway laughing in the echoes of Shimla. We had inhaled budding camaraderie in the roads of Kufri. We were acquaintances and classmates discovering richer friendships in the shimmering waters of Manali and were beginning to sow warm seeds of solidarity in the cold but rich soil of Dalhousie. We were standing on the brink of this uncalled night, with uncalled tears from an uncalled war. Tears that could flood a promising civilization of memories that we have today or could be dew drops that gleamed the sunshine of nostalgia. We sat down in hugs to warm up the shivering heart and it was possibly the heat from the hot jalebis in Shimla or the unruly tunes from crammed bus rides or the inhalation of love in the snow valleys of solang and we chose the dew drops. If you recall how Mahabharat ended, all of the Pandavas winded up into the mountains to lose each other one by one into the womb of asceticism. But here, we wound downwards. Downwards into the valley of deeper friendships. Downwards holding hands through precarious cliffs and cold gazes from the Kauravas. Downwards to discover a new journey. And in the this version, we found each other, giving in to stronger relations.

India Reacting to COVID-19

Corona - The Lessons Learnt

-Mrs. Sobha Krishnan(HOD Dept. EXTC)

Writing that felt strange...	May be
But many are the lessons..	Spent more time with family
This lockdown has taught-	Talked to long forgotten relatives Pursue a left behind hobby
We are always told-	Nourish the tender shoots of a talent
While in the rat race , stop to smell the roses..	Forget petty squabbles
But how many did?	Catch up with long lost friends- and many more
We reveled in our busy routines , too busy for	Corona you taught us , we need so little to live
Everything that matters-	Shall cherish the time with our loved ones
It's now we learn , forced to learn..	Shall remember the lessons learnt....for ever
How meaningless many things were..	Waiting to start afresh,
How we made trivial things important ,	Waiting for you to be soon gone..for ever
Our family, friends, hobbies, everything was on the fringe,	
As we plugged along with our daily routines.	
Now that there is time ,we can look back	
What is it we could have done differently ?	



Mrs. Sobha Krishnan
(HOD, Dept. EXTC)

संकल्प

- निलिमा वारके

हमें अपने मन को हमेशा संतुलित रखना है
इसी में हमारा आत्म विकास समाया है |

मैं अपने कर्तव्य खुद के प्रति,
कुटुंब की प्रति, काम समाज और
विश्व के प्रति, शांति, आनंद
और स्वास्थ्य के प्रचार के लिए बद्ध हूँ |



Mrs. Nilima Warke
(Associate Professor,
Dept. Instrumentation)



Broken Laws

-Rohit Sreedhar(Alumnus)

Everyone’s quiet.
Just like a toddler, who’s gotten a earful,
For an irreversible mischief.
Who shrugs by a punishment that can’t be annulled against,
Even a mighty sorry’s tariff.

There’s sense in only staying calm,
There’s solidarity only in solitude.
Ponder, an apocalypse too is a deed of a palm,
Let’s wash it away soon, in waters of gratitude.

The sun feels a tad tender,
And the chirps, a decibel louder.
The window overlooks a necessary pause,
The horizon mirrors a list of broken laws..



Photograph by Rohit Sreedhar

‘Separated’ in ‘Togetherness’

-Anushika Kulkarni

It’s so amazing to think that through collective knowledge and togetherness the human-kind made a lot of things: water sanitation systems, healthcare systems, education, transportation systems, literature, art,etc. It is overrated to be a one-man-army and the essence of being human lies in ‘togetherness’, community and give and take of help because helping and trusting people to help you is a truly wonderful feeling of togetherness.
Well right now we are amidst a pandemic, the Covid-19, which asks us to adequately isolate ourselves and follow strict social distancing protocols. Many countries have imposed a lockdown , including ours, to fight the deadly CoronaVirus and to come out of this situation undefeated. In this quarantined period, I dearly miss my friends, hugs, laughing over an overused pun and working on cool things together. On the other hand, it is very heartwarming and emotional to see so many doctors, nurses and essential services workers, working on the front line protecting us, tirelessly, trying their best, and making timely and appropriate decisions for the rest of us to prevent this situation from escalating and getting worse. It is also endearing to see the people respecting the protocols and staying at homes and recognizing the efforts of those who don’t have an option to ‘Quarantine and chill. .
To show our gratitude to the health-care workers for their undeterred spirit and unmatched efforts, as our Prime Minister suggested, on 22 March 2020 at 5:00 p.m., the people stood in their balconies, verandahs, open corridors, etc. and vociferously applauding and playing

instruments and striking spoons on vessels, and doing the sweet ‘we-are-all-in-this-together’ dance. The thunderous 5-minutes clapping and clinging sound of utensils, conchs and bells was a song of Unity and a tune to our poem of ‘Togetherness’. It was not just that the health-care workers that felt acknowledged and appreciated but this gesture was very empowering for the people as well . Coming into their balconies and seeing the cheerful faces of the people of the neighborhood, smiles and applause, was very heart-warming.
Soon after seeing such an overwhelming response by the citizens, the Prime Minister requested citizens, in an attempt to reignite the spirit of togetherness, to turn off their lights for 9 minutes at 9 pm on April 5, 2020 and light a candle or a diya or even use the flashlight on one’s mobile to mark the country fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. Again, the people unitedly participated in this activity, resulting in a very beautiful twinkling of lights in the Sunday-night city-skyline. Some people got creative and projected illuminated gratitude messages for doctors, police officers etc. There was enthusiasm and a feeling of togetherness in the air and it was felt by everyone standing in their balconies holding a diya or lighting candle.
However, there was an important and relevant question raised by many as to how this is solving any practical problems because a lot of people are not co-operating in this situation; doctors and essential workers are being attacked, and ironically , in order to perform the task a few people broke the social distancing protocols and organised parades and candle marches,

adding to the predicament. Just moral support is not enough, along with keeping health-care workers in orisons and prayers , we must keep them protected .
However, coronavirus is a global threat, which means we as a planet earth are in this together. And any small act that eases us and helps us cope mentally to this challenge is, I believe, momentous. Isolation is going to be tough because evolution makes us social beings. We must take care of our health especially, mental health. During home quarantine, we can learn together , we can sing songs together, light candles together , draw oranges together and pray together. So many people, right now, are feeling displaced in their life, their education; worried about their daily bread and butter, their health. We must remember, that things will get better, we will get through this, we will celebrate at the end of this and we will do all of it together. In solitude and togetherness we will win this war against the Covid-19.



Social Distancing

Small Measures, Big Differences during Times of Panic

-Hridesh Kamal

It was only a few months ago, when the world was looking at China with horror - as a new strain of the SARS virus, named Covid-19, emerged in the city of Wuhan. What followed was a multi-city lockdown trying to contain the disease within the quarantine zone. But, alas, quarantine zones are often porous.

It took less than four months for the disease to spread across over 87% of the world's countries and territories at the time of writing this piece. With over 2.9 million victims, the disease is twice as contagious as the flu and over 100 times deadlier. It wouldn't be a stretch to claim that we are currently living through a historic pandemic.

Why so serious? Humanity has seen numerous pandemics over the years. On one hand, this shows that humans can survive such events as a society. But on the other hand, this leads people to carry an irrational sense of safety. As quoted by Nina Fefferman, a 'Public Health and Family Medicine' research professor of Tufts University, Massachusetts, "A lot of people have the emotional response of - 'You know what? I'm going to guess it's going to be okay. I'm gonna try and stick it out...'" This quote from October 2005 accurately describes what we see today. Further, there are things which make our current condition worse. This pandemic is not like the ones our grandparents may have seen, say measles. There is no obvious way to know you have the virus because there are no marks or red dots and many people have zero symptoms for

WEEKS. You have little idea if you have it, and even less whether you can transfer it to someone else.

Key to survival: We all feel sad that we are locked in, unable to go outside. All the major events of the year have been either cancelled or postponed indefinitely. We can't even walk across the street without receiving a 'Are you infected?' stare.

But the only way to wipe off this pandemic at our hands is staying indoors and supporting those who risk their lives to protect us. And if you need to step out for necessities or emergencies, you need to keep a few steps in mind. And the key is to build on simple, every-day actions.

Making a difference: Being in the middle of a global pandemic makes it easy to seem that your

actions are too small. In fact, how can you stay indoors and make a difference? The country is so big and there are not 'that' many people you can come in contact with for it to cause an issue right?

While this will come as a shock to most, simply by staying indoors you save about 188 lives. This number takes into consideration the chance of you unintentionally spreading the virus, and the people who got it from you spreading it further combined with a 1% mortality rate.

This number increases exponentially if you consider a densely populated city like Mumbai. If just 80% of us make sure to follow social distancing, wear a mask when stepping outside and wash our hands frequently, it is estimated that we can end this disease from the entire country in under a month. This disease, infecting over thousands every single day, can be defeated by these little actions.

Time for responsibility: Today, it's not "Everyone for themselves". The reality is that we are stuck in this as a team. And like every team sport, if one person doesn't play their part, it makes the whole team suffer and lose. More importantly, in this game where we are stuck, these losses are a question of life and death.

We are in this together. And you have the power to help all of us win. In this game, success means survival. Success means a return to the underappreciated joys of life that we deeply miss at the moment. And few people can describe the path to success better than this.



"We are in this together"

Soldiers: Battling the Pandemic

-Tanya Dubey

The chilled breeze of February was fading away, and the scorching summer of March was approaching. The afternoons had begun to heat up. Everyone was busy in their daily routine, waking up early in the morning and gearing up for the long day ahead at schools, colleges and offices. The students of standard tenth and twelfth were all geared up for their board exams. India was just doing fine when all of a sudden everything changed with a blink of an eye. The Government ordered all the educational institutions to be shut down. The news channels were flooded with headlines talking about the rapid spread of the corona virus in India and the increasing number of infected people. Within a few days, India's Prime minister, Mr Narendra Modi, announced a lockdown in the country. There was a sense of fear everywhere. Everyone was locked up in their homes fearful of infection by the malignant virus.

Amidst the panic, there were a few people who cared less about what the virus could do to them but more about what they could do for the country and its people. There were a few people who were more concerned with how they could be of help to others in this dreadful time. Doctors and nurses on the front lines, policemen, delivery drivers, news reporters, and many others, who are doing their bit to keep people from leaving their homes, have taken this selfless step of coming forward, to help the citizens of the country, at the cost of their own lives.

In this unprecedented situation, with the corona virus spreading expeditiously, it is the health care workers on whom the citizens can count on. India does not have enough kits to test most of its population for the new virus. But that does not stop India from fighting it. There are thousands of health-care workers fanning out across the country to trace and quarantine people who

might have had contact with the ones tested positive for the virus. The doctors are trying to provide the best possible health care to the patients. The police force is also extending its help and support in these terrible times. The policemen are playing a major role to ensure the enforcement of the "stay at home" order, which is the most important key to eliminate the spread of this noxious virus. They are also providing help to the citizens in these times of curfew. In many areas, the policemen were seen delivering groceries and medicines to the citizens.

In addition to the health care workers and the policemen, there are many more brave souls who are helping the people of India to walk through these tough times. The news reporters are constantly filling, the citizens, in with the latest updates about the pandemic. The delivery drivers are delivering groceries and other basic necessities to the people's doorsteps so that they don't have to step out. There are many social workers who stepped out of their homes to feed the poor. And the list of these audacious humans continues.



Health care workers testing citizens for the corona virus

Their tireless work and self-sacrifice are showing the best of humanity. Though it is a pity that many people are turning a blind eye to their altruistic efforts and are also ill-treating them. There have been many instances where stones were being thrown at the health care workers and the policemen. There have been reports of violence against the doctors with the reason being stated as 'the doctors are responsible for spreading the virus'. In Delhi, doctors complained about their forceful eviction by the landlords who were fearful of infection.

All these altruistic and chivalrous souls are paying a heavy price in this battle. People are failing to realise that it is the hard work and selfless service of such people, that India is capable enough to fight this battle against the COVID 19 pandemic. The citizens of India should thank them all for their magnanimous service to mankind.



Police officials check upon commuters during lockdown in the wake of corona virus outbreak

Video Lectures: A Newer Scope to Academics

-Mihir Pamnani

Today, the whole world is fighting the global pandemic COVID-19 with utmost courage and patience. Countries all across, have implemented extended lockdowns, strict rules on social distancing, personal hygiene and sanitation. It's like everyone on the planet is determined against one novel entity to get this over with. Quarantining is the new social hashtag. Governments are striving harder to increase the test numbers exponentially meanwhile simultaneously looking after all sectors of the socio-economic sphere to retain the sense of balance once we get past this. Virtual platforms are blooming with better insights on positivity, reaching out to people struggling such untamed

times with every tinge of kindness. It all feels humming in harmony to an anthem to find their way out of this tres-passed bacterial infection.

And to keep the academic curriculums, the institutions around the world have resorted to video-lectures. The now old-school video-calling facility to cater the set timetables. 'Zoom'-the app created by Amercian-Chinese businessman has turned to become a new-found boon to academic sector. Though a majority of elementary schools in most regions have decided to promote the students, the technological revelations are highly in use by high school and university faculties. Classroom timetables are sent prior to students via email and everybody joins in the meeting at the set time. The teachers share the study material screens whether power-point or scribbled bullets whilst them explaining the concepts of the concerned subject. The students now switch classes with a tap on screens instead of walking to the classroom in physical domain. But though the whole idea has been truly fruitful midst such tough times, the core issues of slower internet connectivity and online traffic in network topologies make the whole process arduous and exhausting. There are difficulties in student-teacher exchange of

dialogue owing to the remembrance of the classroom-model. But to summon up the positives, it sure does serve the bare minimum to keep things in running smooth on time.

But as they 'more the power, more the responsibility', with the cases of data-frauds and leaks being hiked with hackers sprouting on every corner destabilizing firewalls, the process is fighting for it's authentic integrity. As a result, 'zoom' has also witnessed a data-breach so far, making institutions to look out for other portals of communication such as -google hangouts meet, cisco webex meetings etc. The modern classrooms have indeed shifted to virtual forums to maintain regularity. For students, the entire experience is new and naive though adaptability comes easy for budding minds and will set in normalcy in due course of time. The virtual representation and the working format also is indeed preparing students for times ahead to manage tasks at workplaces. Though the process isn't the epitome of praise as of now, but will certainly endure developments and stronger policies in near future. All in all, it can be said that in such callous times, this new wave of learning seems to be adequate to cater the purpose of education and timetables satisfactorily.



Online Lectures During COVID-19

WhatsApp University : Awareness and Spread of Fake News

- Kaushal Jagasia

Be it Good Morning texts with a picture of steaming hot idli sambhar cooked for breakfast received on the family group, jokes and banter with your friends, the life saving notes on the class group; our cellphones are constantly buzzing with WhatsApp messages. WhatsApp is one of the most popular platforms for communication in India. It is an important form of social media that has influenced the psyche of the modern users; just like any other application it has its own advantages and shortcomings. With a user base of more than 400 million users, it has unfortunately become one of the most misused platforms, as far as misinformation and fake news are concerned. Owing to this, the term WhatsApp University has emerged, which is slang for the most ridiculous and unreal news that gets circulated.

The rationale behind using the term WhatsApp University is that the universities are a medium to provide knowledge and information. Similarly, since WhatsApp has taken over as the most preferred communication medium in India, it is now being

used to share information which is rather funny and unrealistic, and it may have serious sequences. The following is a message that was being circulated on WhatsApp during the first two weeks of lockdown :-

Hello friends,

Sharing a very good news with you hope this helps you and your family. A simply homemade remedy can help you fight corona. Take 1 cup water and boil it. Add ginger to it and 4-5 peppercorns. When it boils for 2-3 mins add lemon drops to it and drink this every morning. Corona will not dare to enter your body. Let's fight against corona together.

While a lemon ginger ale might help you to boost your immunity it certainly does not classify as a vaccine for coronavirus. The tone of the message is misleading as it suggests one would not need to worry about the virus if he's having a lemon ginger ale.

In these uncertain and trying times, misinformation can add to the confusion, creating panic or a false sense of assurance. Many people

do not pause to verify information that they receive on messaging apps like WhatsApp, and immediately forward it to those on their contact list.

There does not seem to be a full-proof solution to the problems created by our home-grown WhatsApp University. One possible solution is to change the privacy policy and monitor each message specifically, but that seems to raise a few eyebrows as it will be a grave violation of the right to privacy of individuals which was declared as the fundamental right under Article 21.

The bottom line is to keep a check on the messages we share on messaging platforms and making sure we do not end up graduating from the great Indian WhatsApp University (read as : become a victim of fake news and misinformation).



WhatsApp makes fighting FAKE NEWS a challenge



WhatsApp MyGov Corona Helpdesk is an Official Chatbot to Clear Queries About COVID



Striking a Balance this Quarantine

-Arya Kasulla

Amidst this global catastrophe, working from home has nuanced into multiple aspects. Though a bunch of people were already used to this lifestyle it was a drastic change for the others. Often it is really difficult to change your work patterns since we are extremely habitual about them. However the word 'home' does add a level of comfort to everyone's minds.

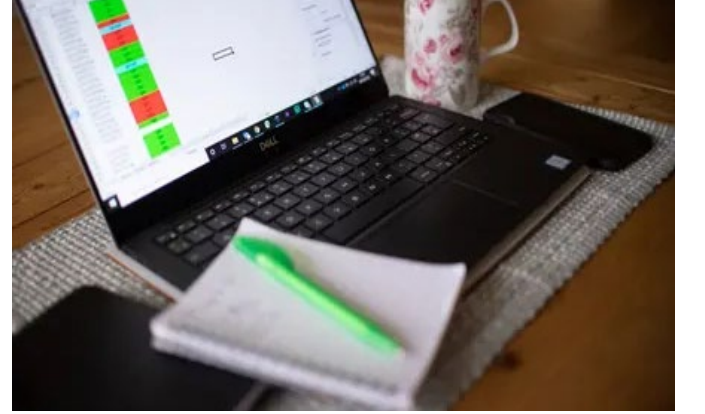
So does carrying out your job at the comfort of your home imply Downton Abbey marathons? Or are they brimmed with inactivities or simply just long conference calls discussing the process? As a matter of fact the current scenario is the exact opposite of that. A vast portion of the working class is exhausting itself with excel sheets and files and ppts. They're cutting short the tea breaks and lunch times just to counteract the pressures of inactivity. There are firms who

work on a connected work ethic during these times but geographical constraints and communication anomalies continue to nullify their efforts. A painstaking effort of the teachers to consider the credibility of the work assignments submitted by the students is a task.

It is really important to maintain one's sanity around this time. To take care of maintaining appropriate hygiene and take care of the demands of the house, be it ordering groceries or managing bills. These tasks seem a little more tough when you have to sit in front of your laptop for 7-8 hours approximately each day. While everyone is using the wifi bandwidth for streaming Netflix or Prime, trying to get a video call through might just be the toughest task of each day.

Once this lockdown gets over and we can all resume our normal lives, work from home is gonna be surely missed because you cannot have the

comfort of hopping in bed for a quick power nap or play with your dog till the file is getting processed or for that matter, multitask your movie. But, it will always be an experience that we know for sure ain't in any form less hectic than an actual work life.



Work From Home

काही संस्मरणीय कौटुंबिक क्षण!

कीर्ती दयाराम पाटील

मुंबईच्या रोजच्या धकाधकीच्या जीवनात उशिरा पर्यंत झोपून राहणं म्हणजे अशक्यच अं आणि त्यात तुम्ही विद्यार्थी असाल तर शक्यच नाही. रोज शाळा आणि कॉलेजसाठी लवकर उठव च लागतं. ही पण रविवार मात्र आपल्या हवर्का चा असतो. अशाच एका रविवारी 15 मार्च रोजी एक महत्त्वाची नोटीस जाहीर झाली.

‘महाराष्ट्र शासनानुसार Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) च्याबाबत सुरक्षित ता पालणे गरजेचे आहे. त्यामुळे सर्व विद्यार्थ्यांना कलविण्यात येते की 31 मार्च पर्यंत कॉलेज बंद राहिल.’ ही नोटीस वाचल्यावर काहीवेळ आनंद गर्ग नात मावेनासा झाला. 15 दिवस कॉलेजला सुट्टी अं म्हणजे उशिरापर्यंत झोपता येईल मनसोक्त ह्रस्वस्वरु बघता येतील आणि सुट्टीचा आनंद घे ता येईल. पण एकाच दिवसात त्या भल्यामोठ्या सुट्टीचा कंटाळा यायला लकंटाळा यायला लागला. मित्रमैत्रिणींना भेटता येत नव्हतं आणि दिवसभर ह्रस्वस्वरु बघून कंटाळा यायला लागला. मग आपसूकच माझी पावलं माझ्या खोलीच्या बाहेर पडली.

आज कित्येक दिवसांनी आम्ही सर्वज ण एकत्र जेवायला बसलो. रोजच्या जीवनात मी कधी घरच्यांसोबत नीटसा वेळ घालवू शकले नव्हते पण या सुट्टीमध्ये नाईलाज म्हणून का होईना मला खोलीच्या बाहेर

पडावं लागलं. मग हलूहलू आईबाबांसोबतच्या गप्पा नातेवाईकांची विचारपूस यात माझही मन रमायला लागलं. इतर वेळी ‘लवकर उठ’ म्हणून सांगणारी आईदेखील मला उशिरापर्यंत झोपून देऊ लागली. आणि घरच्या कामांमधील धावपळ बघून मीदेखील घरकामात मदत करायला लागले. घरच्यांसोबत वेळ घालवायला लागले. वेळ जात नाही म्हणून का होईना पण मी स्वयंपाकातले सोपे सोपे पदार्थ शि कू लागले. त्यात स्वतःला व्यस्त करून घेतलं.

एरवी सोशल मिडियावर वेळ घालवणारी मी आज कुटुंबासोबत एकत्र बसून चर्चा गप्पा एवढ च नाही तर टीव्हीदेखील बघायला लागले. कारण टीव्हीवर लोकांच्या करमणूकीसाठी जुने कार्यक्रम आणि जुन्या मालिका लावण्यात आल्या होत्या. रामायण महाभारत अशा पौराणिक कथा तर शक्ति तमान मोगली इत्यादी मालिकांनी आबालवृद्ध ना एकत्र बांधून ठेवलं. सुरुवातीला काही पर्याय नव्ह ता म्हणून आणि नंतर नंतर आवड निर्माण झाली म्हणून आम्ही सर्वजण एकत्र या मालिका बघाई ला लागलो. या मालिकांच्या आठवणी मोठ्या कडून ऐकता ऐकता त्यात रस निर्माण झाला.

मालिका आणि बातम्यांच्या बाबत सुरुवा तीला गप्पा आणि हलूहलू आमच्यात चर्चा होऊ र्गली. ‘आता पुढे कायत्र’ ‘कधी सगलं पूर्ववत होणारत्र’ यापासून ते ‘नशिब आपण एकत्र र्ग

होत जे घरापासून दूर आहेत त्यांचं कायत्र’ अशा र्च चारिक विषयांवर चर्चादेखील झाल्या. घरी बसून कंटाळा येत असला तरीही आपण सुरक्षि त आणि एकत्र आहोत याचा आनंद होता.

खरंच या एका महिन्यात social distance जरी वाढलं असेल तरीही मानसिक अंतर खूप कमी झालं. कुटुंब एकत्र आली संवाद वाढला नातेवाईकांची मित्रमैत्रिणींची विचारपूस आणि र्चा कशी वाढली. हा एक महिना खूप काही शिकवू न गेला. जेव्हा हा लेक्कदेह्द संपेल त्यानंतर एक वेगलंच आणि अनुभवी जग असेल एवढं नक्की.



कुटुंबासोबत एकत्र बसून रामायण महाभारत अशा पौराणिक कथा बघायला लागलो

World Reacting to COVID-19

USA to the Rescue?

-Arnab Saha

The United States of America has been a powerhouse of a nation, not only in means of foreign affairs and influence but also in the image, which has been portrayed for decades now by an overwhelming count of movies, TV shows or comics ranging from the widely-loved Avengers series by Marvel to classics like Independence Day, where not only, is the United States the primarily affected country but the one who always shows grit to overcome these arduous scenarios and do so in a manner as if these world-ending crises were some mere prosaic daily routine.

Now fast forward to the disastrous year of 2020, where, within the first month itself the people have been bombarded with a plausible Third World-War as well as the egregiously bad wildfires

in Australia. This generation, which thinks raiding Area 51 is peak humanity, is clearly stunned by the circumstances brought along the Corona Virus pandemic, which has caused the first global shutdown of such a degree since the horrifying World-War II and more than 100,000 deaths. Now the question in hand is, where is the United States of America, the self-appointed saviours of the world? Upto the 15th of March, 2020 cases were increasing in a slow but alarming rate in the United States, with around 2 thousand total reported cases on the 14th of March, while developed nations in Europe, like Italy and Spain, were crippling with total cases already soaring through 5 digits, per day and a similarly alarming death rate. While the president of USA, Donald Trump was holding China and its

administration accountable, for undermining the seriousness of the disease which ended up transforming into such a worldwide crisis, the citizens of USA had already started panic buying, with Toilet Papers being the primary target but simultaneously, some had a rather casual approach with various instances of mass gatherings with a scary attendance.

After just a week of this, from the 23rd of March cases started surging exponentially with locations like New York City and New Jersey being hotspots, with the daily reported cases being above 10,000 cases in the USA. Suddenly, the simulation, as shown in the movies started seeming real. USA has become the most infected country with upwards of 475,000 cases, and New York itself having close to 200,000 confirmed cases with the final antago-

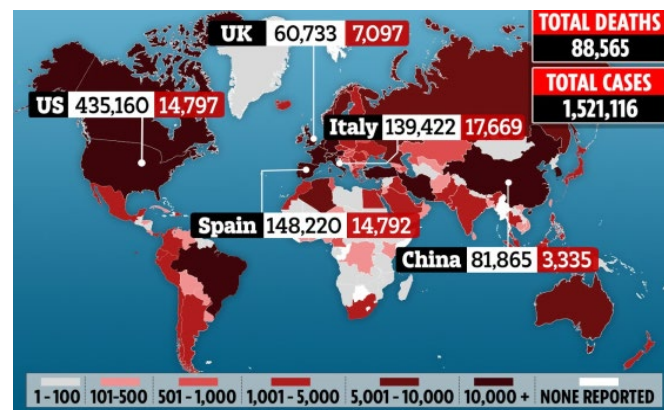
nist being a virus-ridden Bat. The whole narrative of USA being the primary target with New York being the centre of it all started seeming too real.

The question in hand now is, how will USA deal with this? Will it be the saviour like it always says it is? If a nation like United States of America is barely coping with COVID-19, is there actually no hope? As of now, according to press interviews with the POTUS, Donald Trump, the headspace of its administration has been shifted from preserving the global economy and has been changed into the laconic narrative of saving its people first. Along with fast-forwarding procedures for a possible vaccine, USA has shown grit and has been conducting a whopping 2 million tests and has gone through with evacuation of citizens residing in New York City. Even after a nation-wide shutdown, which has shown us some spine-chilling photos of famous destinations, which are crawling with people throughout the year, being eerie and empty, unfortunately, death rates have been alarmingly increasing with total deceased approaching a scary figure of 20,000.

On the brighter side, USA has been playing an influential role to arrive at a global medicated solution to this pandemic. Then comes the hot topic of Hydroxychloroquine. This drug, which made the kind of impressions on the internet that celebrities wish for, made the headlines globally ever since it has been showing positive reports for certain cases of COVID-19 infected patients. With Hydroxychloro-

quine, also came India into the picture as our country produces 70 % of the world's supply, primarily because Hydroxychloroquine is important for acute cases of Malaria, which has been a concurrent disease in India. Brazil, as well as 25 other nations, also followed the steps of the United States of America when it came to importing Hydroxychloroquine from India, with their respective Presidents pushing the drug for further examinations. Talking about influence, vaccination named 'BCG', which is frequently prescribed to the citizens by India has been taken up for the doctors in Europe, who are in immediate contact with the virus affected patients and has been shown results in providing a certain level of protection.

Coming back to the narrative of USA being the knight in shining armour, things have certainly progressed ever since cases started booming



Globally effected countries



Trump addressing the press about the details of tests conducted

How People Cope up with Coronavirus Positively Throughout the World

-Shivani Shenai

With all the tragic things that are happening in the world as a result of the coronavirus, now might seem like an unusual time to talk about being positive. Yet, staying positive is the core ingredient in the recipe for fighting off this invisible enemy. 'Change comes from within', similarly at such a position in life, positivity must start at an individual level. It is critically important to stay calm and to keep a positive growth mindset. One must try to focus on what they can control and take care of themselves and their loved ones.

At a community level, masks and food are being distributed to police who are operating full time in the front lines to maintain the lockdown and prevent people from violating the quarantine rules. Health care workers don't have the luxury of relaxing in their homes to shield themselves from the coronavirus. They have to expose themselves to the risk, and some are living separately from their families for weeks to avoid transmitting the virus to them.

India has been exporting hydroxychloroquine to many countries such as the United States, Spain, Germany, etc helping many such countries to fight this battle. As asked by our Honorable Prime Minister, people from all over the country clapped on the 22nd of March during the Janta Curfew and lit candles and diyas on the 5th of April, to commemorate health care workers, police, sweepers, vegetable vendors, etc. One can see the amount of respect the country holds for them, as everyone clapped their hearts out in unison and chanted 'Jai Hind'.

Numerous NGOs in association with restaurants have been donating food to underprivileged people all over the country. Tata Trusts which is headed by Ratan Tata committed Rs 500 crore and Tata Sons, the principal holding company of the salt-to-software conglomerate, announced another Rs 1,000 crores to manufacture ventilators, protective gear, Covid-19 testing kits and facilities to treat infected persons. Likewise, many individuals have donated an abundant amount of

money to the PM's funds and the CM's funds.

The entertainment sector around the globe has been able to convey the same message of positivity from their respective residences by shooting and editing videos to produce short films and motivational or silly or heartwarming videos. People from around the world are recruiting volunteers to support local residents who are elderly, vulnerable, or stuck at home without any family or friends nearby. Many have established Facebook groups to pursue the same.

A video of a fitness instructor in Seville, in Spain, who held an exercise class for quarantined residents in an apartment block who joined in on their balconies went viral whereas when a couple downsized their wedding and got married at home, their entire neighborhood surprised them by celebrating from their cars. WestJet threw four students a mini-graduation on their flight home after their college closed due to the coronavirus. There are a number of such cases that reflect how caring and loving humanity could be at such times.



WestJet crew throwing a mini-graduation for four students on their flight home

But one such particular case was too heartwarming to not share. A husband celebrated his 67th wedding anniversary outside his wife's nursing home after coronavirus restrictions kept them apart. Bob Shellard, 90, was not able to visit Nancy, 88, at her nursing home in Stafford Springs, Connecticut, due to the coronavirus pandemic. Instead, he brought a beautiful sign he made himself along with plenty of balloons and stood outside her window to mark their 67th wedding anniversary. "I've loved you 67 years and still do. Happy Anniversary."



Bob Shellard wishing his wife Nancy, Happy Anniversary

History shows that panic has never solved anything, hence one should try to focus some of that energy on really helping the people in our community. Staying home is the safest and most prudent approach anyone can follow in these extraordinary times. Positivity has always surrounded us, one must just try to find it. Together we can fight this.

Is Covid-19 a Boon or a Curse to Our Environment?

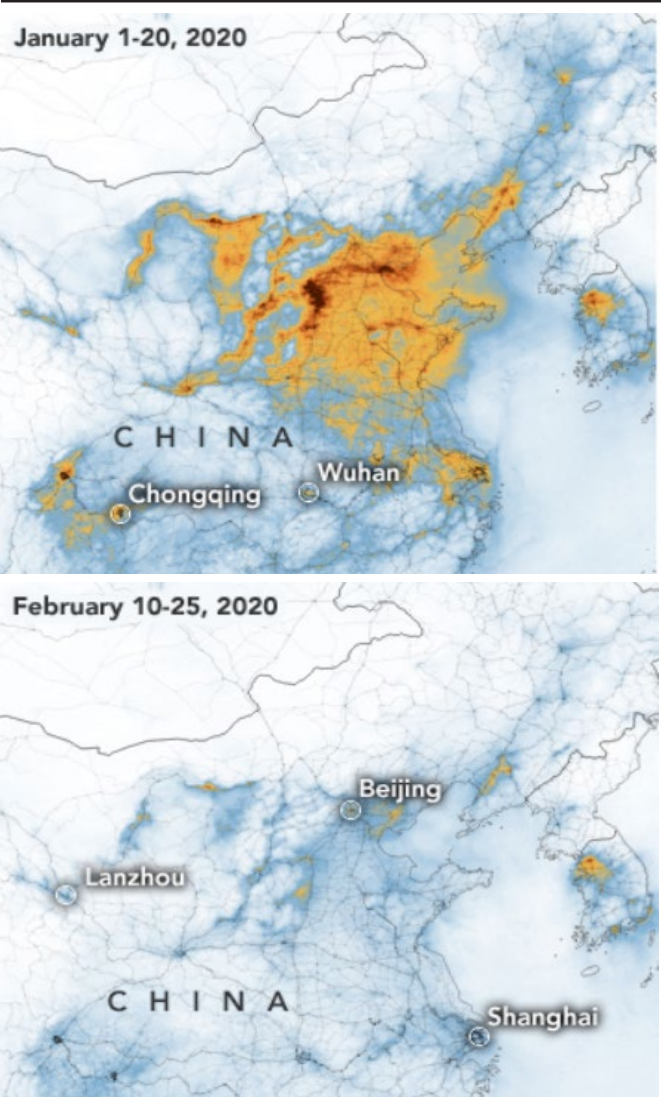
-Maitraiya Dandekar

The coronavirus pandemic has caused a global reduction in economic activity. Although this is a major cause for concern, the ramping down of human activity appears to have had a positive impact on the environment. With the closing of Industries, businesses and transport networks, emissions and effluents have decreased considerably, and measurable data supports the clearing of pollutants in the atmosphere, soil and water.

The month of April, has recorded what might be the lowest levels of pollutants in the air since the 2008 financial crisis when a lot of fossil fuel was used to jump start the economy. Transportation makes upto 23% of global carbon emissions. Driving and aviation are key contributors to emissions from transport, contributing 72% and 11% of the transport sector’s greenhouse gas emissions respectively. These emissions have fallen in countries where public health measures, such as lockdowns, have reduced unnecessary travel. Compared to last year, levels of pollution in New York have reduced by nearly 50% because of measures to contain the virus. In China, emissions fell 25%



CORONA VIRUS proved to be a bane for the Jobs around the world.



Satellites found decreases in air pollutants

at the start of the year as people were forced to stay at home, factories shuttered and coal use fell by 40% at China’s sixth largest power plants since the last quarter of 2019. In Europe, satellite images show NO2 emissions fading away over northern Italy, with a similar scene in Spain and the UK.

In India, the results were similar too; March 22 was the ‘Janata Curfew’, following which, a significant dip in air pollution levels was measured across the country. Cities like Delhi, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Lucknow saw their average Air Quality Index (AQI) staying within two digits. Water bodies have also been clearing up and the rivers like Yamuna and Ganga have seen significant improvement since the enforcement of a nationwide lockdown.

According to the real-time water monitoring data of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the average water quality of 27 points of the Ganga seen in recent days, is suitable for bathing and propagation of wildlife and fisheries. Positive, visible impacts – whether through improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions or cleaner water bodies – are but temporary, because they come along with tragic economic slowdown and human distress and could this good news for the environment only be temporary? As the world is being asked to wash their hands to fight the pandemic, the UN recalled that around 2.2 billion people do not have access to drinking water and that 4.2 billion - more than half of the world’s population - are deprived of safe sanitation systems. Photos of these ‘improved’ environmental conditions, of reduced smog in China, unpolluted canals in Italy and Dhauladhar mountain range in Jalandhar, India have been shared all over social media, giving hope to a demoralized global population. But have they perpetuated a false narrative of an environment saved by a few weeks of quarantine and ignored the negative environmental impacts that have instead ensued?

To start with, the pandemic has led to the abandonment of various environmental sustainability programs due to risk associated with the virus. Similarly Italy has banned infected residents from sorting their waste at all. Additionally, many corporations have overturned disposable bag bans and begun relying once again on single-use plastics, despite the fact that environmental experts say single-use plastics can still harbor viruses and bacteria, and many restaurants are no longer accepting reusable containers - in early March, Starbucks announced a temporary ban on using reusable cups. With more people isolated at home, there has been an increasing number of online purchases and meal deliveries made. This has not only caused the disposal of more single-use plastic packaging, but has further required more fossil fuels to be burned for the individual transportation and distribution of goods.

There has also been an increase in medical waste as the personal protective equipment that healthcare professionals are using can only be worn once before being disposed of. Hospitals in Wuhan, for example, produced over 200 tons of waste per day during the peak of their outbreak, compared to an average of less than 50 tons prior.

China has asked sewage treatment plants to strengthen their disinfection routines to prevent coronavirus from spreading through sewage, mostly through increased use of chlorine. The ones that are celebrating the environmental improvements during the Covid-19 crisis are shortsighted said Li

Shuo, senior global policy adviser at Greenpeace in Beijing. Pollution may temporarily decline, but this is hardly a sustainable way of cleaning up our environment. Meanwhile, the virus crisis brings other environmental problems that might last for a longer time and are harder to deal with.

Further it would be safe to assume that following mandatory lockdowns, countries will be focused on restarting their economies by funding industrial activities, while individuals will want to travel. Frequent flying forms a large part of the carbon footprint for people who do it regularly, so these emissions could simply come back if people return to their old habits.

The takeaway from this is that once nations tackle the coronavirus, they have to tackle bigger issues like better implementation of the environmental, transport and industry regulations should be considered a priority to ease the everlasting impacts of human activity on the environment. As everyone and everything returns to normal, we must take into consideration the results of this pandemic. The environment bounced back faster than we thought it could and it would be downright irresponsible to not use that knowledge once social distancing and nationwide lockdowns are no longer required. Because only long-term systemic shifts will have a permanent effect on the pollution levels in the atmosphere. So, in the aftermath of this crisis, when economic stimulus packages composed of infrastructure and industries are designed, there is a real opportunity to meet that demand with green packages of renewable energy investments, smart buildings, green and public transport, etc.

With respect to the disease itself, it is important to understand where such diseases come from, because the health of our planet plays an important role in the spread of zoonotic diseases. As we continue to encroach on fragile ecological ecosystems, we bring humans into greater contact with wildlife. Further, illegal wildlife trade and illegal wet markets are not infrequent causes of such diseases. Around 75 per cent of new and infectious diseases are zoonotic and, in fact, about 1 billion cases of illness and millions of deaths occur every year from these diseases.

Humanity’s expansion on the earth surface means that, today, human activity has squeezed wildlife and nature into an ever-smaller corner of the planet. And yet, this environment is critical to our own survival: nature provides us with our oxygen, regulates our weather patterns, pollinates our crops, produces our food, feed and fibre, but it is under increasing stress.

Changes in temperature, humidity and seasonality directly affect the survival of microbes in the environment and evidence suggests that disease epidemics will become more frequent, as the climate continues to change. As we continue our relentless move into natural habitats, contact between humans and fauna increases, whether as a result of urbanization, habitat loss or live animal markets – all of which increases the likelihood of interaction between animals and humans. The “wild” must be kept “wild.” It is time to restore our forests, stop deforestation, invest in the management of protected areas, and propel markets for deforestation-free products. Where the legal wildlife trade chain exists, we need to do a far better job of improving hygiene conditions. And of course, there is the urgent need to tackle the illegal wildlife trade, the fourth most common crime committed worldwide.

Prophylactic Quarantine

-Bhavesh Lohana

As the novel Coronavirus outbreak has intensified worldwide, everything has come to a sudden halt. The Coronavirus has transformed life as we know it. Our college is closed, we're confined to our homes and everything feels uncertain at the moment. It wasn't like that when I first got the news of lockdown. As an introvert, it wasn't in me to worry about being propped up in my home by myself. I wasn't thinking of the consequences and I thought it would be great for me to get some rest, catch up with my studies and revamp some hobbies. The first week went agonisingly slow, nothing to worry of. No college, submissions or unit tests. I was quite happy, with the amount of time I got to rest. I was absolutely wrong about that because soon enough I was bored, my whole routine was disrupted. So, I started drawing and doodling hoping it would help me pass the time. Little did I know, that wasn't going to last. The first week wasn't even over yet!

I was sure this was going to end soon, but then came the twenty-one days lockdown news, and I was already dreading it. With not many things to do, I started reading novels, that's how I spent my entire week two of the self-quarantine, by reading



Reading Novels, during Quarantine

the Percy Jackson & the Olympians series, poetry books and whatnot, just so I could not bore myself to tears. It was week three, I indulged myself into learning German, it was worth a try. As time passed by, it felt like I was living the same day again and again. Then, some of my professors started conducting online lectures and submissions and that was a relief because it kept me busy. I also started learning video editing and Photoshop from online courses. By the end of the first lockdown, I realised this battle against the pandemic isn't over yet. The entire world is in for a long haul. I look forward to the day we all can get back to how it was before the Coronavirus global outbreak. This pandemic has taught me to appreciate and enjoy the finer aspects of life. We take so many things for granted, now that we don't have them makes me realise how we need so little to live and that we should take time to admire even the tiniest of things.

Tested Negative for the Pandemic Blues

-Vanshika Dangi

A few months ago, last year, during December 2019 to be specific, COVID-19 pandemic ravaged the city of Wuhan in China. Thousands of people died, and the numbers increased exponentially. It kept getting worse and soon started to spread all around the world. We did not think it would affect us, but a few weeks ago, we found a few cases, and we have been in lockdown since the 25th of March. But despite the efforts put in by the Government, the police and the people actually following the lockdown, the numbers are still climbing. I always wanted a break from my daily routine life, but I did not expect this, although I am genuinely enjoying my time during this lockdown. Of course, my privilege allows me to do so. I sought to practise my guitar this quarantine, as I had lost my touch with it. This lockdown is also a great opportunity for me to pick up the slack and complete all of my pending assignments and journal work. Apart from that, I have been binging on some tv-series and movies which I really wanted to see but didn't get time to do so earlier. I am re-

ally fond of cooking and this time has allowed me to explore culinary and pastry arts and my family devoured all of it with great joy. Both my parents work, so we don't spend a lot of time together usually, but we are more involved in each other's lives now. This pandemic has cost a lot of innocent lives and inconvenience to the entire world. I am privileged enough to have a roof above my head and stay somewhat away from the danger, but a lot of people do not have this privilege. The entire world has been affected by this and is suffering. Although every cloud has a silver lining, and this pandemic has forced people into lockdown, and since man is locked up in his house, nature has started healing, pollution is less, the animals are returning to their natural habitat and people are not able to tamper with nature right now. I hope we are soon able to find a cure for this crisis and are able to leave our houses again. There are some selfless people on the frontlines desperately trying to protect and save humans from this pandemic who are risking their lives. So please follow the rules of this lockdown because it is

very important to plummet the number of cases, especially because we live in a country with a population of over 1.3 billion people, a lot of lives are at stake. And if you are privileged enough please donate and give to those who are suffering and don't have enough food.



Rekindling old hobbies

Productive or not?

-Sneha Kartik

“Get Up Sneha it’s 1 PM”

“Go to sleep Sneha it’s 4 in the morning”

That’s pretty much how my days start and end! Don’t worry this article isn’t going to make you feel guilty about how you wasted time. This article is to make you realize how unknowingly you and I used our time well.

“Are you being productive?”

“Stop wasting your time.”

“Study for your tests” and

“Why are you always on your phone?”

These are a few out of the million lines we hear in 27 different languages across India. I am pretty sure that most of us discovered new hobbies or went back to the old ones. Keyboard, Guitar ,Painting,Designing ,Coding and a plethora of other hobbies.Sounds overwhelming right?

“Hey!How have you been doing?”

Now that line explains my new hobby .This Quarantine I spent time Catching up on Some old ,Some Broken ,Some ended on a misunderstanding,Some Moved on to different states, Some we were in different Streams, Some Roommates and Some people who I had spent all my time with . Yes, This Quarantine I caught up on some old relationships,Starting with the one sitting in the hall right now. It’s funny how when you are alone,You start realizing the value of people in your life who you once took for granted. My day starts with an amazing lunch with my family, Surprisingly it had been long since all of us were together everyday for lunch and not just on a Sunday . The past few months having a table keeping all the work,deadlines and problems at bay . There was a table of laughter , Jokes and some old stories. Afternoon and the Evenings were a time where I spent with myself . Discovering some hidden talent or just writing down letters to myself in my diary .Somewhere I finally understood the value of Space and time with yourself or what most of us call it “ME Time”. Let’s just say that I had a lot of clam-

ored thoughts and ideas sorted out this Quarantine. Then came the Starry Night and that’s when the calls used to start. 2 hour calls might sound meaningless to a lot of people but to me it was a time where I got to know the person on the call better. People who were once just acquaintances became Friends over a game of Ludo every night . “True Friends are never apart , Maybe at distance but never at heart “ Whoever wrote these lines ,had probably foreseen this situation .A lot of things changed but the emotions and the feeling ?Never Did . “HAPPY BIRTHDAY” Still had the same love and excitement .When all of us sat down in front of our laptops with a bowl of Maggi to celebrate my Best Friend’s birthday. This lockdown might have been sudden but One thing I realized is that I should have hugged my friends a little tighter the last time we met. Somewhere between traveling to college, catching trains , eating in the canteen ,finishing assignments and attending lectures ,this lockdown helped me value the little things.

Quaran'times'

You never know how fast you are going until you stop (or crash). As the speeding world was brought to a violent halt by the pandemic and the ensuing lockdown, everyone discovered how capricious life truly is.

The first few days of the lockdown were overwhelmingly empty, a feeling that was shared by many in my family because everyone was cooped up in the house and devoid of the usual hustle and bustle of their daily routine. After the initial monotony of the shutdown had passed, most workplaces, schools and colleges turned to the internet to continue with their regular course. This took up a small part of the day and the rest was reserved for spending time with family, pursuing hobbies or simply enjoying the newfound peace and quiet of the streets from our windows.

There is a famous quote which says, "If you can't go outside, go inside." With plenty of time on my hands, I tried to engage in some activity that

would keep me inside the house. The most prominent of these activities was 'learning to do more with less'. The internet is replete with ways to recycle old items around the house and cook with merely two or three ingredients. I found this both interesting and practical. In the sultring heat of midday, I discovered that a movie or a book are always good company.

Rumors regarding the pandemic have been spreading faster than the virus itself. This surge of false information has caused many to panic and take drastic measures even if they are at a low risk of being infected. This just goes on to show, how fear can throw the most advanced civilisation that the earth has ever known, into complete disarray. A Fear that is caused by misinformed and fake news spread by few people looking for their own profits. Hopefully, people will realise that 'The Right to Freedom of Speech and Expression' is not just a fundamental right but also a fundamental duty of

every citizen of this country and all countries affected by this pandemic. We must always refrain from spreading news based solely on hearsay or rumors.

Above all the pandemic has compelled each one of us to rethink our priorities. In the span of a month, nature has flourished. The Himalayas were seen from Punjab because of a drop in the air pollution levels, swans were seen gliding down the clear canals of Venice and clear blue skies were observed above China. Once the lockdown is over and the pandemic is behind us, hopefully, we will strive to keep our surroundings at least as beautiful as they have become in our absence.

Once all of this is over, I imagine everyone will be grateful for the small blessings in life, like being able to travel, meeting friends, eating out or simply jogging in a park. Until then all I can do is stay home, say a prayer and know that this too shall pass.

-Christine Jacob

Coronavirus – A Pan(dem)ic

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has affected the entire world. The novel coronavirus, known to have originated from Wuhan, China first affected India around January 30th, 2020. But as the cases started increasing, for further spread of the coronavirus the government stepped in and decided to close the educational institutes. As a result, the college was closed from 15th March, 2020.

In the beginning of year 2020, when people around the world, except the Chinese, first heard of this virus, no one was worried. Nobody knew that there would be a pandemic of this proportion. Nobody had ever seen anything like this before. The world had no prior knowledge or experience of the risk of this virus. In the beginning, people around the world didn't understand the intensity of the virus. That's when the novel coronavirus outbreak hit the world.

At first, everyone was really excited and happy about the "unexpected vacations" we got from the college. The government urged everyone to practice 'social distancing' but it was impossible for citizens to practice it as the offices, public transports were still working then. On 22nd March, 2020, the citizens of India observed a 'Janata Curfew' which was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Further, on 24th March, the prime minister ordered a nationwide lockdown of 21 days. Only the essential services were working by this time.

The whole country was put under a quarantine to prevent the further spread of coronavirus. As soon as the lockdown was announced, I realized that this was going to be the best opportunity to do all the work that I had been putting off for months. I

am an avid reader. But, due to my college routine, I hardly got to read any novels. I thought of this as a perfect time to pursue my hobby. I completed reading two books in this Quarantine period. The first one was 'Unaccustomed Earth' by Jhumpa Lahiri and the second novel I read was 'The Book Thief' by Marcus Zusak. Apart from reading, I learned to cook different delicacies from my mom. I never really liked cooking, because I had never tried it before. But, the lockdown introduced me to a new and a different hobby. Eventually, I started enjoying cooking and making different delicacies for my family. I also watched a bunch of good movies. Using a simple chrome extension, my friends and I organized regular movie viewing parties. We also played various games in the lockdown.

Apart from pursuing my hobbies, our teachers had arranged regular online lectures for various subjects on zoom. We were given assignments on the topics taught. The teachers really made sure that they covered all the portion through online lectures and assignments. We were sent PDFs of various reference books. One of our teachers mailed us audio lectures. At first, it was difficult to adjust to online lectures, but once we got acquainted with it, it became easier and was also convenient. Being in last year, we had to prepare our Black Book for our BE Project. Additionally, I also did some online courses on Udemy to improve my profile and add value to my resume. In all, I tried my best to make this lockdown to make as productive as possible.

Amidst all this, the country experienced an interesting event when the prime minister ap-

pealed to the citizens to clap at 5 p.m. for 5 minutes on 22nd March, 2020. Citizens all over the country participated in large numbers appreciating the doctors, nurses, police and other essential service workers. In a similar way, to defeat the darkness, the prime minister appealed to the citizens to light candles or diyas on 5th April, 2020 at 9 p.m. for 9 minutes. This, too saw participation from the entire country in a mass. Constantly checking news is one of the routines I fell in during the lockdown. Every time I heard the increasing number of cases in our country and the entire world, I would get anxious. The world is facing a difficult time. But, by practicing social distancing, we can help the government to stop the further spread of coronavirus and together we can overcome this difficult time.

-Akshara Sarfare



India : 22nd March, 2020. Citizens all over the country participated in large numbers appreciating COVID heroes

Quarantine Equals No Quarrel Time!

I still remember the last day of college before 'it' happened; yes, even naming it makes me shudder. Indeed, I am talking about the Coronavirus pandemic that has affected millions of people and brought the entire planet to a standstill. It was the last day of our cultural festival 'Utsav'. After clicking a million photographs with my friends, all dressed up in suits, I was returning home with one of my friends in the local train. We were skeptical about the declaration of a holiday by the government as no one knew the seriousness of the situation back then. As my friend was about to alight, I bid her goodbye and joked "Hope to not see you soon!" because I desperately needed a mini-vacation. Little did I know

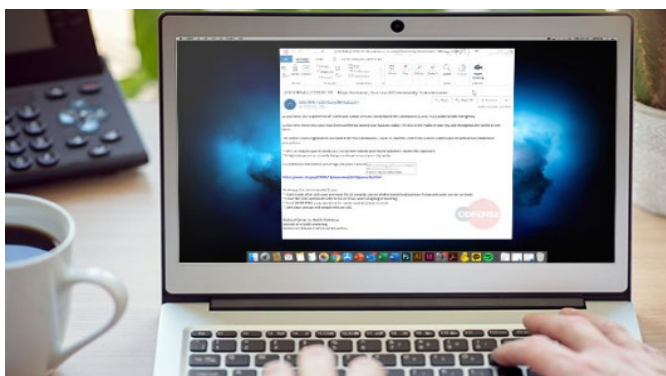
that I was going to badly regret those words shortly.

Finally, it was announced: no college for two weeks! I was ecstatic. Being an overly organized person, I started planning things right away. It was the usual stuff: cleaning, cooking, reading, pursuing hobbies, and a lot of Netflix! In the first week, I never realized how the days passed. That evening of the Janata curfew was a truly memorable one when our honorable Prime Minister had requested all citizens to clap and appreciate the unsung heroes who are fighting the virus by risking their own lives. At 5 p.m., all residents of the society gathered near their windows and started playing all sorts of instruments. That feeling of unity was sur-

real and it reminded me yet again of the real power of our nation. I was too busy relaxing and enjoying the much-needed break, but then arrived the first bomb: an announcement by the government that there is going to be a lockdown across the entire nation till 14th April. The only reason I found respite in the news is because I thought we students were freed from boring college assignments, projects and lectures at least for a while. However, technology has advanced at a rapid pace and our professors enjoyed taking advantage of it in the form of the Zoom app for online video lectures, Google classroom for submission of assignments and WhatsApp for communicating the submission deadlines.

-Padmaja Borwankar

My friends had become my lifeline because although physically apart, we had become much closer friends than we were before the lockdown. This was also an excellent opportunity to catch up with school friends because no one could give an excuse of being busy anymore. Since I was a biology student, many of my school friends are aiming to become doctors. Hence I got a daily dose of news about the rising positive coronavirus cases from them. Video calls had become a daily routine. I specifically remember one video call with my junior college friends. We were four of us and hadn't been in touch for a long



Completing online courses

With the busy life that we all lead in today's world, family time is something we miss out on. This quarantine period helped everyone spend quality time with their family. I thoroughly enjoyed the conversations I had with my father about almost any topic ranging from world history, politics, economics to ancient history about Ramayan and Mahabharat. I remember him narrating excerpts from these great epics to put me to bed in my childhood. However those stories faded with time and I hardly recognized the characters from those epics. Eventually, rather than a conversation, it turned into a monologue as my father had a lot of knowledge to impart and all I did was try to imbibe all of it. Being an artist, my father also drew a portrait

This crisis is still looming around. It is going to take months for the situation to go back to normal. However, when it will all be over, people will start valuing relationships and every puny little thing they had taken for granted. They will realize the true beauty and power of nature. They will start caring for others more often. Most importantly, they will resolve their individual differences and quarrels to come together as one single human race for fighting a common enemy. That is the world worth living for!



Learning French

-Rashmi Singh

It was the end of the second week and the situation only got worse. The news articles and the headlines got me worried that this is not getting over any soon and we still need to continue the fight against this pandemic. I learned that just like connecting, distancing too would someday save lives. The other thing I was most worried about was my

gary vay-ner-chuk

WHY NOW IS THE TIME TO

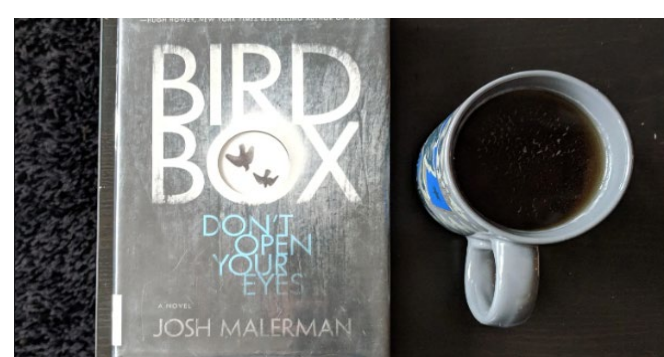
CRUSH IT!

CASH IN ON YOUR PASSION

"Big, hairy, and viral to learn the hustle and techniques that helped him build a \$60-million business and a company that sells on his own terms." —**THE NEW YORK TIMES**

bestselling author of **THE 4-HOUR WORKWEEK**

'Why now is the time to crush it' by Gary Vaynerchuk



'Bird Box' by Josh Malerman

I hope when all of this ends people learn to appreciate each other even more, show gratitude and respect towards everything and fall in love with the process of their life.

The Fun Ends and Quarantine Begins

-Gaurav Govilkar

The disaster had hit us. I was watching a repeat of Money Heist Season, as the Season 4 was due next month. I had a lot to catch upto. Something more interesting, than the goofy Professor, popped in my notifications. It was one notification I would rather not pay heed to, but this one was special... VESIT had finally declared its shutdown! I sprung out of my bed and started packing my stuff.

Five hours of turbulent roads and five episodes of the quintessential series, I finally landed at the doorstep of my home! My mom, being who she is, the overprotective one, summoned me to sanitize myself and my grandmother advised me to use Gangajal to do so... Listening to all this I felt like I had come home!

"Crap!", I said to myself and finally had a long bath in MY bathroom, now an unfamiliar one though. After my bath, I almost took the bucket out of the bathroom when I realised... This is not the hostel. I felt a bit embarrassed but thankfully no one saw me.

Political discussions made their way to the dinning table making grandma upset about no one commenting on her freshly prepared 'achar'. Dinner was over.. But not my task of the day - "If I don't complete the heist, Netflix would sue me", I argued

with dad as if it was teleological reasoning. Now it was Grandpa's turn to quibble. He handed me his old, wizened transistor radio and asked me to repair it for him. He thought I could at least repair a radio, now that I had given one whole semester to engineering. "Fine", I said, having nothing to cavil back. I nodded and went back to the 'Royal Mint'.

Midnight was nearing and suddenly the wifi blinked red.. "No.. No.. this can't be happening.." I cursed a bit and thought that this internet would have got CoronaVirus. A mug of black coffee, I had about an hour ago was gonna prorogue my sleep. Thinking about how to crosswalk this night, I spied on that shabby looking transistor. My engineer mind started looking at the transistor as though I had found the love of my life. I decided to pass my time repairing the quondam device.

As I took the device in my hand I realised I was only one semester old and this wasn't my cup of tea. Having nothing else to do I started to play with the buttons of the transistor and out of nowhere a raucous noise hit my ears so bad that I felt deaf for a second after. I was done with that ruptured machine, I put it aside. As I was about to

put it off.. for ever.. I heard some stochastic voices. Having a very brief eureka moment, I tried to listen to what the transistor was trying to say.

The sound wasn't clear enough and my ears had already suffered damage a minute before. I also thought of taking the transistor near my ear but resisted. After tuning a few buttons I managed to obtain a fairly audible voice. Instantly, the voice struck me. It sounded like never before, like an empyrean voice.. What I heard was near to unbelievable: "Humans.. Humans.. Humans... You were trying to find us.. Look here we are.. The Little Green Men, as you all say... Yes! We are little, but we are huge... You weren't ready for us and you had set out to find us. One of the many mistakes you made. But why only Humans? We love your earth. So beautiful!! The flora, the fauna... we love it all. But we can't take this until you're ruling it! So now you get it, why just Humans? Get ready, we are here to conquer you. This is just the beginning. HERE THE FUN ENDS... AND COUNTDOWN BEGINS.

Yes we Green Little Men have arrived!! "

Diary of a Solitary Adult(ish)

-Sreevidya Iyer



The Beginning....

Day 1:
Dear Diary,
Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy? I try to act all concerned and not happy about my stroke of luck and smirk thinking about all the fun I'll have in the next 15 days. Good thing I didn't complete my assignments. I have abandoned all proprieties. This is, after all, the end of times.

Day 4:
Dear Diary,
The days are blending into nights and the nights into days. A peaceful existence if there ever was. Brother is starting to annoy me. Mother is alarmed at the way I'm consuming food. What can I say, my mouth gets bored. And, this is, after all, the end of times.

Day 7:
Dear Diary,
Everyone is tense. Mother feels I shouldn't disturb brother because he's "Working From Home". I scramble to gather my things as the door shuts behind me for the 10th time. I have made a considerable dent into my supply of TV shows. Regional cinema in India is an unexplored mine of wonderful content. I'll learn Malayalam and Telugu too by the end of quarantine. Also, I have been getting emails from college about subject notes. But then, this isn't the time to worry about studies, it is, after all, the end of times.

Day 9:
Dear Diary,
Lockdown has been extended for 21 more days. I'm not sure I like this isolation anymore. I'm hard-pressed to find regional language movies with English subtitles, that I haven't watched already. The first cracks appear in my blissful state as I see emails about submissions from college. Turns out, it is not the end of times after all. I console myself as I look at the new movie streaming online, there's still time.

Day 15:
Dear Diary,
THERE ISN'T TIME! I have mountain loads of sub-

missions left. I curse myself for wasting my time watching movies. Regretfully, I take out my laptop and start typing away. I'm starting to notice something about mother. She spends her day observing the puppies of our society. She must be really bored.

Day 20:
Dear Diary,
The first wave of submissions is done. I dragged my feet, pulled my hair, snapped at people, but I got it done. Also, I have taken a great interest in the aforementioned puppy ecosystem. One of the pups loves sleeping under our two-wheeler. The other two spend their days digging up the dead leaves in the garden and playing with garbage. They turn their noses up at our expensive biscuits. Oh well, more for me.

Day 30:
Dear Diary,
A cat is antagonizing the pups. She has taken over the spot under the scooter. The pup brings its siblings to fight the cat. Naturally, she wins, they run tucking tails between their legs. On the more boring front, I have completed submissions. The lockdown has been extended, once again. Perhaps, it's time to take up a hobby or plan for the future or start studying for the inevitable exams. Definitely tomorrow, I tell myself as I plop down and start the movie.

Divided We Stand, United We Fall

-Tanvi Shetty

I still remember getting back home on 14th of March. All the faces I encountered that day were covered with masks while their eyes filled with fear. I knew that this novel virus was leading us towards a great misfortune and within a few days complete lockdown was initiated in the city.

Even though I was overwhelmed with the chaos that ensued after the lockdown was declared, a part of me sighed with relief knowing that our examinations would be postponed. However, something I did not account for was the boredom that would engulf me. For the first few days Social Media acted as my saviour. I spent hours of my day interacting with friends over social media. I have always loved staying indoors but this time it felt different because I started missing my daily routine of hanging out with all

my friends. It's not all dreadful as in this melee, I have been able to sharpen my culinary and cleaning skills. Since I knew that this quarantine would last longer than expected I decided to leverage my spare time by grasping a new skill set. I ended up learning the basics of softwares like Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Premiere Pro. As a child I have always loved dancing. I might not be a great dancer but dancing has always made me feel content and so I have been trying to shake off this quarantine stress by dancing to my favourite songs. I have also managed to catch up on a lot of good series and movies. I would highly recommend watching Shutter Island and Yes Man, both are completely distinct genres but worth watching.

Even though this pandemic has caused us all to stay away from each other and practise social

distancing our Hon. Prime Minister has ensured that the country still feels united. Prime Minister Modi called for 'Janta curfew' on March 22 from 7 am-9 pm, saying no citizen, barring those in essential services, should get out of the house and requested all citizen to come out to their balconies at 5pm that day and applaud for all those real heroes selflessly working for our safety and well being. I still recall that moment, my parents and I came out in our balcony and started clapping but we did not expect so many people to do the same. Everyone was cheering and applauding. There was so much positivity and happiness in the atmosphere. It made me realise that we do not know whether the virus will continue to rage for weeks or months or on and off for years but all we can root for is, us fighting this together as one.

Metamorphosis

- Aishwarya Sahoo

It is times like these that makes one value things which seem pretty dispensable only when you lose them. If anything, this experience of quarantine made me realize the importance of people in my life. The local trains and the journey inside them always felt so vexing until the trains were shut down. It is the solitude I feel at day and night that makes me realize the importance of people. Be it a stranger in the train who was reading my favorite classic; an act of kindness which she hadn't realized herself then. Or the little girls who I used to teach at a home which was not home in the literal sense.

It was hard to believe that I was the same person who would be happy whenever we had holidays in college. I am the kind of person who likes to speak the bare minimum -- not quite the

social butterfly but this time makes me realize how important are the people who listen. Listen, yes, your condrumdums and messy thoughts. The more you come to realize after the phase of self-introspection, the more you realize how far you are from the kind of person you always wanted to be.

The lockdown also made me realize how we only scratch the surface of all the things we want to dig deep into. With a busy schedule of lectures and the extracurricular activities, you just watch movies. But when you have time, you understand them, the underlying message the director wanted to give. You read in between the lines of your novels, understanding all the unsaid thoughts of the writer.

So after successfully spending a lot of

time in the classic 'Netflix and Chill', I decided it was important to cherish the time with my parents and my annoying little brother. Call all those friends who I hadn't called in months and listen. Pursue cooking as a survival skill. Read all the novels which were staring at me angrily for leaving them unread. Develop a few technical skills because although the time may have freezed, our lives haven't. And more than any of that, always believe that even though this pandemic has hurt us more than we expected, we will also heal more than we think. That after the lockdown is over, it will bring us all closer.

VESIT Diaries

Mr Nayan Jadeja, an alumnus of VESIT, a graduate from the Batch of 1990 from the Department of Electronics. He is the President as well as the co-founder of COVIAM Technologies in Bangalore for 5 years. His career began as a software developer at Citicorp and then went on to get his Masters from the US while working as a Software Developer. After working for almost 13 years in the US, he came back to India to start his own Company along with his Bench-mate, Deepak Nachnani, from VESIT.

Q1.Tell us something about your college life at VESIT.

I was in one of the earliest batches at VESIT. It was still not a very established college, nor had it built up the strong reputation it now enjoys. We only had 3 branches of CS, Electronics and Instrumentation and obviously were in the older campus. While the college was still trying to establish itself, the professors and lecturers were diligent and the engineering students serious and academically focused, although we did have our share of fun and games. The sports facilities were good and I, for one, made the most of the cricket, soccer and volleyball breaks! We were a close-knit batch, and many of us are still in touch. As is the norm these days, we, too, have our own WhatsApp group that has enabled us to reconnect.

Q2.The most memorable moment/time at VESIT.

Without a doubt, sports day activities were the most memorable. Especially the cricket match we played in our first year since we played against the higher-ranked and senior instrumentation batch and were still lucky enough to win that game!

Q3.Professional life after VESIT.

I went on to get an MS from Utah State University in Electrical Engineering and an MBA from the University of Texas at Arlington (part-time) while working. My professional journey started at Citicorp Overseas Software Limited at Seepz (interestingly, there were 8 of us from VESIT out of a batch of about 20 software engineers they had hired). I have had the good fortune of working at smaller tech startups like Cimatrix and Fiberlink, mid-size companies like i2 Technologies and even very large companies like American Airlines and IBM.

About 5 years ago, my partner, Deepak Nachnani and I decided to venture out on our own and started Coviam Technologies. Deepak and I were bench mates at VESIT, worked for a year to-

gether at Citicorp before our respective careers separated us. Incidentally, the "Vi" in Coviam stands for Vivekananda – a tribute to our alma mater, VESIT, where we met and embarked on our engineering journey together, as we are immensely grateful to VESIT for all the learnings and experiences.

Q4.A glimpse of your personal life.

I've been happily married now for 26 years, having met my wife, Deepma at Utah State University, although both of us were from Mumbai. Our older daughter, Niharika is studying her final year in Biological Sciences (4th year) at UC Berkeley and our younger son, Avichal is headed to begin his Bachelor's in Computer Science at Rose Hulman Institute of Technology. We have been well settled and living in Bangalore now for more than 12 years along with my parents.

Q5.You have seen it all, from being a software developer in the US to an established businessman in India. Shed some light on the challenges you faced while making this transition.

I wouldn't say that I have seen it all, though I have been fortunate to have gone through many amazing experiences and have worked with some phenomenal colleagues in my career over the years. Let me share some of my learnings and challenges. Firstly, as we all know, India produces some amazing technology and can go head to head against any of the best engineers in the world. However, when it comes to our personalities and ability to speak eloquently or put our points across, graduates from India struggle a lot. I faced similar problems and had to work towards becoming a better communicator to ensure that my American colleagues understand my viewpoints and I express my opinions without being outlandish or out of place. Another learning that came with my time in the US, was the understanding that not everyone knows the answer. We grow up in a hierarchical culture of India, being taught to respect our teachers and bosses and thinking that they know it all while our job is just to follow orders. Thus, adjusting my mindset and building the confidence to question my boss, articulate counterpoint to my seniors at work, was another huge learning. Another one is cultural, we grow up feeling we cannot or should not say "No" to our bosses or leaders. This, unfortunately, damages our credibility a lot. So, early on learning to communicate assertively was essential and helped me establish a rapport with my bosses.



Mr Nayan Jadeja

The other challenge a lot of technical folks from an engineering background face is deciding whether to remain a technologist or moving into management. The flip side is that when the engineer moves to the business side or people management side, they struggle - feeling lost, (as they may feel their non-technical contributions aren't worth as much. This is something I personally struggled with when I decided after 9-10 years of being a software developer to move towards management.

Q6.Changes you see in the present young students at VESIT.

I have a lot of faith in the younger generation and am confident they do not have a lot of the limiting beliefs that we were shackled under growing up. They are confident, creative and willing to take risks to ensure a better future, not just for themselves but for society in general. They are also so much more globally and environmentally aware, mature and willing to do the right thing than we were when we graduated in 1990. They are also comfortable with the latest gadgets and the newest technologies. Fortunately, the world has flattened and the type of opportunities, the infrastructure (thanks to the cloud, mobile and social), and the speed and rate of change, allows anyone, anywhere in the world to innovate, ideate and change the world. I feel very confident that the current crop of students at VESIT has it in them to create

amazing innovations that can have a huge impact.

Q7.Importance of extra-curricular activities in a student's life and how to manage them along with academics.

I believe you need to be well rounded to succeed in life. Being unidimensional, even if it's only in academics, cannot serve you well in the long term. Every individual should broaden their horizons and be adept at multiple things. Participating in extra and co-curricular activities is supercritical for long term success. Remember, where there's a will, there's a way. Another weakness of this age group is procrastination. I remember, we would enjoy and have fun throughout the semester, then slog it out for the last 4-5 weeks before the exam. Unfortunately, in hindsight, which as they say is 20:20, I wish I had been well rounded all through – studying regularly and continuing with extracurricular activities even during exams. My advice to my kids and every student is to cultivate multiple interests and passions - figure out what they are drawn to early in life – sports, music, art, social activities – and to continue pursuing these side by side with academics, career, and professional life. Participating in team sports is an amazing learning experience. When you join the corporate world, you will have to work with your teammates and leaders, and you often won't have a choice to decide who can or can't be in your team. In my opinion, team sports help you cultivate the ability to work alongside people with different strengths and abilities.

Q8.Can you throw some light on some activities that a student can do which will help them build their career?

I know this is easy to say now and give as a piece of advice, and I know I personally didn't do this – but if I could live my life over, I would take this seriously. Do not try and mug things up towards the end of your semester, and then regurgitate it at the exam. That doesn't help us much in the long run. Try to understand the concepts – if your fundamentals are strong, you will have a solid foundation to build an amazing career. So, make the effort to go deep, understand concepts, ask questions, and be very inquisitive in life. You learn more by asking questions than just listening to what the professor may have to say. Whenever the opportunity provides itself, try and look for internships - even if only for 2 – 3 months between your semesters. I think getting early access or opportunities to work in different setups/companies will help you figure out things like what you like or don't. It doesn't need to be a large, well-settled company or setup – find friends or acquaintances, who you can help out – whether they are small shops, or a start-up trying to create something. Get involved in such activities early on. I do feel, colleges also need to figure out how to provide the opportunity for students to work in an internship program, for a semester of their engineering. I have also found successful individuals are typically well-read and have a wide range of topics that they understand and so I always advice younger folks to read a lot of books – on a variety of different topics and formulate opinions on them.

Q9.Please guide on some interpersonal skills a student should develop apart from academic knowledge for professional life?

As I mentioned earlier, just having pure technical skills is not going to help you forever. In order to succeed, you will need great interpersonal skills – the good news is all of this is learnable. I've always been an introvert, preferring to keep to myself, and would shudder at the thought of hav-

ing to speak in front of 5 people. Over the years, I have consciously forced myself out of my comfort zone and developed my communication and public speaking skills. And, if I can do it – anyone can!

The ability to work with different individuals is also important (see my point on team sports above). In the end, the world is looking for problem solvers – your ability to throw yourself into a problem, and solve it, is going to determine your success both personally and professionally.

Having a positive, go-getter attitude is much more important in the real world than great technical or academic skills. Essentially, there are 2 types of people in the world – those who look at a problem and always complain or are cynical, and the others, who have a better chance of success, are the ones who look at it as an opportunity to solve a problem and immediately start thinking of solutions. Try to be the latter.

Always, stay updated on the latest trends and happenings in your domain. Remember, that learning never ends – we all need to keep learning till the very end. So, have the attitude of trying to learn from every event, every situation, and every individual you encounter

Q10.Importance of getting recruited during campus placement.

Obviously, it's an advantage and takes the pressure off, if you can get placed through campus placement. But it isn't the end of the world if you are not placed. There are more than enough problems and challenges in the world out there. Do not wait for an opportunity to come knocking at your door. You will have to show hunger, show the desire to find the best opportunities and pursue them. In the end, over and above academic qualifications, the ability to be a problem solver and the ability to work hard will define your success more than anything.

Q11.Importance of post-graduation in today's world.

Personally, having gotten both an MS and an MBA, I am not a big fan of a master's program. In the end, what you gain from your master's depends on the mindset with which you approach it. Honestly, I believe the MS did not help me much, besides giving me the chance to get to the USA. I did my MS with also the mission to get it done and look for a job and hence feel I didn't learn much from it. On the other hand, I did the MBA because I wanted to learn, and I did it when I thought I was ready for it. I find one of the biggest mistakes we make is to go in too early for an MBA. In my opinion, one should pursue an MBA after at least a few years of experience in the industry, because then it all becomes very relevant and you can associate with what's taught. I wish more students who go after an MBA do it a little later than immediately after their Bachelors.

Q12.Should students have a life beyond technology? How significant is it for a student to have a hobby?

I think I may be repeating myself here, but given my previous answers, I'm sure you understand where I come from. Being, well rounded, having multiple interests in life, and using your hobbies to help you as an outlet from the pressures of grades is important. Also, technology is there to assist and help us – not to replace or subsume our life. So, being cognizant and aware that it's an enabler and should not become our life is an important lesson for all of us.

Q13.How should a student go about planning his / her life and career? Your advice.

The technology and world change too fast for you to have a clear-cut career plan and to follow it as a map. At this point, you should look at it as skills to learn and opportunities to grab or pursue. Try and focus on learning as many skills as you can, ones that you like, and can become a career for you – since you will be doing it for many, many years. Next, evaluate each and every opportunity, be honest with yourself, be aware of why you like what you like, and then go after any opportunity that matches up to your interests. Beyond that, approach your career as a marathon and not a sprint. You aren't going to get it done or succeed overnight. It requires consistent, long hours of hard work. Adopt a personal goal of continuous learning and continuous improvement. Do not put yourself against a friend or colleague – just try to be better than yourself from a day ago, a week ago, a month ago, or a year ago. Ensure that you are continuously learning new skills, new capabilities, and improving. Always, under promise and over deliver. Do not go promise too much, and then fail to deliver what you had promised. Figure out how you can be the go-to person for your boss, your team, your company. If you are the one getting things done, more opportunities will automatically come your way.

Q14.Message for the new generation at VESIT!

Please be aware and realize that everything in life takes time. Although you may hear of success stories and the media might play them up as overnight successes, there is always a grind behind it all. Building a career takes time. To become an expert or renowned person in your field, go deep into a particular domain or technology and give it time. Also, don't be attracted or blinded by the latest tech or the newest feature – For example in software, real knowledge comes from not only writing or working on new code but by seeing it work in real life, facing and solving problems in production, scaling and stress testing for resilience under heavy load - that's where most of the learning comes from, not just by writing new code all the time. Finally, don't focus on doing tech for the sake of tech. Make sure the problem you are trying to work on or solve, is to address a real business problem and will help solve something real. Doing a new technology, just for the sake of learning new tech, won't go a long way. It has to be uti-



Mr Nayan Jadeja and Mr Deepak Nachnani