

SLS MIRROR

ਬਾਗੁਪੁਸ਼ਟ 2015
ਚਰੀਪੁਲਣੇ ਚ
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Editorial

"At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance." This was rightly stated by Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India on the eve of India's independence towards midnight on 15 August 1947.

This moment found its re-utterance on the 15th of August 2015 when the young and energetic students of the NCC group of PDPU marched along the beats of the drums. The value of a country is assessed not by the riches or assets it possesses, but by its people, especially its youth. Wealthy nations can go to ruin if their newer generations are unable to keep pace with their forefathers and drive innovation and growth, and developing nations can boost their welfare with insightful planning and an enthusiastic youth. This effort by the young students of the NCC was followed by the extravagant dance performances and the flag hoisting ceremony.

SLS experienced two days of a fun filled environment to mark its Foundation Day. When I think of the word 'SLSence' a famous saying is re-emphasized in my mind, that is, "to be successful you do not need a beautiful face and a heroic body, what you need is a skilful mind and the ability to perform." This is exactly what SLSence 2015 reflected. The various hues of SLS got manifested across its student population in the form of various performances at different events. SLSence in itself has a unique blend of creativity, healthy competition as well as fun and frolic. It is a creditable initiative that is managed by the students, for the students which witnessed great enthusiasm and zest.

This issue of SLS Mirror includes study trip, SLSence, 3rd National Seminar and many more.

Hope you have an amazing read!



Study Trip to GVK Emergency Management and Research Institute

The Thursday morning was quite different as round 80 students of School of Liberal Studies, Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University was excited to pay a visit at EMRI. It was indeed a great exposure about how the state handles the emergencies situations.

The EMRI institute is situated at Kathvada, Ahmedabad. We were also accompanied by four faculties of SLS, PDPU. (Dr. Ashvin Dave, Dr. D. Sriram, Mr. Darshit Shah, Ms. Manju Yadav).

There, we were guided by the officials of EMRI who further explained the working of the institute. There were four help lines simultaneously going on viz. 108,181, Dail -100 police and Khilkhilat where 108 is emergency services covering medical and fire emergencies. 181 is 24 hrs running women helpline where women counseling, queries request and complains are handled. Dial 100 is police helpline number and khilkhilat was providing services to the pregnant women.

The best part of this help lines is they do not have IVR (interactive voice response) system; instead the call answered within 20 seconds and help is generated. We understood the detailed procedure of how ambulance services are delivered.

The ambulances are fully equipped with the tools necessary for emergency services also the driver known as Pilot and EMT's known as Emergency Medical Technician are fully trained from their own department "Ananya". They maintain all kinds of Pre-Hospital care records having the name, address and vitals of the victim etc.

EMRI also performs follow up calls and they have around 450 ambulance and 2300 professionals who work 24*7. For 181 women helpline they receive almost 2000 calls and among it 200 are for counseling. The counselors hold degree of Master in Social Welfare.

This is the one of the successful model of Public Private Partnership where all the technological costs are barred by private firm called GVK and rest by government. Because of EMRI's continuance 24*7 efforts, they "reach" emergencies, "sense" it and provide "care".

Thus, it was a very good learning experience and we thank the Department of Public Administration, School of Liberal Studies for organizing the study tour.

Dr. Ashwin Dave



3rd National Seminar on Interdisciplinary Approaches to Knowledge



The 3rd National Seminar on Interdisciplinary Approaches to Knowledge, 20th -21st August 2015, was organized by the School of Liberal Studies, Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University. The seminar focused on various emerging and challenging issues of national and international importance in the field of International Relations, Psychology, English Literature, Public Administration, Economics, Business Administration, Commerce & Trade. While providing a platform to debate and ponder over multifarious subjects on contemporary world concerns, the seminar brought to the fore the necessity of adhering to the transdisciplinary approach along with interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary outlook.

The proceedings of the seminar, spanning two days, conversed on and brought forward many local and global issues both from academic and policy perspective. Ranging from Smart Cities,

energy security, maritime security, diplomacy to feminism and climate issues, the two days deliberation proved to be a stimulating exercise both for the delegates, faculty, and students. The aim of the seminar was to develop critical thinking with ethical solutions to the existing problems, and roadmap for the future through an interdisciplinary and integrated approach, which is largely in congruence to the fact that any incident and happening today needs to be interpreted through and from different perspectives, with re-



search and logical arguments. In the seminar 61 speakers presented 50 papers, and participants included Students, Researchers and Academicians from various parts and institutes/universities of India and the seminar has become successful to reach its objectives.

Dr. Sanjay Pradhan and Dr. Sitakanta Mishra.



Independence Day Celebration

Independence Day is not just about remembering the heroic deeds of our ancestors but also a reason to celebrate our culture, our nation and our existence.

Just like every year, this year too, PDPU celebrated the Independence Day with the same vigor and enthusiasm. The programme started with the flag hoisting, followed with the parade and cultural programmes. The march past of the NCC troop was in perfect synchronization and was the limelight of the day. The director of the college then took the centre stage to shed some light on the advancement of India in the past years, proceeded by a patriotic speech delivered by Kewallya Jain. Offbeat, the music club of PDPU, presented forth their own creation, a melodious tribute to Mother India, while students of Soul Pepper, the dance club, mesmerized the crowd by a beautiful dance sequence. Madhav Joshi surprised the audience by delivering a beautiful speech in Gujarati. Shubhankar Bhattacharjee filled the ears of the audience with the soothing sound of his flute by giving a solo instrumental performance.

Last, but not least, was the felicitation ceremony.



Cadets from NCC were promoted to higher ranks and other members were awarded with medals and certificates to mark their achievements throughout the activity tenure. The event concluded with Kartik Kapri expressing his vote of thanks to the involved people for making the event as vibrant and cheerful. Thus, sixty nine years of freedom was celebrated with immense pride and joy.

Kartik Kapri



SLSense 2015

SLSense is an event that is celebrated in PDPU every year exclusively for and by the SLS family.



This event is celebrated every year on the 24th of August when the seed of the School of Liberal Studies was planted on the grounds of PDPU. D block is decorated and is filled with people wearing their proudly owned SLS t-shirts. This year, 2 day fest was organized by the students of SLS'13 exclusively for the students of SLS. This two day celebration started with an inaugural session by the dean and director of school of liberal studies, Dr. Nigam Dave along with Dr. Neeta Sinha and Mr. Phalgun Kumar who played the role of event coordinators of this creative rendezvous.

This year's SLSense was a two day celebration on the 22nd August 2015 which was the pre SLSense celebration where informal and sports events like Boys and Girls Kabaddi, Cricket and Tug of War. On the foundation day i.e. on 24th, other academic and informal events were organized. These events

included events like Ad com, Braingles, Quiz X, Friendship Quotient, Finish My Story, Watch Your Back, Lingo Badlingo, Moneyopoly, Taboo, Pitch Perfect and The routine. These competitions had particular amount of points assigned to the winners and the batch with the highest amount of points would be declared as the winner of the year. This year SLS'13 was declared as the winner. The organizing committee was publicly appreciated by the faculty and student bodies. The event Pitch Perfect and the Routine was judged by SLS alumni Sarthak Malani, Namit shah and Shreya Kothari respectively.

SLSense truly gets better and better every year. The Sixth foundation day of SLS was truly and creative and enjoyable affair.

Manas Daxini
SLS'13



Audit Course

Photography

School of Liberal Studies had organized a photography workshop as a part of audit course for the students of SLS'15. This program was headed and carried out by Mr. Ketan Modi and his team who are renowned photographers of Ahmedabad. As an introductory session the students were taught the basic photography skills through a presentation. The students got to learn the true meaning and importance of DSLR through the basic learning of ISO, shutter speed and different types of lenses. Students also got to know different forms of photography and also gain knowledge about vivid angles. On the second day students were asked to bring camera and click pictures as per their learning and imagination. The students enthusiastically clicked and results achieved at the end of session were truly amazing.

Team Audit Course



Chinese Brush Painting

School Of Liberal Studies has organized a Chinese Brush Painting under Audit course for the First year students. It was conducted by Asha Mandapa and her team IDEAL.

Students were initially taught the simple brush stroke of a flower followed by leaves, plums, bamboos, fishes and mountains. Students were made to practice extensively through water colours to achieve the desired motif in one go as no redoing could be done. After a little over a week, once students had their hands skilled enough, they were given rice papers to paint their desired designs over them.

The rice papers came alive through myriad objects and landscapes painted over them in minimal colours with rich and bold strokes. While some saw Bamboo sticks in monochromatic hues, others were adorned with plums and flower buds in vibrant shades. Once these rice paper paintings were done, their paintings were then transformed into lamp shades over a bamboo frame that symbolised China in its purest form. The students were proud of their art work and were more than elated to learn an art form so unique and far from the western style of painting.

Team Audit Course



Rural Internship/Civic Social Service Internship

The Office of the Rural Internship (RI) and Civic and Social Service Internship (CSSI) conducted an orientation session on 7th April, 2015, for the First Year B.Tech students of School of Petroleum Technology and School of Technology, Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University respectively. The session was preceded by the Registration where 522 students were given the Handbooks, Undertaking forms, Confirmation forms and Letters of Recommendation by Team RI/CSSI with the help of volunteers of Admission team 2015 of SLS. The formal session began at 5 PM in the auditorium by welcoming and felicitating the guests with mementoes and bouquets.

The event was graced by following guests and officials of PDPU:

Invited Speakers: Mr. Kiran Chavda, Director, Lokniketan Trust, Ratanpur; Hemangini ben, Managing Trustee MGP Sarvodaya Kendra, Amirgadh; Mr. Devang Desai, Deputy Commissioner, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation

Officials of PDPU: Director General, PDPU Prof. Raghvendra; E- Advisor, PDPU Prof. N. R Dave ; Prof. Uttam Bhui represented SPT; Mr. Sanjay Rao Training and Placement Cell, PDPU; Prof Nigam-Dave, Director SLS; Ms. Neeta Khurana, Coordinator RI/CSSI

Team RI/CSSI- Student Interns: Mr. Harpal Singh Vaghela; Mr. Chintan Jani; Mr. Anmol Jain; Mr. Jenish Trivedi; Ms. Urvi Shah; Ms. Anushka Tharad.

Director General, PDPU Dr. HB Raghavendra Sir, addressed the students and emphasized on the importance of the exposure that the internship provides; and the seriousness of this endeavor. Mr. Kiran Chavda, Lokniketan Trust introduced his NGO which was established in 1961 and has 28 institutions under its umbrella which work for providing education at minimal cost and better living conditions to the tribals. Ms. Hemangini, the Trustee of M G Patel Sarvodaya Kendra highlighted the importance of soft skills in a student's life along with all the technical knowledge. Mr. Devang Desai, Deputy Commissioner, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) spoke on behalf of AMC and informed student about the magnitude of work involved in managing a city that is the fifth largest city and seventh largest metropolitan area in India. Prof. Uttam Bhui wished the students the students well and encouraged them to do meaningful work. Students applauded his inputs.

NR Dave Sir, Education Advisor, PDPU connected with the students in his inimitable style and immense wit. He stressed that RI does not stand for



Rigorous Imprisonment but is an opportunity to bring in reasoning and rigorous initiative to contribute towards society. Prof. (Dr.) Nigam Dave, Dean SLS, under whose leadership the RI/CSSI is being conducted, briefly addressed the students and instilled in them the importance of hard work and discipline that is expected of them. Ms. Neeta Khurana, Faculty, SLS, coordinator of the RI/CSSI briefed the students about the internship, its requisites in terms of learning, code of conduct, academic relevance, deadlines, etc. She then acquainted the students with the RI/CSSI team which will be working under the leadership of Dr. Nigam Dave, Dean, SLS. The students listened to her in rapt attention and were moved by her enunciation of the idea behind academic internships. The program was hosted by Mr. Anmol Jain, Team RI/CSSI. After the orientation programme, the students were given sometime to find NGOs for their internship, a list of NGOs was given at the back of the handbooks. Once the students had received their letter of confirmation from the respective NGOs, they were given kits which included t-shirt, pen, folder, 8GB pen drive, and a daily diary. The kit distribution process was completed by 25th May, 2015. The internship commenced on 27th May, 2015 (any three weeks). Team RI/CSSI took follow up on regular basis and visits by SPT and SOT Faculty were scheduled, feedback was documented. The evaluation was scheduled on 1st August, 2015 with different panels evaluating students from different fields. Each panel consisted of one faculty from School of Liberal Studies and other two faculties from the respective schools. The students were expected to

submit photographs of the internship, report, certificate from NGO, testimonials, feedback forms and logo of the NGO. The evaluation process was completed successfully, for the students who were unable to give the examination for some reason, a second round of evaluation process has been scheduled.

Team RI/CSSI



Student Reflections

Offense is not an argument

The plague is growing. From university campuses to television news studios, from classrooms to living room discussions, truth is increasingly being pushed under the carpet of political correctness. Logic and facts are being sacrificed at the altar of being respectful and considerate. Our civilization has suffered as a result.

Globalization has, for the first time in human history, pushed so many different cultures in close physical proximity. We have co-workers from different continents and roommates from countries we've barely even heard of. It's a lot of exposure to alien languages, alien ideas, and alien lifestyles. It has overwhelmed us, and pushed us into the comfortable cocoon of accepting everything and anything. Because if something or someone is different, you can't call it wrong, can you? It's just...different.

And then, there's the risk of offending someone, the ultimate act of wrong doing in a 21st century conversation. The cardinal sin. You can twist facts and distort realities to suit your narratives, but you can't ever, in any context under any circumstance, offend someone. The beliefs, biases, and prejudices of every single person must be held sacred and beyond questioning or reproach.

Because of this mindset, comedians have stopped performing on university campuses. Jerry Seinfeld, a remarkable comic artist, said, "there's a creepy PC (politically correct) thing out there that really bothers me." Sam Harris, a neuroscientist and a prominent voice in the western intelligentsia, bore the

burnt of PC culture when he spoke about the fundamental conflict between human rights and certain Islamic ideas. Tim Hunt, a Nobel Prize winning scientist, was sacked from his position in academic institutes because of a sarcastic remark he made in a South Korean science convention about women scientists...the remark which later turned out to be grossly misreported. All these cases, and a thousand more, prove that we have pushed the respect argument way out of proportions.

Freedom of speech is nothing without the freedom to offend. In a republic, an individual should be protected against the whims and sentiments of the crowd. To deem certain ideas as offensive is to curtail free thought. Words, cartoons, paintings, movies, jokes – these are all part of our culture and our art, and their essential job is to awe, shock and reveal. To curtail these and to hold our biases and preconceived notions as beyond scrutiny is to do a sad disservice to our civilization.

Charlton Heston said, "Political correctness is tyranny with manners." Let not the manners deceive us. Offense is not an argument. Truth, you see, is surprising, non-negotiable, and bound to ruffle a few feathers. Let's embrace it anyway.

Jash Dholani

SLS'15



Faculty Reflections

Greece Economic Crisis: The Way Forward

The global economic crisis of 2008 and the subsequent prolonged economic slowdown facing the world especially European Economic Zone, has led to economic collapse of Greece-the country which survives more on tourism, shipping and some financial services. Its exports base is quite low- at 13% of GDP in 2014- which is even less than many emerging economies and only comparable to the level of developing countries including that from South Asia. A more leisurely lifestyle of the Greeks has also forced them to languish in a less innovative atmosphere- in economic as well as industrial landscape. Coupled with overall economic slowdown of Europe, Greece suffered the most because of its widening current account deficit and overall fiscal deficit, which led the balance of payments problem leading to the burgeoning public debt-internal as well as external.

When public debt became unsustainable, Greece had to depend on the external commercial borrowers particularly from the other member countries of Europe- like Germany, Belgium, Spain etc and other parties like IMF and European Council. The 319 billion Euros of debt which Greece owes to its lenders and its inability to meet the deadline of repayment few months before along with further sourcing of new loans led to its debt restructuring efforts but with heavy conditionality put by the EU countries- mainly by Germany- particularly the macroeconomic stability measures and stringent economic reforms measures which are collectively

known as austerity measures- leading to requirement of hefty new taxes on Greeks, cut in public expenditures and pension benefits, and cut in overall defense expenditures. This became the bone of contention for the Tsipras government on the issue of stifling austerity in the face of a severe economic crisis, leading to failure of all subsequent negotiations on bailout packages- roughly on an immediate capital injection of about 90 billion Euros to the banking system. Common people protested on the nature of the conditionality imposed on the Greeks in the name of austerity measures-when it is well known that economic reforms may not lead to the economic recovery of the already struggling economy, rather it may prolong the recovery and further plunge the economy into greater turmoil.

The Greek Prime Minister Mr. Tsipras initially fought with the lenders but finally he budged unto the demands of the EU countries to obey and implement the reforms measures. He even sought a new mandate by his re-election onto the top post. Now

when he has won the general election, he has a great task in hand- to swiftly negotiate on the urgent bailout packages in more tolerable terms. People also cannot overlook the fact that the economic reforms measures have to be put in place to rejuvenate the economy on its feet. How all these get implemented with less cut in welfare measures and lesser burden on Greek people- is what Mr. Tsipras has to work on and lead its economy on a slow and painful recovery process. What more essential is, to infuse

confidence on the lenders as well as the people, for jointly collaborating on Greece' recovery. IMF and EU led by Germany have to play a far more considerate role than they have shown as of now..

Manoj K. Sahoo, Visiting Faculty, Department of Economics



Interaction with Mr. K.C. Reddy

Mr. K.C. Reddy, Ex IPS and Former Chief Security Advisor at the United Nations for 14 long years, discussed with students and faculty on both internal and international security from Indian perspective. The session was concluded with the reality that, all the countries in the world should work together for safe, stable and secured international society.



Dr. Sanjay Pradhan



Discussion was largely on security aspects, which covered wide range of areas such as National and International Security. A comparative perspective was made on American Home Land Security and India's national security system, and challenges faced by these two countries after WTC attack. The discussion equally focused on maritime security in the context of Mumbai attack and aftermath. In the changing geopolitical context, it highlighted, how global security is common concern for all the coun-

Industry Speaks: Dr. Gita Rajan

Q. What led you to the field of Gender Studies?

I have always been interested and invested in women's issues, both in developed and developing economies. I found that both Women's Studies and Feminist Studies left out a large part of the population that can productively work to build a stronger society. Therefore, Gender Studies was very appealing as it functioned on exploring and critiquing power dynamics between men and women in society, and demystifying cultural and socio-religious stereotypes of both masculinity, and femininity. I was also working at this time with ethics, and hence Gender Studies became more about parity, and equity rather than simple equality between men and women.

Q. Do you think that Women's Studies and Feminist Studies work largely on Polarization?

Absolutely. It is not just polarization between men and women in society, but also between races in Europe and North America, and castes in India. There's also the dichotomy created between classes, sexualities, and of course intolerance of minority vs majority communities everywhere.

Q. Talking about minorities, how do you think Gender Studies can enhance discussions in contemporary India?

This again is a very good question because there is a deliberate driving of divisive forces that yield no actual gain to the larger population. It is now time for young people, like students in our Gender Studies class to undo these political agendas. And young students can see through these loaded, power-based ar-

guments, they can imagine and build models of cohesive societies. As you know many of our class discussions show that students are genuinely invested in learning new ways of thinking and applying them to local realities. This is a very practical approach. If we are talking about parity and equity as the cornerstones of Gender Studies, there is no place for divisive and destructive discourses. It is time that students of India as young intellectuals figured out a way to enter this conversation. We cannot let others take away our future.

Q. How do you think students can become leaders in such discourses, where they can avoid the obvious pitfalls?

This is again a good question because there are so many obstacles to developing leadership in young people today. For example, political leaders all over the world have an agenda which may not be in the best interests of forging inclusive societies. Or, media personalities will want a following rather than allowing young people to think independently. The other problem I see is if you want social change or if you want to work for the betterment of society, there is an option of joining NGOs. This too is fraught with problems because young people then are just followers. In my opinion, the best way to build leadership is to give students the skills and strategies to think independently, reason and make informed decisions, be logical instead of being doctrinaire. This, I hope, is precisely what our class in PDPU is leading towards where we have open and candid discussions but always with educated perspectives and courteous manner. The other one good thing about

understanding Gender is the ability to negotiate and compromise for the good of society.

Q. Talking about PDPU students, how do you think they have benefited from your Gender class?

This is a vast area of discussion, and I can only say that so many students have come to meet me individually and in groups to discuss their futures. The Memorial University opportunity to pursue a post graduate degree in Gender Studies is a classic example. I am working with two students quite closely on pursuing post graduate degrees abroad. There are others that I have been mentoring to present papers at international conferences, all on the subject of Gender. Again, the engineering students in our class have just submitted a paper for a conference on ‘Science Technology and Engineering: Career Paths for Women.’ Here, their paper will be on how men can partner with women engineers to create enabling ecosystems. Individually too so many students have come to discuss strategies they have learnt in class to manage personal and professional relationships in a chaotically globalizing India. You know of course that because of my accident, I have been not able to go to the cabin in School of Liberal Studies, but all the students feel such a degree of comfort in speaking with me that they just come to my guest room. And it is a joy to discuss all these ideas with them.

Q. Let me conclude by asking how do you see PDPU students in your class getting a long range vision of opportunities and possibilities?

I am truly delighted to be teaching PDPU students because every class is a wonderful occasion to inter-

act with really smart and inquisitive minds. It is expected that SLS students would have a natural affinity to taking a Gender Studies class, but it is the strength of PDPU that engineering students feel welcome and are ready to participate in class discussions. Hopefully giving the students an ability to think through ideas that are now in the global arena will enable them to use the same strategies to look into future opportunities and possibilities.

Dr. Gita Rajan, PhD



Gita Rajan is Professor of English and Gender Studies at Fairfield University, with a strong research and publication record in South Asian Literatures and Visual Cultures, and Gender, Globalization & Sustainable Development.

Sarjeet Narendrakumar

SLS'14

Students' Achievements

Ishita Dave

SLS 12 student , Ishita Dave's article titled "India's Strategic Access to Chabahar" was published in the South Asian Voices on 21st August 2015. Link of the article : <http://southasianvoices.org/indias-strategic-access-to-chabahar/>



Devanshi Shah

SLS 12 student , Devanshi Shah article titled "India and Pakistan Membership – A Strategy to Increase SCO Influence in Eurasia" was published in the South Asian Voices on 6th August 2015. Link of the article : <http://southasianvoices.org/india-and-pakistan-membership-a-strategy-to-increase-sco-influence-in-eurasia/>

Faculty Achievements



Dr . Ritu Sharma

Conducted training session (MDP Programme) on "Understanding Group Behaviour in Organizations" for Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd. & Group Companies organized by the School of Petroleum Management, Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University, Gandhinagar (Executive Certificate programme on management) on 11th and 13th August 2015.

Ms. Neeta Khurana

Have been appointed as an External Member of the Diploma Jury of Film and Video Communication Department at NID, Paldi.

Delivered an expert lecture on 'Personality Development' during the Foundation Program at Institute of Infrastructure, Technology, Research and Management (IITRAM) on 10th August, 2015.

Delivered a keynote address to students and members of local Women Welfare Committees of Deesa in a seminar on Women Empowerment on August 7, 2015 (Friday) at DNP Arts & Commerce College, DEESA to deliver a keynote address to students and their parents in a seminar on Women Empowerment on August 7, 2015 (Friday).

Ms. Neeta Khurana and the team RI/CSSI successfully completed the evaluation of the majority of First year B.Tech students on August 1, 2015.

Successfully completed the short teaching assignment at NID, Ahmedabad to teach Semiotics, starting July 27, 2015.



Dr. Sitakanta Mishra



Gave a talk on "Nuclear Security Issues in South Asia" at the CAPS-HQ Maintenance Command Joint Seminar on Technology and Aerospace Power at 3 BRD, Chandigarh on August 25, 2015.

Published an article titled "Atomic Politics", Geopolitics (New Delhi), August 2015.

Published a chapter in a book. The name of the chapter is "Zero Justifiable Gains: Lessons from Cold War TNW Experience", in Vinod Patney edited Asian Defence Review 2014-15, New Delhi: KW Publishers, pp. 19-35.



Mr. Sandeep Pathak

Attended a three day National Workshop on "Creation of IR using Open Source Software" in Information and Library Network Centre (INFLIBNET), Gandhinagar from 26 - 28 August, 2015



Create-Witty Corner

CONTRO

*And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.*

Alfred Lord Tennyson

Chances are you might have read that out aloud. Give it another try. This time read it to yourself, in your head. But whose voice is that, in your head reading aloud to you? Its not your own! Have you ever really given any notice to that voice? It is hazy, but clear enough for you to understand.

What if it belonged to someone..someone who lives in you free of cost with the sole purpose of helping you read? What if that being were to come out into this world and leave you “deaf”? What if this being is your anti-conscience and has all your bad concentrated in it? All about the bad thoughts that we think, the terrible things we want to do to the people we hate, but we never act of these impulses because hey! We are good people!

Our anti-conscience isn't nice. Its evil. Let's let it out now, shall we?

#

George made his usual cup of coffee that morning. He went to the door and opened it to retrieve the daily post and shut it. As he made his way to the table, he opened the post to glance at the headlines. And glance he did. And did so again. But he felt the same kind of lost we all do when we look at our watch the first time, but don't pay attention enough to note the time. He confusedly sunk into his chair, still groggy from the night and tried to read yet again. He saw the text; he saw the pictures, but read he could not.

He gasped and tried to say the words aloud this time. Success! He read the headlines and the stories below them, just to be sure he hadn't lost grasp of the English alphabet overnight. But there was still something quite not right for he read all this aloud and the moment he tried to read to himself, his ability to comprehend the text would vanish.

Little did he know we were all facing the same dilemma. But hell was yet to break loose.

#

“I need to staple shut my boss' lips together so he can't shout at me while I idle away in the office all day and he is forced to watch. That is one assignment I would not mind working overtime for!” ControGeorge said venomously.

“I hate the woman upstairs. She stomps around in high heel all day long, not to mention the noisy nights with her string of boyfriends. I want to drive her highest heels right into the depths of her heart and see her blood gush out as her life ebbs away.” ControMiriamcried.

“Now, now, ControMiriam. What did we say about violence? ControGary asserted.

”We don't wish, we DO.” ControMiriam said with its tiny coiled head bowed low.

“Ergo, you don’t want that, you WILL DO that!” ControGary screamed.

“HEAR, HEAR!” shouted all the contros from down below.

There were hundreds of them. Oh no, wait sorry. I forgot to look up. There were thousands of them!! Oh yes, they could fly. Well, some of them could. They were tiny, about quarter the size of your thumb. Their naked bodies were just lumps. A lump for the torso, a lump for the head, and four stumps for their four limbs. But no two contros looked exactly the same. Their heads were bunch of grey tissues twisted together and bundled up with an occasional patch of nerves showing. Just like our brain.

Their insignificant voices collided together and formed a defending roar that echoed the streets. But the roar lasted for much less than your usual roar and the echo echoed for even less time. Their voices are evident only when you listen for it. Or else, it just gets lost in the wind.

Ahead, the cars are jammed up against each other. Horns are blazing and cutting across the crisp morning air. Pedestrians and yelling, the drivers are yelling, and the traffic officer is doing the same. But nobody really hears the other over the incessant horns.

Why the jam, you might ask.

Well, for starters, the tires of over three fourth the city cars had been punctured while they were on the move. It was almost as if the streets had been sprinkled with invisible pinpricks all over. A man’s bathroom door had been locked from the inside so he would be late for office one last time before they fired him. An ex-boyfriend’s suits and formals had been ripped to shreds. The beads fresh out of the rotary kiln and had smashed to dust. A girl’s hair had been dyed green at the salon, with the hair dresser claiming innocence.

Haha, hell had broken loose if you asked me.

How long till the inhabitants of the city of Pasadena figure out what had happened?

#

Kitti couldn’t read her test questions. As she sat squirming in the seat, she looked around inconspicuously. No one was writing. Kevin eyebrows were knit together in confusion, Sharla looked stressed out trying to comprehend the questions. Yes no one could read. What was going on here? Kitti looked up at Professor Montgomery. He was staring out of the window lost in deep thought. He didn’t look peaceful, but incredibly cranky, probably fussing about his ongoing divorce battle. Kitti felt bad when she had heard the news of his split-up with his husband of ten years. They seemed like the happiest couple out there. She quickly looked back at her test. Nope, still nothing.

#

The contras continued their quest of extracting revenge out of the people they hated. Not one person was left unharmed. The things their worst enemies had wished upon them were becoming a reality. Some pranks were minor ones like drowning people's kindles in the lake, or water was spilled into their bedroom floor so their socks would get soggy and make that annoying squishy sound every time they walked.

And some were gruesome crimes. If I showed you the cold, lifeless, bled-out corpse of Miriam's upstairs neighbor, you would get the idea.

To-do lists were checked off as the contras fulfilled their goals. They were diligent and very sneaky in their planning, though that was rather unnecessary as people hardly bothered enough to look around for miniature miscreants, much less when they were busy suffering the worst day of their life.

The contras that could fly, had a blast as they zoomed in and out of soon-to-be crime scenes in no time. As their victims tried to navigate through their day without tripping of their untied shoelaces, or spilling their drinks, the contras schemed away.

At the end of the turbulent day, the contras silently slipped back to their shelters and the folk could suddenly read again. And they surveyed the mysterious damage inflicted upon their city and its inhabitants, they wondered if it was a work of the ISIS. They failed to rejoice in their enemies' downfall as they had their own downfall to grieve.

Miriam's upstairs neighbour's body was blue by now. ControFaith, for Faith had been the woman's name, upon finding her human dead, silently burst into flames and all that was left behind was a tiny pile of ash, one-eighth the size of your thumb.

Roopkatha Sarkar

SLS'15



Viddhi Thakker
SLS '15



Viddhi Thakker
SLS '15



Create-Witty Corner

Human

A flower dries leaving a fragrance,
a stone gets lost being stagnant.

A moth ends its life on a streetlight,
a star bursts out shining too bright.

An ant is crushed doing hard work,
a tree sheds down too absurd.

An animal falls off giving leather,
a wind fades away with the weather.

A scorpion is torn with a new life,
a chicken is cut through with a knife.

A pig burns itself on a frying pan,
a Lion has to R.I.P in his own den.

A goat is spaced as a ritual,
a cow is slaughtered too fatal.

But, a human dies leaving traces,
within memorable grey ash phases

Jaydev Patel

SLS'15



UPCOMING EVENTS

Teacher's Day Celebration

Pandit Deendayal Memorial Lecture

THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Ms. Niyati Trivedi

Anmol Jain | Urvi Shah

Manas Daxini | Jasmine J. Pereira

SPECIAL MENTIONS:

Aayush Choksi | Saanya Sinha

Khushboo Patel



SLS

**SCHOOL OF
LIBERAL
STUDIES**

PANDIT DEENDAYAL PETROLEUM UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL STUDIES

Off Koba-Gandhinagar Highway, Raisan,

Gandhinagar - 382007, Gujarat, India

Phone: +91 79 23275231 | Fax: +91 79 23275030

Website: www.sls.pdpu.ac.in

