

E Pluribus Unum

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS



A LOOK INTO HIS LIFE

Article By: Naisha Arora, Grade XI, SNS Gurugram

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Tennessee Williams:

A look into his life

-by Naisha Arora, Grade XI, SNS Gurugram



"If I got rid of my demons,
I'd lose my angels."

- Tennessee Williams

Thomas Lanier Williams or Tennessee Williams (March 26, 1911- February 25, 1983), is considered among the most revered playwrights of 20th century American drama. He wrote about themes which are often considered controversial in society. He wrote about love and death and violence. He wrote about vices and sins. He wrote about corruption and the degenerating nature of society. **Williams' literary works often reflect a hyper-realistic, naturalistic nature of society.** He utilized a lyrical writing style which

incorporated varied elements of the Southern Gothic style. For his plays, Tennessee Williams drew inspiration from his own background, experiences, and the world around him which is what makes it important to know more about an author's background.

One of his many literary inspirations was his familial situation and the relationships he formed with his family as a child. His father- Cornelius Coffin Williams- was an alcoholic, a gambler and an abusive parent who preferred his work as a salesman instead of his parental obligations, leading him to have a complicated relationship with Tennessee Williams.

His family life was full of tension and despair as his parents often engaged in violent, frightening arguments. Stanley Kowalski- a character in Tennessee Williams' play 'A Streetcar Named Desire' is said to have, in part, been inspired by his father's abusive, controlling and egoistic nature. His mother, on the other hand, was quiet and possessive. She later separated from his father but was firmly attached to her children.



The character of Amanda from one of his most famous plays 'The Glass Menagerie' was based on his mother. His sister Rose and her experiences instilled in him a fear of illness, madness and death.

Rose was forced into a lobotomy to cure her worsening schizophrenia, making her the model for Williams' protagonist in 'The Glass Menagerie'. The playwright was fairly sick as a child, also having had a near death experience with Diphtheria, rendering him terrified of illness.

Moving on to his youth and his education. Despite coming from a fairly dysfunctional family, Tennessee Williams attended University of Missouri, Columbia and the Washington University in St. Louis before finally getting his Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University of Iowa.

Before joining the Washington university however, he worked at the International Shoe Company due to being forced by his father. Afterwards, he also went on to study at the Dramatic Workshop in New York. Due to the educational support he received, he started submitting plays for magazines and competitions from a fairly young age.

His education allowed him to understand the technical nuances of writing. 1940's onwards, seven of his plays were performed on Broadway. Some of his most famous works today continue to be 'A Streetcar Named Desire' (1947), 'The Glass Menagerie' (1944), 'The Night of the Iguana' (1948), 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof' (1955) and 'The Rose Tattoo' (1951 premiered). Despite his early successes and awards he received, Tennessee Williams' struggle with his deteriorating mental health, drugs and alcoholism continued to increase well into the 1960's.

In a less accepting time, he was a homosexual public figure who grappled with his sexual identity and acceptance. This is a theme which he has explored through numerous plays including 'A Streetcar Named Desire'.

The death of his long standing partner- Frank Merlo is said to have plunged him into deep depression from which he never recovered. He often wrote about themes of love, death, desire and sexuality in his plays, arising from his own experiences.

Another common theme throughout his works was that of societal alienation and isolation. His characters are often projected as being unique personas being rejected by a conventional society.

Tennessee Williams' was a hypochondriac who feared loneliness and failure. His plays reflect his own internal conflict and trauma, making them raw and vulnerable which audiences could easily connect with. Of course, in today's society it would require a lot more context to be able to understand his settings and plot as most of his writing is set in post WW2, transitioning America.

After his death, he was honored in the St. Louis Walk of Fame and the US Postal Service even issued a stamp to decorate him. Tennessee Williams may have died in 1983 however, his contributions to the literary world will never be forgotten.

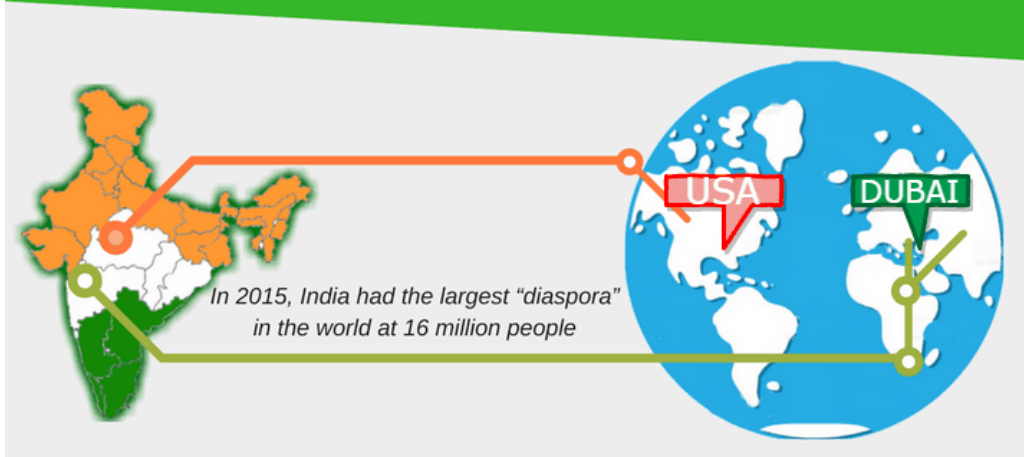


The Great Indian Brain Drain

-by Mehar Gaba, Grade X, SNS Gurugram



Brain Drain From India



Last year ended with the headlines of Leena Nair and Parag Agrawal joining the list of Indian minds taking charge of foreign multinationals. Leena Nair, an Indian Origin British citizen was announced as the new chief executive officer of Channel, becoming the first female and youngest-ever CEO of Channel.

Parag Agrawal has taken over as the Chief Executive Officer of Twitter from November 2021. At around the same time, Indian born economist Gita Gopinath was promoted as the first deputy managing director of The International Monetary Fund (Imf).

Sundar Pichai, Satya Nadella, Shantanu Narayen and Indira Nooyi are already some of the esteemed names of Indian origin or Indian borns who are leading foreign multinationals.

What is a brain drain?

In simple words, it's when skilled human capital emigrates from developing countries to the developed world. The converse of brain drain is brain gain, which, simply put, is large-scale immigration of skilled labour.

India's big brain drain is because of the migration of the educated. India has a huge amount of human resources, many of whom are choosing to live abroad.

Why do people prefer to migrate from India?

There are many reasons why educated people prefer to emigrate and nobody blames them for going and settling abroad.

Lack of higher education facilities- Increasing cut-offs and the growing population make access to higher education facilities increasingly difficult. As of 2018, nearly 7,53,000 Indian students were studying abroad. Several news reports suggest that more than half of the first rankers in Class 10 and Class 12 examinations during the years of 1996 to 2015 had migrated and were studying or employed overseas, primarily in the United States.

Lower Income- Developed countries offer better salaries and facilities to sectors such as IT, health, research etc. Income is one of the most pertinent reasons why people emigrate from India. Better opportunities and facilities such as cheap and satisfactory healthcare and education facilities are a gargantuan reason too.

Comparing The United States to India, reports suggest that one earns, on an average six times more in the academic sector, more

than double in the IT sector and about three times more in the management sector in the United States.

Non-recognition of Talent- India is the second-most populous country in the world. The chances of being recognised are difficult and hence people prefer to live in places where their work is more appreciated.

Gender inequality- Is a much ignored and neglected dimension of the brain drain. In 2021, the gender gap in India widened to 62.5%. There are immense gender disparities in education, income and labour force participation in the entire system. There are not enough women in leadership and technical roles in India. This results in many highly skilled women to shift abroad with no intention of returning.

Other factors of the brain drain include political instability, lack of opportunities, health concerns, social status, safety, quality of life and conflict.

People are leaving at the cost of our countries development. India ends up contributing more human capital to our host countries rather than our home country.

The US National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) says in a report that India is the largest exporter of doctors in the world. According to a report, there is one Indian doctor for every One thousand three hundred and twenty five Americans (1 Doctor : 1,235 Americans). In India, there is however 1 doctor for every two thousand and four hundred Indians (1 Doctor : 2,400 Indians). It's an extremely disturbing figure.

The brain drain results in reduced economic growth, lack of skilled

manpower and limited innovation capabilities. Bringind back the diaspora of Indians or at least preventing more Indians to move abroad should be a priority for our country.

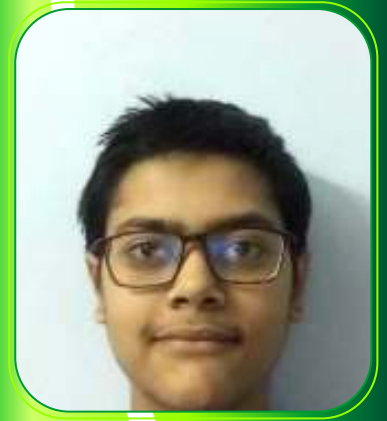
We need to understand the cause of the great brain drain and try to reverse the trend urgently. Our country needs to be able to provide higher education for all. A life of quality with cheap and efficient healthcare and education facilities. Equality should be focused on. Safety for all should be a priority.

Talent and new ideas should be welcomed, appreciated and honed. This change can certainly not be achieved overnight but if the problem is tackled in time, it could reap enormous benefits for the country.



Which year is it?

-by Akshay Bhatia, Grade X, SNS Faridabad



The new year, as we commonly know, is 2022. But this is only according to the Gregorian Calendar. There are many other calendars in the world and it is a different year according to each. Let us look at some of these dates and calendars.

Gregorian Calendar

The Gregorian calendar is the most widespread calendar in today's world. The calendar begins with the Birth of Jesus Christ. It uses the terms BC(Before Christ) to signify the period before Jesus Christ, and the term AD(anno Domini) to signify the period after His birth. 'Anno Domini' means 'in the era of our Lord'.

This calendar itself was only made around 525 AD. It was invented by the Christian monk, Dionysius Exiguus.

Since the calendar has become so common over the world, in modern times, to support religious neutrality, the terms 'BCE'(Before Common Era) and 'CE'(Common Era) are many times used in place of BC and AD.



Surprisingly, modern historians have put forward that there is an error in the Gregorian calendar. Research shows that Jesus Christ was most likely born 4 or 6 years before the date which was considered by Dionysius Exiguus. If this is true, then the new year is 2026 or 2028 and not 2022!

Vikram Samvat

According to Vikram Samvat, the current year is 2078 VS. (VS - Vikram Samvat). The Sanskrit word 'Samvat' means year.

This calendar is popularly believed to be started by the famous king Vikramaditya. There are various legends as to why the calendar was started. One legend has it that the Calendar marks the victory of Vikramaditya over the Shaka dynasty. However, there are many more legends and none has been validated by all historians. There is also uncertainty about the identity of Vikramaditya.

He is sometimes identified with Chandragupta Maurya II of the Gupta dynasty, while some say that the calendar is not related to any king at all.



The new year according to Vikram Samvat begins with the month of Chaitra, that is, March-April.

Many of the Indian festivals such as Diwali, Holi, Janmashtami, Raksha Bandhan, etc. are based on Vikram Samvat and hence, they fall on different dates each year.

These are the months of Vikram Samvat:-

1. Chaitra (march-april)
2. Vaisakha (April-May)
3. Jyestha (May-June)
4. Asadha (June-July)
5. Shraavan (July-August)
6. Bhadrapada (August-September)
7. Ashvina (September-October)

- 8.Kartika (October-November)
- 9.Margashirsha (November-December)
- 10. Pausa (December-January)
- 11.Magha (January-February)
- 12.Phalguna (February-March)

Indian National Calendar

According to the Indian National calendar, the present year is 1944. The Indian National Calendar is also known as the Saka Samvat, and is similar to the Vikram Samvat but also has a permanent correspondence with the dates of the Gregorian Calendar.

The calendar started from 78 AD and was adopted as the National calendar along with the Gregorian calendar on 22 March 1957. The months are the same as that of the Vikram Samvat, but they always correspond to the Gregorian calendar. For example, The month of Chaitra always begins every year on 22 March and every leap year on 21 March, but, the date of the new year varies in Vikram Samvat.

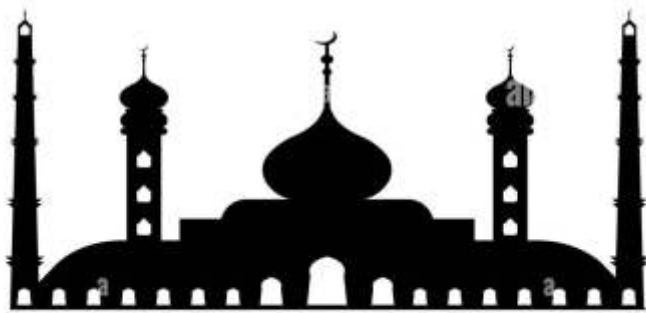


Hijri Calendar

The present year according to the Hijri calendar is 1443 AH. AH means 'Anno Hegirae' or 'in the year of the Hijra'

This is an Islamic calendar, which begins when Prophet Muhammad migrated from Mecca to Medina. This event is known as 'Hijra' and took place in 622 AD. The dates of all Islamic festivals such as Eid are based on the Hijri calendar.

The Hijri Calendar is a lunar calendar and consists of 354 to 355 days. Calculation of time based on the moon is difficult and sometimes due to clouds or other climatic disturbances, there might be sudden changes in the dates.



2022 1443
1444

January	February	March	April
sun mon tue wed thu fri sat 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	sun mon tue wed thu fri sat 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	sun mon tue wed thu fri sat 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	sun mon tue wed thu fri sat 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
May	June	July	August
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These are the months of the Hijri Calendar:-

- 1.Muharram
- 2.Safar
- 3.Rabi'ul-Awwal
- 4.Rabi'uth-Thani
- 5.Jumadi al-Ula
- 6.Jumadi al-Ukhra
- 7.Rajab
- 8.Sha'ban
- 9.Ramadan
- 10.Shawwal
- 11.Dhul Qa'dah
- 12.Dhul Hijjah

The Hijri calendar is inconsistent with the Gregorian calendar, as the latter is a solar calendar while the former is a lunar calendar. Further, The Hijri calendar has about ten days less than the Gregorian calendar. Therefore, over the years, the dates of the festivals change drastically.

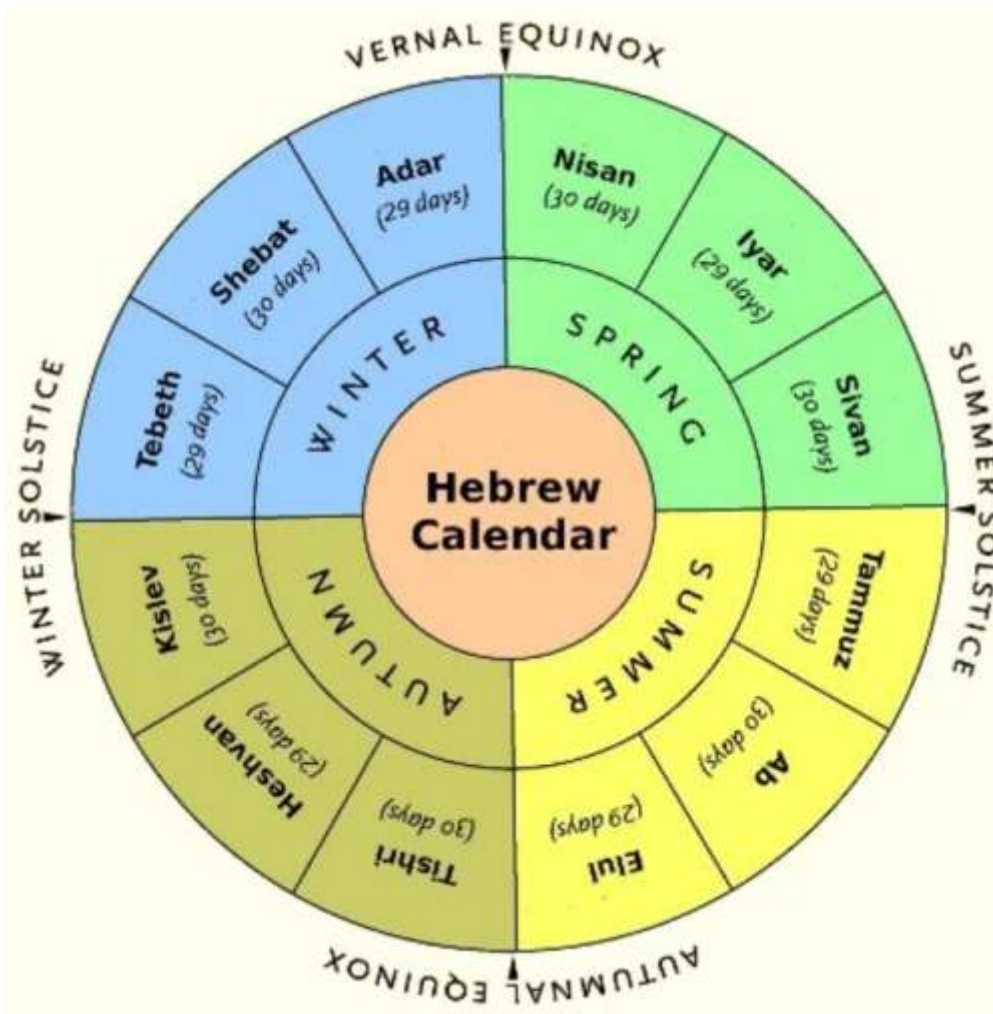
The Lunar Hijri Calendar is followed by most Muslims over the world for dates of religious festivals, except in countries such as Iran.

Hebrew Calendar

According to the Hebrew calendar, the present year is AM 5782! The term AM means 'anno mundi' or 'the era of the world'.

It is also known as the Jewish calendar. The calendar is a luni-solar calendar. The first year of the Hebrew Calendar begins from 3761 BC. This is based on the Jewish belief that the world was created in that year.

One year in the Hebrew calendar does not contain a fixed number of days. A non-leap year might be 353, 354, 355, days long, and a leap year might be 383, 384, 385, days long. In other words, a non-leap year has twelve months and a leap year has 13 months. A leap year occurs 7 times in a nineteen-year cycle.



Persian Calendar

According to the Persian calendar, the current year is 1400 AH. The Persian calendar, similar to the Hijri calendar, begins when Prophet Muhammad went from Mecca to Medina.

It is a solar calendar, and is also known as the Solar Hijri calendar. This calendar is officially used in Iran.

The Persian Calendar is reputed to be the most precise calendar of the world. There are no rules to determine leap years as the Persian calendar is an observational calendar, but many complex mathematical rules have been suggested to find out the number of leap years. According to one such rule, whose accuracy is very close to the observational accuracy, one leap year, which will have one extra day, is required every 1,10,000 years!



شنبه	یکشنبه	دوشنبه	سه شنبه	چهارشنبه	پنجشنبه	جمعه
		۱ ۲۶	۲ ۲۷	۳ ۲۸	۴ ۲۹	۵ ۳۰
۶ ۱	۷ ۲	۸ ۳	۹ ۴	۱۰ ۵	۱۱ ۶	۱۲ ۷
۱۳ ۸	۱۴ ۹	۱۵ ۱۰	۱۶ ۱۱	۱۷ ۱۲	۱۸ ۱۳	۱۹ ۱۴
۲۰ ۱۵	۲۱ ۱۶	۲۲ ۱۷	۲۳ ۱۸	۲۴ ۱۹	۲۵ ۲۰	۲۶ ۲۱

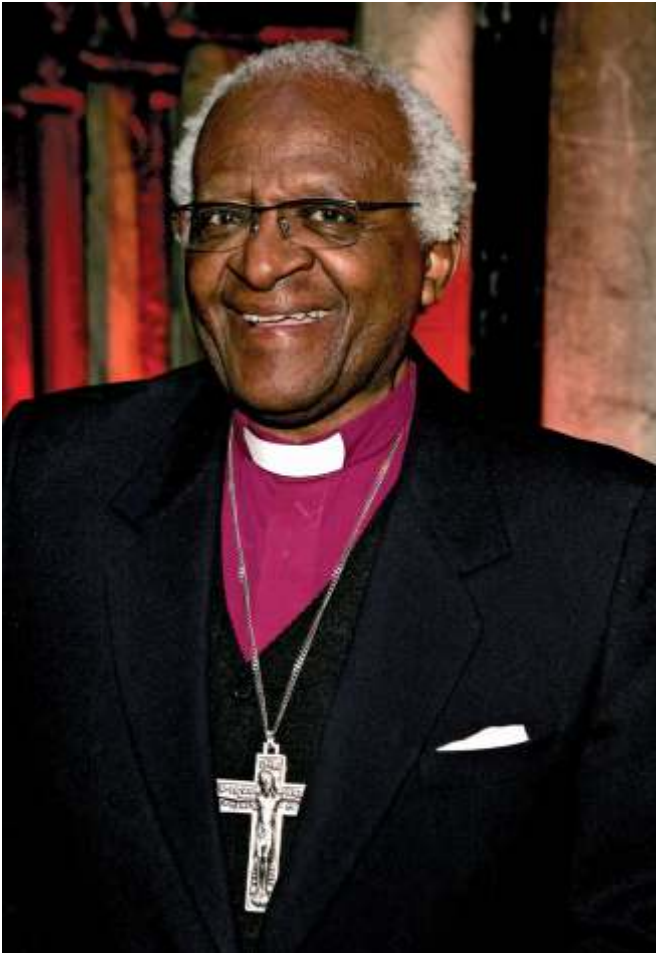
Conclusion

While the Gregorian calendar is used most in today's world, there are many other calendars which have been made by different people. They are all based on different beliefs, ideas, or historical incidents. On the other hand, some put forward that time is only a mental concept.

It is quite possible that in the future, different calendars might come up. However, despite believing in different dates, and using different calendars, we are all living in the same present moment.

Desmond Tutu: *A true humanitarian*

-by Mehar Gaba, Grade X, SNS Gurugram



If you want peace you don't talk to your friends.
You talk to your enemies.
-Desmond Tutu

Desmond Mpilo Tutu was a South African Anglican bishop and theologian. He was known for his work as an anti-apartheid and human rights activist. He passed away on the 26th of December last year, aged 90. Known as the moral conscience of South Africa, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning icon's death was mourned by people all around the world and world leaders.

Born in 1931, Tutu was born of mixed Xhosa and Motswana heritage in a humble household in Klerksdorp, South Africa. Tutu had an older sister, Sylvia Funeka.

Tutu contracted polio at an early age that resulted in the atrophy of his right hand. Tutu was baptised in June 1932. He attended the Johannesburg Bantu High School in 1945, where he excelled academically. After leaving school he trained first as a teacher at Pretoria Bantu Normal College and in 1954 he graduated from the University of South Africa.

After three years as a high school teacher, he began to study theology, being ordained as a priest in 1960. From 1967 to 1972 he taught theology in South Africa.



Tutu was the bishop of Johannesburg from 1985 to 1986 and the Archbishop of Cape town from 1986 to 1996. In 1986 he also became president of the All Africa Conference of Churches.

Nicknamed 'the Arch' He was known for his work as an anti-apartheid and human rights activist. He worked tirelessly and non-violently to end apartheid rule in South Africa. He was one of the most prominent opponents of South Africa's apartheid system as well as racial segregation and white minority rule.

He was a passionate believer in non-violence which helped in bringing out universal suffrage. When Nelson Mandela was freed from prison in 1990, he and Mandela led negotiations to end apartheid and to introduce a multi-racial democracy in South Africa. At this time, Tutu assisted as a mediator between rival black factions.

After the 1994 elections in the country, Tutu was selected to chair the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate past human rights abuses. Desmond Tutu had a close bond with His Holiness, the Dalai Lama. Tutu did a lot for India too, including preventing and breaking child marriages in the state of Bihar.

In 2006, Tutu was awarded the Gandhi peace prize for his contributions to social and political transformations through the Gandhian values of dialogue and tolerance. In 1984 Desmond Tutu received the Nobel Prize for Peace for his role in the opposition to the brutal apartheid regime in South Africa.

Desmond Tutu was a modern-day activist for racial justice, LGBT rights and often spoke on the injustices faced by Palestinians in Israel. He greatly empathised with non-violent protest. He will be remembered as a true humanitarian and as a citizen of the world.

Betty white

-by Vani Dawar, Grade IX IGCSE, SNS Gurugram



In the loving memory of the wonderful human being and beautiful actress.

Betty white, the light in the dark, was a Legendary comedian. From working in The

Golden Girls to voicing Bitey White in Toy Story 4, she was an icon on and off the screen. We all know her work in the entertainment industry but she was also an animal lover and activist.

Betty White's contributions to the entertainment industry as many but her attention towards animals isn't very far. For nearly a century she has been an strenuous and dutiful animal welfare advocate. Betty herself owned 26 dogs, she admired "anything with a leg on each corner".



Betty when publishing her book " Betty and Friends" in 2011 she wrote how her parents were great animal lovers and she is grateful that this passion of theirs has been passed on to her. She as a child had taken care of the abandoned animals and always had her parents' support.

She also has done a lot of donating and volunteering to nonprofit animal welfare organizations and has also taken time to contribute to fundraisers and make public appearances for special announcements regarding animals.

“In addition to her legendary status as an actress, comedian, and producer, Betty White has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to helping animals in need, including dedicated support for local shelters and animal welfare endeavors, fiercely promoting and protecting animal interests in her entertainment projects, and personally adopting many rescued animals,” Matt Bershadker, ASPCA president and CEO, shared with TODAY.

Her commendable work doesn't stop here, she had also been very actively involved with Morris Animal Foundation, a nonprofit organization which invests towards the advancement of animal health. She had been a trustee for 50 years and had personally sponsored numerous studies which helped improve the health of various animals.

Even when she is not here with us anymore animals are being cared for under her name because of the #bettywhitechallenge, where fans are contributing to animals shelters to show their respect and thank her for her admirable work.

This is only a glimpse of her work but let's all together honor her and do something for animals around us, it's not always necessary to donate large amounts of money. We can help just by feeding the strays of our locality or checking up with their health. Helping can be done in many ways but you have to get up and do it.



My Blue Tainted Heart

-by Miraya Joneja, Grade IX, SNS Faridabad



what lies beneath this ocean of darkness,
sea of regret, and waves of guilt,
reminiscing the pain of my past,
is my blue tainted heart.

it's a mystical creation,
that truly never forgets,
a magical love that once was,
that now stood long gone.

it's just an acquaintance,
that brings back familiarity,
for every now and then,
it reminds me of who I used to be.

Led Zeppelin

-by Amara Sood, Grade IX IGCSE, SNS Gurugram



"At some deep level, Led Zeppelin's music is about the relationship between humanity and technology. Philosophically, the band prefers humanity pure and simple, but in practice, it must realize its humanity technologically. That seems truer than most good-time pastoral fantasies."

—Robert Christgau, 1972

The band consisted of **vocalist- Robert Plant**, **guitarist- Jimmy Page**, **bassist- John Paul Jones**, and **drummer- John Bonham**. Their songs are driven mainly by heavy guitar with blues and folk music influences. They are usually credited as the progenitors of hard rock and heavy metal, having a significant impact on the nature of the music industry.

Initially named New Yardbirds, they were unpopular among critics and received demeaning remarks before achieving significant commercial success with eight studio

albums in ten years.

Jimmy Page wrote most of the music, while Robert Plant wrote the lyrics. John Paul Jones's keyboard compositions later became central to their music. They spent the latter half of their career on record-breaking tours until the group disbanded in 1980 after John Bonham's death. Since then, the surviving members have sporadically collaborated in reunions, the most successful one being the 2007 Ahmet Ertegun Tribute Concert in London, with John Bonham's son, Jason Bonham, on drums.



Led Zeppelin is one of the best-selling music artists of all time, with total record sales estimated between 200-300 million units worldwide. They achieved eight consecutive UK number-one albums, six number-one albums on the US Billboard 200, and five of their albums were certified Diamond in the US. Their bibliography in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame says they were "as influential" during the 1970s as the Beatles in the 1960s.

Their musical style was rooted in the blues and country blues with the influence of American blues artists such as Muddy Waters, Skip James, and Howlin' Wolf, especially in their first two albums. The majority of their tracks were centered around the twelve-bar blues,

and the blues, directly and indirectly, influenced other songs both musically and lyrically. The band's music was also strongly influenced by the British, Celtic, and American folk revivals. Page adapted his open tunings and aggressive strokes techniques from Scottish folk guitarist Bert Jansch.

According to musicologist Robert Walser, "Led Zeppelin's sound was marked by speed and power, unusual rhythmic patterns, contrasting terraced dynamics, singer Rober Plant's wailing vocals, and guitarist Jimmy Page's heavily distorted crunch."



Ian Peddie argues that they were "... loud, powerful and often heavy, but their music was also humorous, self-reflective and extremely subtle".

Led Zeppelin has influenced many famous bands like Deep Purple, Queen, Aerosmith, etc. The four symbols on the Led Zeppelin IV album have been a source of controversy for many.



Although the band members have never disclosed what they mean, fans have researched on the symbols. Robert Plant: "Each of us decided to go away and choose a metaphysical type of symbol which somehow represented each of us individually--be it a state of mind, an opinion, or something we felt strongly about, or whatever. Then we were to come back together and present our symbols."

Jimmy Page's chosen symbol appears to spell out the word "Zoso," but it is not a word; instead, just a sign that looks like a word. This makes it subject to many theories ranging from people believing it's a satanic symbol to others thinking it represents Saturn.

Robert Plant's symbol depicts a circle around a feather which represents the feather of Ma'at, the ancient Egyptian goddess of truth, justice, harmony, and balance. It could also be seen as a pen representing him, as the band's songwriter.

John Bonham's symbol consists of three interlocking rings, also known as the Borromean rings, which can be found in the *Book of Signs*, published in 1933 by Rudolph Koch. According to the book, this symbol represents an early version of the trinity.

More theories include that Bonham liked this symbol because it depicts a drum kit, the instrument of his choice. Robert Plant also once noticed that when Bonham would drink, he would let droplets fall from the bottle to form interlocking rings on the table.

John Paul Jones also chose a symbol from Koch's *Book of Signs* and appeared on the cover of a book about the middle age Russian religious cult, the Rosicrucians.

The emblem depicts a circle laid over three triquetrae and has been

speculated to represent a confident and competent person, which Jones is. In ancient times it was used as a symbol for exercising evil spirits, and it was intended to represent the leader of the Rosicrucians.

The music and lyrics of this English rock band formed in London in 1968 still hold great relevance, and many still consider Led Zeppelin to be one of the greatest ever.

They are backed by rock critics such as Mikal Gilmore, who say, "Led Zeppelin—talented, complex, grasping, beautiful and dangerous—made one of the most enduring bodies of composition and performance in twentieth-century music, despite everything they had to overpower, including themselves."



2021:

Milestones of Pop Music

-by Maanya Malhotra, Grade X, SNS Gurugram

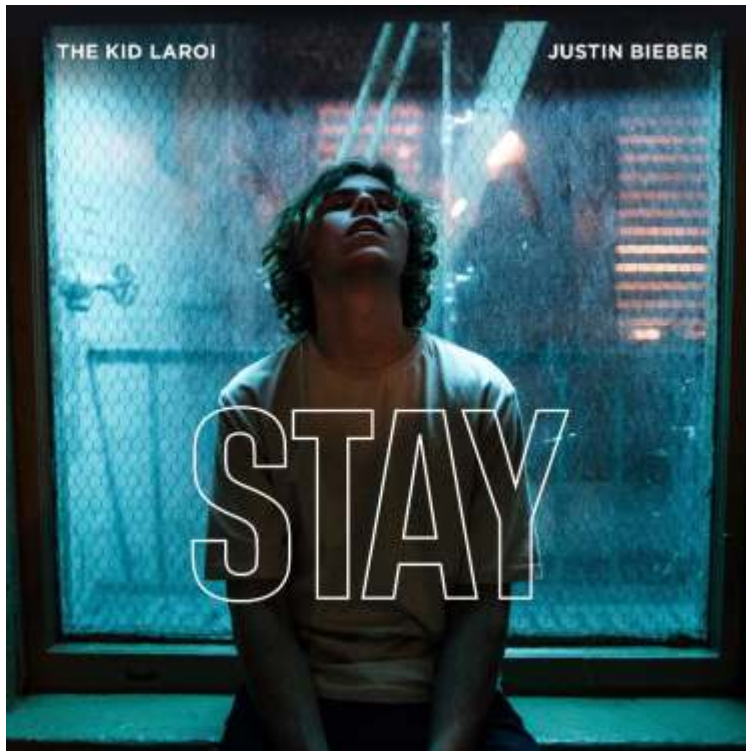


Music has always been a relaxer in chaotic and uncertain times. In 2021, the pop music industry has seen numerous debuts, multiple comebacks and music streaming at its best. [This article gives a summary of the best and the worst of the industry in 2021.](#)

2021 saw a strong start with Olivia Rodrigo releasing her critically acclaimed single "Drivers License", dubbed as "A Pop Triumph" by the Harvard Crimson. A heart wrenching song, it takes you on a beautiful journey disguised in the form of a drive. It has touched 1.24 Billion streams on spotify as of now, approximately.

[This then featured on her album, SOUR, that was released in May 2021.](#) The emotionally vulnerable album has provided multiple super-hits, probably owing to the fragility of emotions it portrays. It covers anger, brokenness and bittersweet memories. [Other notable songs of the album include deja vu, happier, good 4 u and traitor.](#)

In March 2021, Justin Bieber released his super-hit album, 'Justice' which had the songs 'Ghost', 'Holy' and 'Lonely'. All these songs were immediate hits in the industry. 'Justice' may be Bieber's best work yet.



Underneath all the catchy beats and groovy tunes, its an artist being vulnerable and unafraid both at the same time. He also released the single, 'STAY', a collaboration with the Kid LAROI. 'STAY' currently has 1.3 Billion Streams on spotify. This was clearly a strong year for Bieber and brilliant feather in his post-comeback cap.

Taylor Swift released the deluxe version of her album 'evermore' from 2020. Evermore is considered as a sister album of 'folklore' and goes on the same intimate vibes.

She released 'Love Story(Taylor's Version)', a re-recorded version of 'Love Story', the smash-hit single from her 2008 album 'Fearless'. The re-recorded version of the album itself followed in April 2021, titled as 'Fearless(Taylor's Version)'. The album was widely appreciated due

to how Taylor beautifully establishes a connect with her present and past self without letting one over-power the other. Her voice has definitely matured, and is solid evidence of her growth as an artist.



She also released 'Red(Taylor's Version) in November 2021, which once again was a bona-fide portrayal of her evolving skills in the musical world. Her closing piece for 2021, was 'All Too Well (Sad Girl Autumn Version)-Recorded at Long Pond Studios'. This was a strong year for Taylor.

Demi Lovato dropped their first album in 4 years, 'Dancing With The Devil... The Art of Starting Over'. Demi gets candid about their experiences, and confronts the reality about her controversial life decisions. Their pain and regret is portrayed very honestly and genuinely.

'OK to not be OK' with Marshmello has nearly 170 million streams on spotify, same goes for 'I'm ready' with Sam Smith.

Maroon 5 released their first album in 4 years, on 11 June 2021, titled, 'Jordi'. While the album has one or two decent songs like 'Memories'

and 'Beautiful Mistakes', the reflective vibe that they were going for was not the first thing that came to mind. The honesty of loss and retrospection that they were trying to convey got lost underneath all the escapist kind of music they usually make. It was them just vainly trying to expand into all emotions, without much dice. 'Jordi' does not stand a chance when compared to their previous albums like 'Overexposed' or 'V'.

Billie Eilish's superhit album, 'Happier Than Ever' came out on 30 July following her smash-hit singles from the same like, 'Therefore I am' and 'Your Power'. She is everything we expect her to be on this album, honest, genuine and brutal.



She goes into the pitfalls of success in the industry at such a young age, and being constantly in the limelight, which can take a toll on absolutely anyone. Living up to her previous album, 'WHEN WE ALL FALL ASLEEP, WHERE DO WE GO?', she delivers a bold and melodic performance and does not let the melody take away from the message or vice-versa. 'Happier Than Ever', the song, transcends from a slow ballad to one conveying intense rage and that is absolutely beautiful to hear.

In August, popular dance-pop band OneRepublic released their first album in five years, 'Human'. This was a miss. The band was, so to say, droning on about the kind of emotions that they had previously conveyed. While a few songs such as 'Run' and 'Someday' were commercial hits. Both these songs struggle to talk about anything genuine or new. Not a good show by OneRepublic, especially when held in comparison with their hits like, 'Rescue Me' or 'Apologize'.

Silk Sonic, a collaboration between Bruno Mars and Anderson. Paak, released their album, 'An Evening with Silk Sonic' on 12th November 2021. This was Mars' first album in nearly five years. Their critically acclaimed album takes on a very 70s vibe and embodies it in just the right magnitude. A song from the album, 'Leave the door open' has nearly 700 million streams on spotify.



Imagine Dragons released their album, 'Mercury Act-1', which has been their worst work so far. With a very rant-fest like vibe to it, the whole album is unbearably loud and screamy. The angst they were trying to convey was lost with the overpoweringly loud and angry music.

Compared to their past works like 'Evolve' and 'Night Visions', I found it hard to believe that this was the same band's work. Only two songs from the entire album were good, which were 'Follow You' and 'Wrecked', both complete opposites of each other. The former was a very peppy and happy song while the latter conveyed the aftermath of immense loss. 'Dull Knives' and 'Cutthroat' are absolutely impossible to listen to without wanting to stop immediately.

Renowned British band, Coldplay, released their ninth album on 15th October 2021, titled, 'Music of the Spheres' featuring hits like 'Higher Power' and 'My Universe with BTS'. It had a beautiful space based song called Coloratura. A 10 minute space ballad, with beautiful and very-Coldplay like guitar strummings. The album was highly rated and gathered critical acclaim. While it was not their biggest commercial hit, the album had a very beautiful message, like most of their work.



And in today's time, how can any piece of writing about the music

industry be complete without mention of the global K-pop phenom BTS! This year was a strong one for BTS with their singles 'Butter' and 'Permission to Dance' being smash-hits and their collaboration with Coldplay in the later part of the year.

A lot of very worthy artists have been missed out on this article because it is humanly impossible for all the versatile music made in a year to be covered in one article.

Here was, according to me, the best and worst of the year. The upcoming Grammys should be interesting, given the competitive nominations, and all the brilliant work that is going to be facing off. 2021 was a strong year for the music industry and with what we know of the projects in the works for 2022, even better should be expected.



Indigenous people: Reparations and their Plight

-by Abhimanyu Rao, Grade X, SNS Gurugram



Globalisation has long been considered a blessing, one that has allowed development to reach every corner of the world, connecting people across cultures, and even allowed us to import and export products, so that everyone can be connected through common experiences! However, this miraculous connection of nations had an evil twin as well - the terrifying, soul-crushing colonialism - and one of its greatest pitfalls is the destruction of the world's indigenous population.

Who are indigenous people?

The World Bank says the indigenous people are people with distinct socio-cultural groups that differ from the rest of the population. They often have their own languages, customs, and beliefs, and live connected to nature on their ancestral lands. They usually live in tribe-like arrangements, with distinctive leaders, spiritual leaders, and other major figures. They are the original inhabitants of the area they live in, and are major

players in conservation of biodiversity. (I shall refer to this aspect later in this article.). Some well-known examples of indigenous people are the Native Americans (formerly known by the misnomer “Red Indians”), the Inuits of the Arctic, and the Aboriginal people of Australia.

What problems do these people face?

These people, unfortunately, are often faced with several issues, most of which relate to their status as the indigenous population of a country. Firstly, while they only make up 5% of the world's population, they make up 15% of the extremely poor population of the world! Their life expectancy is also reportedly 20 years lower than the rest of the world.



They are often marginalised, with very few countries officially recognising their claims to certain lands, recognising their language, and their culture. They are often mistreated by the government, by

other people, and therefore denied some basic rights in certain areas. Furthermore, the blatant ignorance of other people has endangered their population far more than ever before. **Through the course of this article, I shall write about the plight they face, and the need for reparations. I will begin by talking about actions that have affected them in the past.**

1. Colonialism and the American Indian Wars-

The day was 22nd March, the year was 1622. On this historic day, Powhatan Indians, being threatened by British colonists who were advancing further and further into their ancestral land, murdered countless colonists in an event that was soon called the Jamestown Massacre. **This attack, while done with the intent of self preservation, ended up starting one of the most infamous wars in history!**



From then, all the way to the early 1900s, the natives fought various colonists, including the Dutch, the Brits, and even the French. **After centuries of futile battle and heavy losses on each side, the natives finally caved, and began assisting the colonists.** Unfortunately, their

surrender hadn't come without some crushing blows.

President Andrew Jackson's Indian Relocation Act led to thousands of tragic deaths on the infamous 'Trail of Tears', and several other operations left Native Americans with lesser and lesser land. Before they knew it, they had a mere fraction of their ancestral lands to live on, and were reduced to second class citizens, marginalised by the colonists. This dreadful injustice set them back years in progress, and caused wounds so deep that they still haven't healed from that oppression.

2. The Stolen Generation-

13.02.2008- Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd gives a heartfelt apology to the indigenous population of the country. He apologises to the indigenous people whom he calls "The oldest continuing cultures in human history". He apologises to the so-called "Stolen Generation", and hopes that they can join hands in a new journey of healing and unity, but what is the Stolen Generation? They are the children of indigenous Australians who were forcibly removed from their families to be "assimilated into white culture."

This was done under the dreadful misconception that assimilation was a great gift to these "backward" indigenous people, and by taking away the progeny of these people to place into a "more evolved" culture, and allowing the natives to go extinct, they would be doing a favour to these children. Children were targeted because the government felt that it would be easier to make them forget their culture.

These children were forced to forget their culture and forbidden from speaking their native language. The "lucky ones" were adopted

by white families, but several were just left to grow up in institutions and orphanages.



This was one of the most horrific and inhuman acts ever committed, and it continued all the way until 1970! Luckily, in an uncommon and unexpected move, the Australian Government not only acknowledged this dreadful act, but also asked for forgiveness, and began mobilising resources towards making reparations.

3. Yanomami Measles Outbreak-

The Yanomami are a tribe of South American indigenous people, who primarily live in Brazil and Venezuela. They have had a tumultuous past, originally being affected by the Brazilian Government, who, in 1940, sent teams of soldiers to secure that area of their border, and exposed the Yanomami to diseases like Influenza and Measles.

This killed several members of their community, and was a devastating blow to them. The next time they were wronged was in the 1970s, when the military created plans to create a road across the Amazon Rainforest. They bulldozed the Lungs of the Earth, and in the process, eradicated no less than 2 whole villages of Yanomami people! This also introduced the tribes to alcohol and even more diseases, which was another crushing blow to these people, who had

barely recovered from the flu and measles outbreak from 30 years ago.

Unfortunately, their trials and tribulations were not yet over. The 1980s brought a gold rush, a blessing to miners, but a curse to the Yanomami. **The curse came in the form of 40,000 devilish miners who slaughtered them, exposed them to more diseases, and even destroyed their homes and villages!** This was a humanitarian crisis like no other, and in the short span of just 7 years, 20% of the total Yanomami population had been wiped out.



Finally, in 1992, the Yanomami's land was officially called Yanomami Park, and all miners were evicted. Unfortunately, to this day, miners attack these people, and expose them to foreign diseases, while also polluting their rivers and their forest.

The reason these diseases affect them so much is that they have all developed an immunity to pathogens in their area, but we are disrupting their ecosystem by introducing foreign pathogens into their area, which their bodies just cannot handle. **The Brazilian government has finally begun vaccine camps for the Yanomami, but it may be a case of "too little too late."**

4. Other assorted scenarios-

Gold mines in Bolivia are poisoning its indigenous population, causing issues like diarrhoea, regular fevers, memory loss, exhaustion, headaches, body aches, nausea and vomiting, and even cognitive developmental delays! This has been attributed to the Mercury that Bolivian miners invariably use in their expeditions. They carelessly dispose of it wherever they feel like, and it ends up contaminating the local river, and greatly affecting the indigenous Esse Ejjas people.



The Danes also committed heinous crimes that perfectly mirror the story of the Stolen Generation. They kidnapped several children between the ages of 5 and 9, in order to raise them like Danes, and have them sent back, in order to inspire the rest of the Inuits to become “civilised” like those children. This ripped families apart, and is a massive blotch on the track record of Danes.

What are reparations?

Reparations are acts that attempt to repent for some questionable and discriminatory actions in the past. This is usually done through

acts like giving them benefits like reservations, or through monetary compensation.

The need for reparations-

Are reparations a solution to the continued oppression of indigenous people? In theory, it is quite simple - when you hurt somebody, you apologise. If you significantly hurt somebody, you might give them something as a token of your sincerity. If you break something, you are expected to replace it.

When you have shattered the opportunities and lives, you are obviously expected to replace them, but you would never be able to do that. So you do the closest thing you can, for instance, create opportunities for future generations, and give them a little boost to get them started.

This is a great way to begin healing the rifts that years of oppression would have caused. The Australian government paid a hefty \$280 million sum to the people affected by their severely misguided actions with the "Stolen Generation" incident. In another heartwarming turn of events, the Canadian Government has approved \$40 BILLION as compensation for the missteps made by their Child Welfare System, which was very similar to the events Down Under.

The need to protect Indigenous Populations of the world-

Their culture is one of the most important aspects of indigenous people. This is important because these cultures and people are an integral part of their history, and their extinction is equivalent to the extinction of a species.

Indigenous communities live in close harmony with nature. Most of them worship or at the very least believe in the protection of nature and the environment.

Many of their practices are actually beneficial to the environment, and it is no surprise therefore, that the protection of the environment is closely linked to the protection of indigenous people. Some methods of doing this include amending syllabi in school to include stories of the indigenous community. This will also help in clearing any misconceptions about them that may exist in the minds of people, and help the idea of harmonious coexistence.

Another great way is incorporating their culture into places where it is possible. An astounding example of this is musician Renata Flores Rivera, whose cover of Michael Jackson's hit 'The way you make me feel', performed in her native language Quechua, the language of Peruvian indigenous people, went viral.

This is a phenomenal example of people using these widespread cultural aspects like music, that connects everyone, and using it to spread their culture to stop it from dying out.

While no amount of positive actions today will ever make up for the atrocities committed against indigenous communities, it is time for a formal acknowledgment of these atrocities, and for moving forward towards a world that protects them.

The Arab Spring

-by Naisha Arora, Grade XI, SNS Gurugram



To our generation, democracy is the norm. It is something we are used to, something we take for granted. However, very recently itself, in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region, democracy was something the people fought hard for. To this day, they fight for political stability and democracy. Arab Spring was the term given to a wave of pro- democracy protests and uprisings in the MENA region during 2010-2011. It challenged the deeply entrenched authoritarian regimes of the area. Spring signifies pleasant change, Political progressivism and a collective rise in democratic consciousness, which is what the uprisings hoped to accomplish. These were a series of decentralized social resistance movements against oppressive regimes in the region which promoted cluster democratization.

Started in Tunisia and Egypt in 2010, the Arab Spring had a variety of causes which can be classified into social, political, economic and immediate causes. Social causes

included the youth bulge, education and democracy. Historically, surveys and data reveal that countries with a high youth population are more likely to be unafraid of civic clashes and uprisings and political aggression.

Education enabled the youth to be able to understand and work towards ideas of modernisation and the theory of democratization. The increase in education boosts democratic processes ergo with education and the spread of social media, communication and connectivity the Arab Spring protests were ideated.

Furthermore, the uncontrolled prejudice against ethnic and religious minorities in the region was also one of the reasons that sparked protests. Gender discrimination and inequalities were also very prominent.



The Arab Spring was an opportunity for the minorities to fight for rights, equality, and air out their concerns. These issues also gave rise

to a various human rights violations across the region, including kidnapping, torture and even death by lawless militia.

Political causes were primarily those pertaining to the oppressive dictatorial and authoritative regimes. The MENA region is infamous for having authoritarian systems of governance, even today. People have often questioned the legitimacy of the aging government and dynastic succession- a factor that facilitated the start of the Arab Spring.

By the end of the 20th century, most Arab dictatorships were considered ideologically and morally bankrupt. Monarchs had been in power for up to 42 years (Muammar al- Qaddafi of Libya). The youth especially took the Arab Spring to facilitate the overthrow of these corrupt regimes, overcoming their fears pertaining to security and islamist takeovers.

A capitalist regime of economic inequalities that benefited only the elite few led to corruption within the ruling dynasty and dissatisfaction of the public.

Added to that, the economic causes of the Arab Spring were vast and varied as well. Firstly, the economic gap created by the Great Recession led to wide civilian unrest during the late 20th century.

Secondly, Rampant unemployment, unsatisfactory implementation of neoliberal economic policies, regional trouble, global crisis, etc. were some of the factors which lay the foundation for widespread dissatisfaction.

Moreover, the inflation of prices, especially food prices led to economic instability in countries like Yemen, Morocco, Tunis and

Egypt- sparking protests pertaining to the same. This was also accompanied by a decrease in manufacturing of goods thereby exacerbating the issue of unemployment- especially female unemployment.

Lastly, the catalytic event that sparked outrage and is believed to be the immediate/ sudden cause of the Arab Spring is the self immolation of a 26 year old street vendor named Mohamed Bouazizi, locally known as "Baabousa" in Tunisia.



In 2010, he faced the confiscation of wares along with the public humiliation and harassment he faced by a police officer and her aides. He was denied a hearing with the local governor regarding this incident. Enraged, he set himself on fire outside the governor's office. This became a focal point for public outrage as it represented the daily struggles of Tunisians with unemployment and corruption.

These events laid the foundation for mass protests and uprisings across the MENA region. Owing to the fact that these revolutions were primarily conducted by the youth, the advent of social media played an undeniable role in the spread of these uprisings across nations.

Cyberactivism was an important factor in the success of regional protests. Bouazizi's protest was recorded and shared on a variety of social media platforms, inspiring outrage in the international community.

The Moroccan Oppositionist Youth Movement is an example of an organization which used Facebook to organize public protests and Youtube as a vehicle of political expression. However, this is still considered a fairly disputed point, with scholars arguing that the potential of social media depends upon a variety of external factors.



Additional strategies employed by the protesters included mass protests and the use of strategic nonviolent action. Mass protests are rarely seen in autocratic regimes and the use of this strategy promoted inclusiveness and direct challenges to authority along with displaying widespread public dissatisfaction with the ruling governments.

In Egypt for example, protests and demonstrations were carried forward by people of different ages, genders and social statuses. The

revolution was a uniting factor for a social mix of population rarely seen in Egypt.

The use of strategic non violence won the support of military institutions and aided in achieving regime change in both Tunisia and Egypt.

Soldiers refused to fire at protestors and publicly defied orders by stating that they would not use non violence in order to suppress the protests. Such military deflection is often attributed to similar ethnicities, incentives like improved livelihood, etc. and can frequently aid in successful protests and demonstrations.

However, in cases like Syria where the military remained under the control of the authoritarian regime, a lack of military deflection will most likely lead to violence.

Moreover, the protests and their impact also spread through the creation of civil society structures as well as the occupation of public spaces. Pearl Roundabout in Manama, Bahrain, and Tahrir square in Cairo, Egypt are two examples of popular areas for demonstrations and protests.

Conducting the protests in such public spaces allowed for a congregation of the masses as well as protection offered by the number of people and the area. This also helped the protesters achieve greater recognition and support.

Despite the efforts, the effects of the Arab Spring were not uniform. While in some countries it did help topple the corrupt, authoritarian regimes, these revolts pushed others towards political instability.

For example, Libya today is an anarchic, uncertain state which has become a battleground for warring militias in different cities. With barely functioning legal systems, chaos throughout the country and people in dire need of humanitarian assistance, Libya is not far from being classified as a failed state.

Similarly, Syria has transitioned to a state of civil war . Tunisia, on the other hand, is considered the most stable and successful country to have benefited from the Arab Spring.

It has a new constitution which guarantees a variety of fundamental rights and freedoms including those of citizenship, women's rights, freedom of movement, etc.

While it is still recuperating and rebuilding, there have been increased discussions regarding a variety of reforms pertaining to key topics such as LGBTQ+ rights and religion.

In Egypt, the impact has been uneven. Despite the overthrow of the authoritarian regime, there remain the pressing issues of poverty and injustice which sparked the revolution in the first place.

In spite of the challenges and impact of the Arab Spring, the promotion of democracy and the need to stand up for civil rights, morality, justice and democracy is a theme that can very clearly be seen through this series of social resistance movements.



Stigmatised:

A look at Mental health

-by Jiya Gaur, Grade X, SNS Gurugram

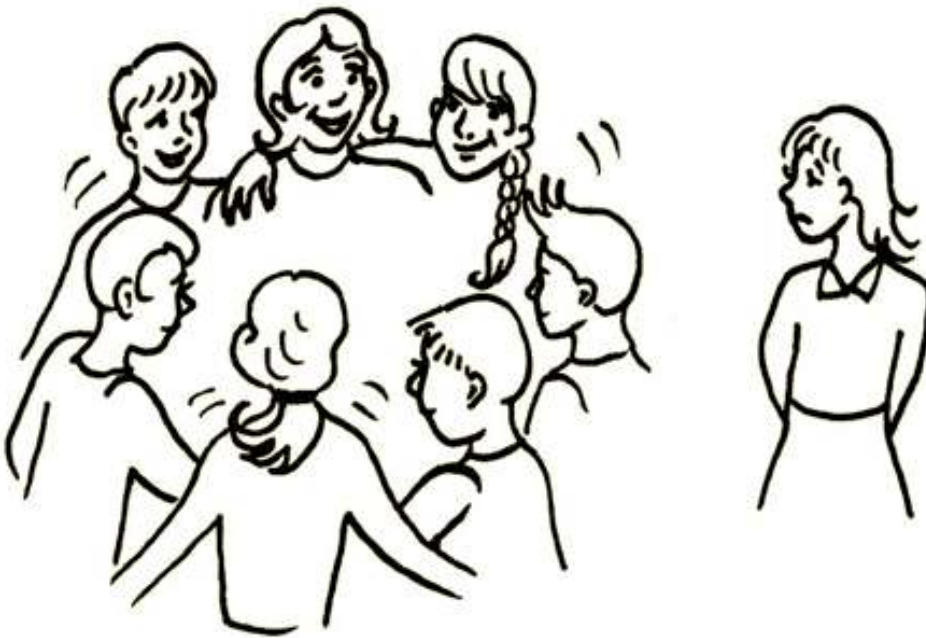


Some things can be avoided. You can hide when you see someone you no longer speak to in public. Say you're vegetarian and you're baking a cake but the recipe calls for eggs, that can be excluded. Unnecessary social interaction such as parties can be easily dodged. Perhaps you could even fake being sick to skip school where the terrifying maths quiz awaits your presence. I could go on listing instances of all that we can shun ourselves away from but that won't change the fact that there remain things you can never avoid regardless of what you try.

Mental Health. Mental Illness. Picturing a scenario where I say these words out loud in public, I can vision people shifting uncomfortably in their seats. Perhaps some sigh with annoyance because they believe it is simply an imaginary concept. Others might shake their heads with disapproval. Regardless of these situations, there might be someone in that crowd who has been struggling for what feels like centuries now. There could be

someone who is waiting for people to listen to them and have themselves heard. This isn't fantasy or some silly gen-z idea. It is real. It has happened to people since the time they have existed.

We see the words "crazy" and "depressed" being used as though they are punctuation. It is romanticised. Being depressed is a newfound "aesthetic" that elicits approval from countless people. Lyrics are filled with "He is such a sociopath" and movies are filled with "slashers" and "psychos" demonising those with illnesses. Stigma begins when we start to view people as "others".



most low manner imaginable. These words are weaponized and used as insults. I don't think any of us has ever stopped to think about the implications of these words when we use them with a casualness as though they are just any other ordinary words. They aren't insults. They are actual mental illnesses. Spurling them as though they are abuses erases the dignity and does a great disservice to those who live with these illnesses every day.

As I write this article, I myself take accountability on behalf of the manner in which I have used these words prior to knowing the damage and hurt it can cause. We can all learn from our mistakes if we really try.

I was recently watching a show uncovering a tormenting case of a family that resided in our very own capital, Delhi. **I find that gossip is one of the, if not the most, dangerous forms of expression that we possess.**

Countless rumours and theories sucking people into rabbit-holes about cults, magicians, witchcraft, demons and satanic rituals in regard to what happened to this family were proudly circulated around the country spreading as fast as wildfire. **Hardly anyone seemed to realise that perhaps the root of all that occurred was because of mental illness and perhaps could have been avoided if anyone tried to understand and listen.**

“Ghar ki baat Ghar mein rehni chahiye, log kya kahenge?” - Secrets of the house should remain within the walls of the house. What will people think? I first heard the statement “Log kya kahenge” on a meme page years ago. Perhaps I was 9. I am now fifteen years of age and these very words continue to echo in the sound waves with an everlasting impact.

The reasons are unfathomable to me. Each time someone we love has a physical health illness, it is announced to every last relative. The news travels from you to your cousins-mothers-sisters-sons-daughters father and in return we are shielded with blessings and prayers, the get-well-soon and the we-wish-you-a-speedy-recovery.

It just so happens that if someone you love has recently been

diagnosed with depression and anxiety, you will lock that secret and throw away the keys. **It must not get out of the walls for it does, our very sense of pride, dignity and respect shall be erased forever.** Every last bit will be diminished and the taunts we shall receive from the said cousins-mothers-sisters-sons-daughters father will haunt us for eternity.

The very prospect that we value secrecy, privacy and the concept of our amour propre over what really matters is explanatory in itself. **We would rather remain quiet with our lips sealed together with superglue letting people suffer in silence without helping them because we believe that people's judgement of something that should be and should have been completely normalised by now holds far more importance.**

Every issue somehow always trails back to the beginning of the circle. Be it a child with anxiety or an adult with depression, all that lies is connected with us saving our own so called dignity in the face of our metaphorical neighbours.



I have often heard people tell me that you never quite realise the value of something until it is lost. **I say this now because I believe that we will never understand the importance of mental health and illness and letting the conversation around it breathe in the air until we lose one another and the damage is irreparable.** The car is travelling on the road with a safe speed and velocity but that does not mean it cannot get into an accident. Why wait for it to crash?

This article is not about statistics and numbers. Anyone reading can simply google the percentage of people struggling with their mental health. I do not think the numbers are necessary for me to realise how inexplicably pertinent it is for me to understand the grave seriousness of mental illness, stability and health.

I know how pertinent it is because I see numerous people close to me that are struggling. I understand that perhaps most of the people I know have ordeals with mental illness and health. **It starts with the people you love most. I would be lying if I said I have been happy my entire life. Every single one of us has had those itchy patches, some much worse.**

Sonder. This very word means the realisation that every passerby is living a life just as complex and vivid as yours.

You may still be lingering upon exactly why Stigma is harmful. It causes reluctance when it comes to seeking treatment and asking for help. A lack of understanding from friends and family and those closest to you can make a person feel even worse.

It generates a lack of opportunities and chances while searching for job positions and admissions. **Needless to say, an individual struggling with their mental health or an illness is usually subjected**

to bullying and harassment. People are inconsiderate and cruel, they do not make an effort to comprehend how wrong what they are doing is.

Health insurances do not cover mental health and illness expenses. This limits those who are not financially adequate to seek treatment thereby creating a whole string of issues for them. More than anything, you lose faith and belief in yourself.

When the people around you treat you as though you're an alien and you are far too afraid to reach out because of the fear of judgement, everything seems impossible. This is Stigma. It is a "mark of disgrace" which is absolutely unnecessary and horrible.

Mental health and illnesses cannot be seen or understood as something that exists in the same manner for everyone. The conversation around mental health and mental illnesses is already in progress in some places however there is still pin-drop silence in many.



Stigma and stereotypes are attached at every end. Some ways to help eradicate mental illness and health stigma include being vocal about it. We should speak about it without an ounce of shame. It isn't anything illicit, illegal and it doesn't make a person any less better than you and I are. Compassion goes a long way. No one wishes to

receive your sympathy and pity but a few words of support may mean a lot more than you think. **The next time you're at an event or party where certain statements are being made and words are being used, use the power of your voice. Express why it is wrong.** This not only gives courage to those facing similar issues but helps raise awareness in public. It is the bare minimum.

I cannot stress this enough but truly, given all the variables around us right now, each one of us has our own muddles. At a time like this, everyone needs someone to be there for them. **Be it a child, a teenager, an adult or a senior citizen, age plays no role in denying the fact that we are all going through a tough time.**

All said and done, be there for the people you love and care about. Check-in with old friends and distant family once in a while. **Take care of yourself, take out at least an hour each day to do whatever it is you love, whether that is reading a book or dancing to your favourite songs.**

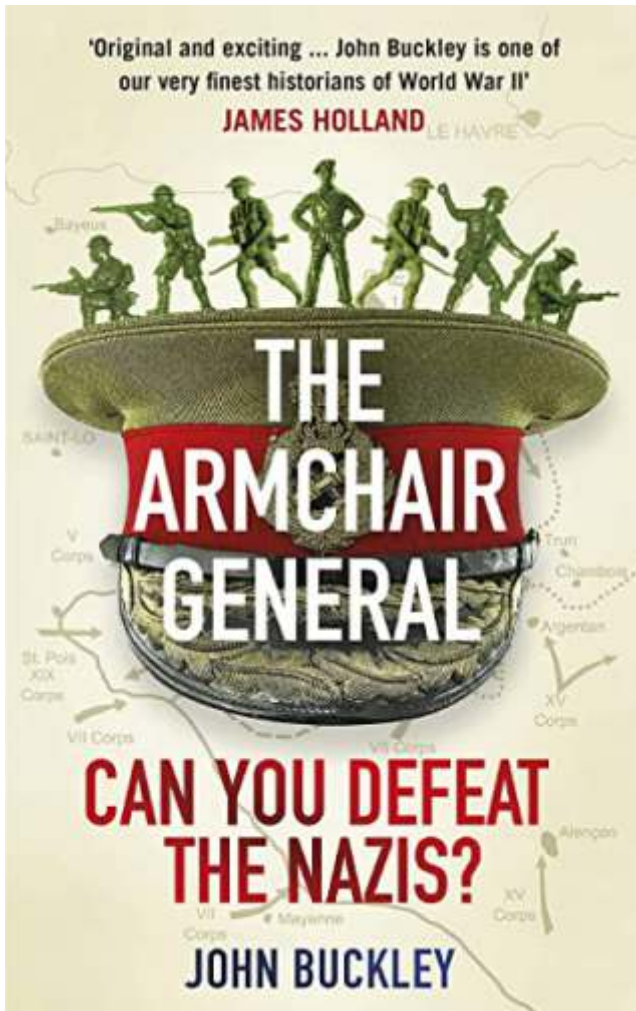
Mental Health. Mental Illnesses. They aren't a joke or something we can take lightly.

I now picture the same crowd I did at the beginning. Instead of forms of pessimism, I see people slowly understand and contemplate everything I say.

Hopefully it left you, the reader, with some fruit for thought too.

Book Review: *The Armchair General*

-by Abhimanyu Rao, Grade X, SNS Gurugram



If you make a list of defining events in the last 100 years, World War II will always find a place of prominence on that list! That place isn't undeserved at all. From bringing Crimes Against Humanity to the spotlight, to creating the United Nations, the shadow of this horrific incident looms over our heads to this day! Often we can't help but wonder, "What if?".

What if someone other than Churchill replaced Neville Chamberlain? What if Britain diverted their reinforcements to Africa instead of Greece? What if Stalin was replaced?

What if the Atom Bombs were never dropped? Any one of these decisions could have greatly affected the war, shortened it, or perhaps lengthened its duration and intensity, maybe increased the death toll, or even have prevented it from taking place altogether!

John Buckley also wondered about these questions, and soon enough, his wondering turned into something much, much more. That's how "The Armchair General" was born. A thinking person's book that answers all of your burning questions, fires up your imagination, and keeps you hooked until the very end. A unique book, because you decide what course the events that led to WWII would have taken?

Why is that? Well, simply because YOU are the author, and John Buckley is simply a facilitator! He will fill you in on the current situation, and you will be the one to choose what to do! You will make the decisions that change the course of history! You can change everything from a battle tactic, all the way to a Prime Minister, and I guarantee that you will have fun while doing it!

I'm actually 90% sure there's some black magic in this book, because time literally flew while I was reading it. I had completed several parts of the book in what I thought was just a few minutes, but it had been at least an hour since I began! Now either I'm just terrible at estimating time, or this book has some serious power!(Between us, I'm quite sure it's the latter!)

I've been waxing eloquent about this book's greatness for so long, that I forgot that I'm talking out of my hat, and making some arguments that are half-formed at best! So now, I'm going to answer this burning question, the one the nation wants to know- Why should you read this book?

There's not much to it really. It's very simple, this book is **GROUNDBREAKING!**

I know that choose-your-own-story books are no new concept, but using them with real historical events to see what could have been is a phenomenal idea. **Instead of being a passive reader, you will find the book to offer you an active role, and an immersive experience.**

You not only have an easy way of remembering what happened in that event, but you also know what could have happened, and can have fun playing around with what the long term effects could have been! Books like these are great because you are deeply invested in what happens next!

It's like when you really love, and connect with a character on a TV show. You will always tune in to watch that show, because you will want to know what happens to the character in the future. **The same philosophy applies here, where you are so invested in finding out what your decision affected, that you check, and this new scenario hooks you long enough to get you onto a decision page again, and the cycle continues!**

What's even better about this book is the detail! Whether you are a World War fanatic, or just someone who wants to learn more about it, the chapters, along with the Historical Notes at the end of every major event, is full of such detail, that you are practically inside the British House of Lords, or in a room full of Generals and Brigadiers in North Africa!

The last great thing about this book is how cunning it is! For those of you who don't enjoy reading verbose tomes on history, this book should be your new best friend. While you are having fun playing

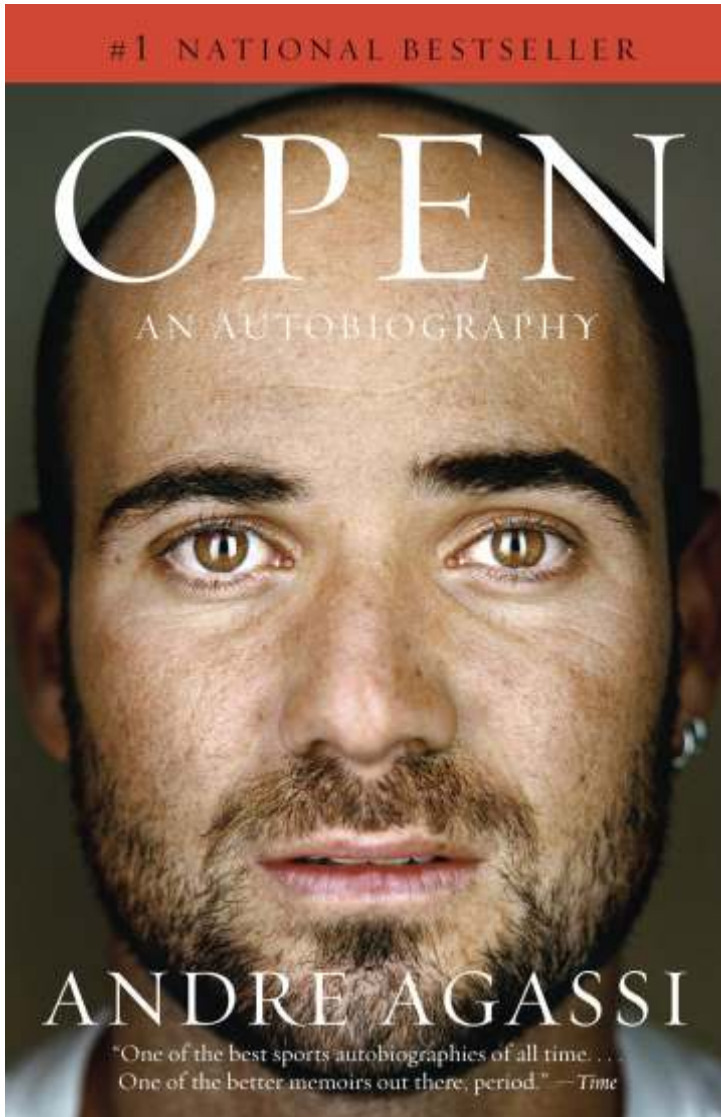
with the chessboard of Global Politics, you are learning so much about more than just the history of the Second World War! You learn about the mindsets of British Politicians in the 1940s, or see the inner workings of Niels Bohr's mind. This is a gem of genre-bending greatness that is truly a must for every bookshelf!

With that, we are done! Whether you think of it as a chance to create your own alternate history, or answer a series of "what if" questions, this book is sure to keep you riveted. Thank you for reading my review of this exceptional book, one that I truly cannot praise enough. If you don't trust my praise, I guess that you'll have to pick the book up and see for yourself! Trust me, you won't regret it!

Book Review:

Open

-by Agastya Rao, Grade X, SNS Gurugram



A lot of people are of the belief that autobiographies are either filled with too many facts and numbers, or they are too philosophical and reflective, or even verbose, self-indulgent and boring. **Perhaps if the autobiography is the story of a unique, feisty person who led an interesting life, it holds the promise of being an exciting peek into the person's life.** One such autobiography that I recently read is a mix of personal

reflections, memoirs of an exciting life story, with some life lessons and philosophy thrown in for good measure. That book is – 'Open' by Andre Agassi.

For those of you who don't know who Andre Agassi is, he was (now retired) one of the best tennis players of his time (86'- 2006). In his illustrious career, he won 61 titles and 8 Grand Slams.



Over and above his sporting laurels, he is a philanthropist as well. He started his own school (a tuition-free school for disadvantaged children) and a Foundation for which he raised 185 Million dollars. Throughout his career, Agassi was famous for making comebacks not only in a game, but also in his career and for being an “irregular”

tennis player for the “punk” way he dressed, famously known for playing the 1988 US Open in denim shorts! Now, let's get on with the book.

From the very start of the book, we learn that Andre's father was a determined man. The candour of the book is apparent in the way we get a peek into the type of man Agassi's father is. **He told Andre that, “if he hit 2,500 balls each day, he would hit 17,500 balls each week, and at the end of the year, he would have hit almost 1 MILLION balls. And a child who hits one million balls a year will be unbeatable”.** This is one of the first examples we see of how hard Andre's father made him work and how he made him train, train and then train some more.

Even though we may not completely agree with the way Andre was forced into spending his entire childhood (and almost the next 15 something years of his life) while reading the book I gained immense respect for that man. **He was driven by tennis, even though the years of being at tennis training often felt prison-like to him.**

Champions often have the support of family and their sacrifices. In Andre's case, his father was a major driving force. The late Emmanuel Agassi (Andre's father) who immigrated from Iran and was also a former Olympic boxer.

Mike Agassi (Mr Emmanuel changed his name after immigrating to America) invented a machine called “the dragon” which would teach Andre the proper stroke to hit a ball. **He bought a house very far from his place of work, because that was the only place where he could afford a house with a yard big enough for an ideal tennis court.**

He even painted the cement walls of his house green- because green

is the colour of a tennis court! His sole criterion for buying a house was whether the house had the dimensions to fit a tennis court. Interestingly, his father also used to string Jimmy Connors' (A tennis legend) racquets.

In India (and I don't mean to be stereotypical or hurt anyone's feelings), there are countless parents who want their children to become doctors or engineers, but Emmanuel Agassi wanted Andre to be a tennis player, and he knew it from when Agassi turned 1. How so?



Well, while watching a table tennis game, his father noticed that Andre would move only his eyes and never his head. So, he made a mobile above his crib with tennis balls and taped a table tennis paddle to his hands and encouraged Andre to hit the balls. And thus began Andre's journey as a tennis player.

You learn very quickly that Andre never wanted to be a tennis player. In fact, quite to the contrary, he said that he hated playing tennis. He also adds that "no one ever asked him if he wanted to play tennis; let alone make it his life".

Andre's narrative also mentions that he was partially responsible for this happening as he had helped build his father's backyard tennis court. He very poetically puts it and says, "he helped feed the chain

gang that built his cell”, He “helped paint the white lines that would confine me”. (Andre used to bring fast food for the people helping his father build the tennis court).

Fast forward a few years, and Agassi became one of the best junior tennis players of the time. He was even sent off to a tennis boarding school called **Bollettieri Academy**. It was here that he begins his tennis career soon after with a world ranking of 610 in the world. He takes an interesting perspective and says that now there are only 609 people in the world who are better than him. He started a successful career at the age of 16.



Fast forward many more years and we see Andre winning countless grand slams, but then, in true Comeback Kid style, we see his ranking plummet to 141, and then working hard to become a top-10 player once more.

We also see him in a low point in his life where he takes drugs and is about to be suspended for it but lies about taking them and says he accidentally drank a soda which was spiked with drugs from one of his crew members. While the fault could partially be attributed to one of his crew members who encouraged Andre to experiment with

drugs, Andre later apologised for doing so and for lying about doing them. Andre is candid enough to admit to his errors, which indirectly gives us a lesson to beware of the company we keep.

To sum it all up, *Open* by Andre Agassi not only gave an insight into what Andre's life was and the hard work he put into becoming a tennis player, but it also shows how mentally and physically stressing the life of a tennis player truly is.

In fact, I would say that hitting 2,500 tennis balls a day can make you practically unbeatable - after all practice makes perfect, doesn't it? *Andre Agassi was one of the best and most unique tennis players, from playing a grand slam in jeans, to playing a tennis match against Roger Federer on a helipad of a skyscraper in Dubai, it is really a testament to the complex yet undeniably great person Andre Agassi is.*



OPEN (Get it?) this book and it will fill you with the determination to be better every day, and if that isn't enough to get you to read the book, here is another selling point - it was number 1 on the New York Times Bestseller list:)

Intersectionality & Feminism

-by Jiya Gaur, Grade X, SNS Gurugram

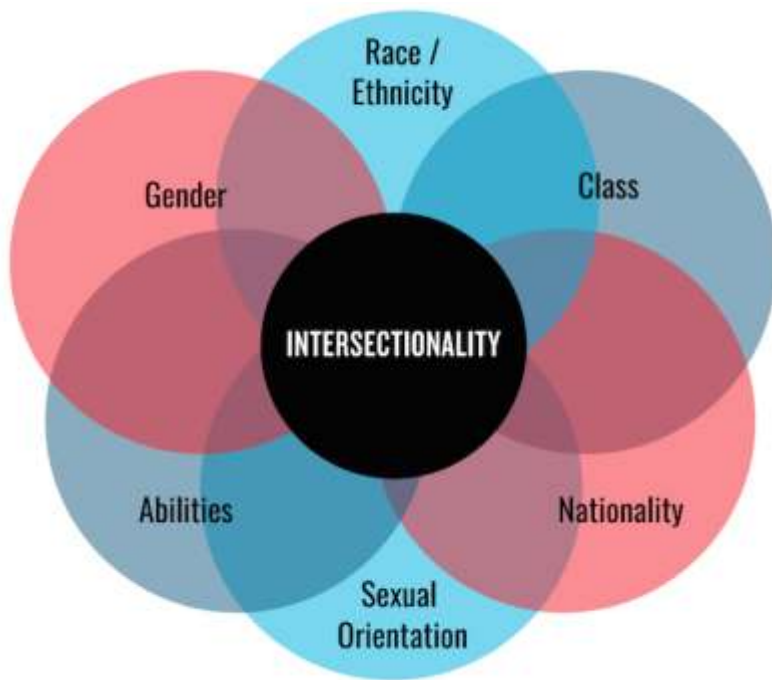


Everything is changing with a velocity so fast that we cannot even fully fathom it. These sudden changes are leaving us numb and raw. **The persistent pandemic, climate change and fight for basic human rights and respect seems to have absolutely no end.** In a society where people merely assume that each individual has the same privilege and rights as you and I do, it is proving to be extremely hard to bring a change in whatever is reluctant.

We have comedians on youtube mocking and demeaning people over the clothes they wear and the way they behave, pretending as though it's one big joke. Rappers and musicians will use mortifying words thinking they have a license to do so. **Despite the fact that there have been cases of assault and harassment that have shook people to the very core, victim blaming is still existent.** We are living in a world where protecting

yourselves with a mask during a pandemic transforms into a revolt of "my body my choice" and yet when those who can reproduce, be it women, trans men or non-binary individuals, abortion is banned. These double standards erase whatever dignity and glimmer of hope we could have had.

All words have a story. The term Intersectionality was first coined in 1989 by a Columbia law professor and one of the United State's leading critical race theorists, Kimberlé Crenshaw. By definition, it refers to the interconnecting and often overlapping systems of oppression.



At the very beginning, the term was intended to account for experiences wherein racial and gender oppression are involved. With time however it has evolved into a far more inclusive term which addresses aspects beyond gender and race such as sexuality, class, religion, gender identity, age and immigration status.

When we think of Feminism in its entirety, we need to understand

that it is not a movement to hoist women on a flag post higher than men. It is for equality. In order to liberate women from the chains of patriarchy in our society, we need to address all the intersections and put our best foot forward against oppression.

It is not only a movement for straight, white, cisgender and able-bodied sisters but it is for every one of us. Intersectional feminism is for people of colour.

It is for those who have been exterminated from history textbooks and replaced with the names of only a few white feminists. The names Audre Lorde, Sojourner Truth and Gloria Anzaldua are unheard of by most.

The initial need for intersectionality began when a lack of visibility Black women faced came into light. **To this day, mainstream feminism is limited to and centred upon the experiences of upper class heterosexual white women.** For a movement that supposedly renders all women, it seems to focus only on those who already have their needs met.

The whole motive of intersectionality is to listen to different kinds of feminists, not just ones like yourself. This isn't just for the sake of it or for some sort of performative activism. It makes complete sense to make what you are fighting for intersectional so it can cater to everyone around you. You will have multiple experiences where people with multiple identities will come together. Making yourself open and inclusive is something that will help us all.

Oppression does not exist in the same manner for everybody. It is subjective. There are multiple layers which overlap and bisect. This is exactly what intersectionality aims to explain. This also means that

feminism is a reflection of the experiences of people with complex layers in terms of class, caste, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity and cultural background. Intersectional feminism recognizes all these differences and diversities and takes into consideration the different kinds of oppression. **To put it another way, intersectional feminism takes on the dominant idea of feminism which is mainly composed of white, cisgender, heterosexual, ableist and all other such aspects.**



Yet another important prospect that one needs to keep in mind while talking about intersectionality is privilege. This is necessary because it is easier to point out who and why people are oppressed rather than pointing out who the oppressor is and how exactly their dominance is continuing because of the privileged status they hold in society.

Without an understanding of privilege and its impact, the entire feminist movement cannot call itself anti-oppressional. This does not mean that the issues faced by the privileged are not important and hold no value. It is not to undermine them.

What it does mean is that those issues alone do not define the entirety of feminism. Overlooking the issues of everyone else is

skimming over layers and layers of centuries of oppression. It rubs out and invalidates the experience of countless others.

Each system has its flaws. Let's talk about India. Intersectional feminism seems to be failing us here. The dehumanization and degradation begins at the very first step because boys are preferred over girls at birth.

National crime records detail the amount of rape, sexual harassment and trafficking each day is harrowing to even contemplate about. We live under the thumb of patriarchy. Married women are subjected to violence by their husbands and even before the wedding in greed of dowry. Sexual harassment at workplaces, be it a bowtie collar institution or a construction worksite is rampant.

In film and music, women are objectified. We are treated as though we are subhuman or inferior. The main agenda of any feminist movement should be to create a community where women can choose for themselves without being feeded a script of lines to say and programmed with actions to perform. Yet, we are sustained by being told that women can simply choose sexist and degrading practices which will help empower them under our patriarchal set up.

Intersectionality. Feminism. Intersectional Feminism. This is a very broad concept yet innumerable aspects are yet to be covered. We have terfs- trans-exclusionary feminists. We have mainstream feminism which only covers the needs of a few.

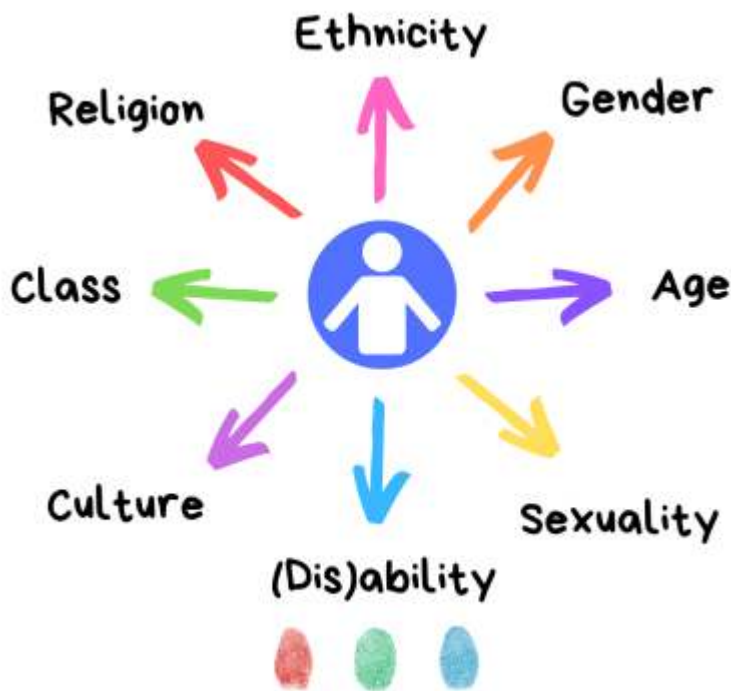
The entire point of Intersectionality is to include everyone. Unless we reach the point wherein everyone's needs are taken into consideration, this will be practically pointless. We haven't quite

reached the ultimate goal yet.

In this article itself, there are definitely many perspectives and points I may have left out which only further proves how wide this concept is.

Freedom and equality from any and every form of oppression can only be achieved when intersectionality reaches all those who have not been considered yet.

So what can we do until then? For starters, let's all check our privilege. Educating ourselves and reading about the history of oppression, spreading awareness and amplifying the voices of those who need it most without speaking over them can possibly make wonders. This isn't just about you and I, it's about all of us!



The Fall of Facebook

-by Anshika Kansal, Grade IX IGCSE, SNS Gurugram



Facebook had been established by Mark Zuckerberg when he was a student at the prestigious University of Harvard. He had initially developed the app for college students as a social networking service. It allowed them to interact with each other and share information with their family and friends. Anyone over the age of 13 with a verified email address was able to be part of the Facebook community by 2006. With over a billion users globally Facebook soon became one of the world's largest social networking sites.

Unfortunately recently an uncovered series of hidden documents have discovered that point that the firm's finest days are behind it.

Teenagers make up the bulk of social media users across all platforms. Teenage Facebook app users in the United States have dropped by 13% since 2019 and were

projected to drop by 45% in the upcoming two years, which contributed to the dip in daily users in the company's most financially viable ad market.

During the same period of time young adults between the ages of 20 to 30 were estimated to fall by 4%. **To make matters worse the younger a user was, the less they used the app on a regularly engaged wire app.**

The message became clear as day, **Facebook was rapidly losing popularity and traction with younger generations, and that too at a much faster than anticipated rate.** The number of new signups is rapidly declining and a series of slides shown during a meeting amongst a bunch of researchers part of Facebook Inc. demonstrated that young people were taking considerably longer to join Facebook than in the past.

This information was particularly troubling. **According to the study, most individuals born before the year 2000 had registered a Facebook account by the age of 19 or 20. However, most of the population born after were not expected to join Facebook until they were considerably older, possibly at the age of 24 or 25, if at all.**

Even after the availability of such information and statistics Mark Zuckerberg recently announced that he wishes Facebook caters more to a younger audience although the chances of this happening seem beyond the bounds of reality.

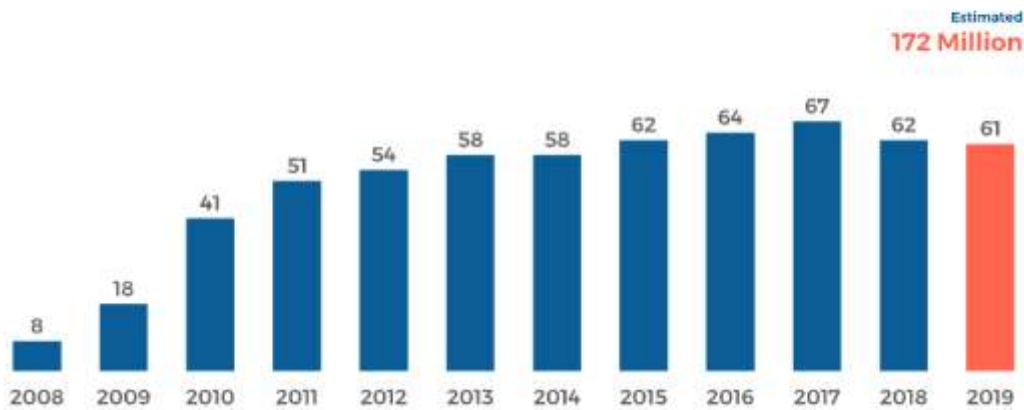
I don't think he realizes that executing this won't be as simple as it may seem because of Facebook's current user base. Most people my age find Zuckerberg's decision-making is immoral. Zuckerberg and the company have received a lot of backlash for their participation in

political squabbles and dramas, such as in 2020 when Zuckerberg opted to keep Facebook posts from former President Donald Trump up that looked to threaten protestors.

Several young adults have always seen Facebook as a site for older folks and none of us want our parents and grandparents to find their feeds full of our posts and ours to be smothered with memes they think are hilarious. I strongly disagree that Facebook can attract younger users because there are various alternative sites to which one may turn to which provide more benefits than Facebook.

Facebook Usage

TOTAL U.S. POPULATION 12+
% USING FACEBOOK



The Rise of Electric Vehicles

-by Agastya Rao, Grade X, SNS Gurugram



There was once a time when people didn't trust electricity and a time when they shunned electric vehicles. Well, this is changing, for the better. With new electric car companies coming up every year (Notable examples being Rivian and Lucid Motors) and newsworthy instances like Tesla gaining a market valuation of \$1 Trillion US Dollars in 2021, it seems like we are in for the start of an "Electric Age."

Tesla delivered over 900,000 cars in 2021, with 310,000 Teslas sold in the first Six months of 2021, with more than 120,000 sold in California alone (For reasons you will see later in the article). Well, you get the point- Electric Vehicles are getting popular, and not just in the USA, but worldwide. This begs the question – are we ready to transform entirely to electric vehicles? (and if yes, should we?)

Types of Electric Vehicles-

Before we get into why electric vehicles have become popular, we need to understand the 3 major types of electric vehicles (“EVs”) that are currently available:

1. Plug-In Hybrid EVs- These electric vehicles are ones that use petrol/diesel but also use battery powered electricity. Electricity is also used to run the car. These come with both electric L2 charging ports and fuel ports.

2. Battery Electric Vehicles- These are solely powered by the battery which is charged by a charger.

3. Hybrid Electric Vehicles- These are powered by petrol/diesel but electricity assists in powering the car, however these run mainly on conventional fuel and cannot be charged by a charge. This does keep emissions low.

Why have EV's risen in popularity?

In the quest for clean energy, electric vehicles have become a key part in preventing climate change. Now it's not just companies that are promoting electric vehicles, but various countries' governments as well. It seems that the entire world has been gripped by “electric car fever”. According to me there are 3 key reasons for this popularity:

1. Climate Friendly

The first option, and the most cliché, but logical, is that EVs are climate friendly. This is an age where there is enough awareness about the planet to make more and more people climate-conscious

in their lifestyle choices. From switching to turning vegan or eating less meat, to decreasing/stopping the use of single-use plastic, it is a welcome development to see people changing their ways, for the better.



One of these instances includes buying electric cars. People consider them far more climate-friendly than your regular diesel or petrol cars. I'm assuming that this may make people feel better about themselves while they are at it.

I am not saying that people buy them to feel better about themselves, but it could be a major contributing factor (and the earth is definitely not complaining about this happy side-effect). **To make a long story short, electric vehicles are more climate friendly than vehicles powered by petrol or diesel, which helps the Earth, and is a major factor to add value to the idea of buying an electric car.**

2. They are "in trend"-

Now this one may not be the most practical or "scientific" reason in support of electric vehicles, but I believe that being trendy is a major reason behind buying electric cars. **I mean, people make heads turn driving their new electric ford mustang.** I would go as far as to say

that electric cars are the new Ferraris. More people are buying Teslas and various electric sports cars and other cars because they are popular. The fact that so many YouTubers and celebrities have purchased the Tesla Model X has added to their popularity.

3. Cost effective

Another major factor for people buying electric vehicles boils down the essential aspect of the cost. Electric cars generally have lower fuel and maintenance costs. Sure, the overall average upfront cost of an Electric vehicle may be around 50,000 US Dollars, but CNBC reported that electric car users spend an average of 60% less than the average “regular” car user.

In fact, servicing costs of electric trucks and cars are an average of 30% lower than similar petrol/diesel cars, due to lesser parts to be replaced.

Another important factor that brings their costs down is the tax deduction provided by Governments of various countries on the purchase of electric cars.

The most popular among them being various tax deductions or rebates such as the CVRP or the Clean Vehicle Rebate Program which is applicable in the state of California in the USA, which offers a deduction of upto US\$ 7000 on the purchase/lease on an electric vehicle via rebates.

The State of California also has a Clean Fuel Reward which can provide savings of up to \$750 on the lease/purchase of an electric vehicle eligible for the criteria.

The Big Players - Electric Vehicle Companies (Tesla, Rivian, Lucid, GM...)

i) The number 1 and most popular EV maker has to be- TESLA.



The common misconception about Tesla is that it was founded by Elon Musk. However, it was actually started by Martin Eberhard and Marc Tarpinning. They received funding to the tune of US\$ 30 Million from Elon Musk at the start.

They first released an Electric sports car called the Tesla Roadster. The company later had an IPO (Initial Public Offering) and have since released 4 models of cars. The company, now headed by Musk, recently hit a valuation of over US\$ 1 trillion and is one of the most successful car and electric car companies ever.

ii) Rivian-

Compared to Tesla, Rivian is a fairly new company. Rivian is owned in part by Amazon, who hold a 20% stake in the company. Ford Motors also own some stake in the company. Originally started in 2009 by Mr

RJ Scaringe, a graduate of MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) they recently had an IPO which valued them at over US\$100 Billion.



Scaringe had originally envisioned an idea for an electric sports car, but later changed the idea to that of an electric SUV (Sports Utility Vehicle and Pick Up Truck. While their stock has dropped in recent times, they are seen as a viable competitor to Tesla in the future.

iii) Lucid Motors-



Next up are up and coming company Lucid. Lucid is notable as the biggest possible competitor to Tesla, with their first car, the Lucid Air being seen as a direct competitor to the Tesla Model S. (Lucid Air just

beat the Tesla Model S' mileage by roughly 160 KM, by clocking out at a mileage of a shocking about 830 kilometres)! Lucid is also taking the electric car market by storm, with a niche in the market focusing on being a "luxury" electric car maker. Lucid has only recently begun delivering cars, but it seems to have a promising future. The next Mercedes Benz of Electric cars, perhaps?

iv) Lastly, there are a whole bunch of companies like **General Motors, Ford and Volkswagen** which have or will soon be releasing electric cars. I haven't included them in the list because they are mostly non-electric car makers or are still in the developmental phase.

What about Petrol and Diesel Cars- The Electric conversion by GM, Ford, Mustang, Jaguar.

Now that Electric Cars are becoming popular, will traditional car makers become obsolete? Well, not really but there is a slight possibility of them becoming obsolete.

Most car makers are now planning to adapt and slowly phase out their current petrol and diesel cars, over the next 10-20 years. Many companies have been releasing electric versions of existing cars in an attempt to adapt.



Jaguar I Pace

Good examples of this are Ford, who released an electric version of their Ford Mustang car, and Jaguar who released an all-electric car called the Jaguar I Pace. South Korean car maker Hyundai have already released an electric car called the Hyundai Kona and are slated to release another all-electric car in 2022 called the IONIQ 5.

These examples do demonstrate that car manufacturers are ready and in fact are slowly but steadily making the transition towards hybrid and fully electric cars.

In fact, Jaguar has announced that they will sell only electric cars from 2025, and Volvo shall sell only electric cars from 2030. But are companies taking a turn to only electric cars too early?

I would say that 2025 is a little too early to switch to an all-electric business model, but somewhere around 2030 would be a good time to switch to all-electric model, as petrol and diesel cars are soon to be phased out, first by hybrids, and then by all electric cars.

Any downsides to electric cars?

Yes, there are a few downsides to electric cars.

1. The time factor: Electric cars take considerable amount of time to charge. The time it takes to fully charge an electric car isn't exactly fast, which means if your car doesn't have any charge, you can't just hop in it and drive off as you would in a diesel/petrol car.

2. Lack of chargers- While electric car chargers are scattered across the USA and a bunch of other countries, they haven't exactly spread across the whole world to make them as accessible as a petrol pump. And yes, while this will obviously improve over the next few years, it

would still be quicker to fill your car up with petrol and drive off rather than wait for a 30 minutes to an hour for your car to charge. As CNBC reported, there are 46,000 commercial charging stations as opposed to the 150,000 fuel stations in the USA.

Electric Vehicles Scams- The Case of NIKOLA-

Electric vehicles have their fair share of scams, the biggest one being the scam of NIKOLA, an electric truck maker. Nikola was an electric truck making startup which was sued by the SEC (Securities and Exchanges Commission) and was made to pay US\$ 125 Million to settle a case of defrauding investors.



They defrauded investors and raised more than US\$ 500 Million after claiming that they made their own hydrogen fuels and received billions of dollars' worth of orders for their trucks. Their fraud

continued with their promotional video where they showed their truck powered by hydrogen cells moving, when it was later discovered that it was in fact, just rolling down a hill.

They clearly made fools out of everyone, as General Motors was about to invest more than US\$ 2 Billion for a stake in the company. Since the level of awareness about new technology is not widespread, such scams are a cautionary tale.

EVs and India- the MG and Kia Story

In the last few years, India has become one of the hottest markets for electric cars. Electric car companies have risen in India the past few years. With companies like Morris Garages (MG) and Kia releasing Electric vehicle hybrids and all electric vehicles in the past few years with great success, the Electric vehicle market in India has become incredibly promising.

MG sold over 40,000 units of their cars in India last year and their sales have gone up by 43% from 2020 to 2021. While other electric car makers are slowly making their way to the Indian market, the future of electric vehicles in India is promising!

Electric Scooters- The Indian Story

All this time, we have been talking about electric cars, but we forgot a very new and exciting component of electric vehicles - electric scooters - which are becoming increasingly popular in India. Ather has released affordable electric scooters called the 450 X which has been met with interest. Ather has also received an investment of \$56 Million from Hero MotoCorp, for a roughly 30% stake in the company, showing the promise of future growth in this market.

Another similar product coming soon is the Ola electric S1 scooter which has also captured the interest of the market. It is noteworthy that electric scooters are still testing uncharted waters, but public reception has been promising for them.

What the future holds...

Electric vehicles are becoming more popular and more advanced by the day. With electric vehicles moving from cars to trucks to scooters, who knows what the future has in store for electric vehicles? Perhaps very soon we will have fully electric boats.

What we do know is that electric vehicles have a shot at stopping or at least decreasing/preventing climate change. If we have a chance to save the planet, why shouldn't we take it?



Wildlife Photography

-by Krishiv Nanda, Grade IX, SNS Gurugram



I Krishiv Nanda born on 26th August, 2007 started visiting Tiger National Reserves since I was 4 years old with my family. Soon I realized that there is something about the wild which fascinated me and I just wanted to go back over and over again. To the extent that now I tell my parents that I would rather go on wild life safaris than any other holiday destinations.

It's the feeling of seeing such beauty roaming freely in the wild. The power some of these animals possess and the various methodologies adapted by each of them to go about life, is what pulls me to see them over and over again.

My father bought me my first camera when I was 10 years old. Guess what, it was a Nikon D750. I was thrilled to hear that I had one of the best cameras in my possession, and wanted to learn so much more about it. I even went ahead and took up photography classes to learn the various methods of using the gadget in my possession, along with

understanding frames, etc.

My first experience of clicking a wild cat, a Tiger was at Jim Corbett National Park in the Dhikala Zone. We were there for two nights, 30 kms deep inside the jungle and seeing a female tiger swim across the river and marking her territory right ahead of our vehicle, Wow!! That was simply amazing.

Then I just didn't stop. Numerous trips to Jim Corbett, Ranthambore National Park, Tadoba, Pench, Jhalana, Bera in Jawai Rajasthan.

I was fortunate to have visited all of the precious locations several times and here I present some of my experiences and my journey towards becoming a successful wildlife photographer.

One thing I've learnt is true, from a very famous saying "The tiger has seen you a hundred times, before you see it once".



Laila Tigress

Zone 5 Ranthambore National Park

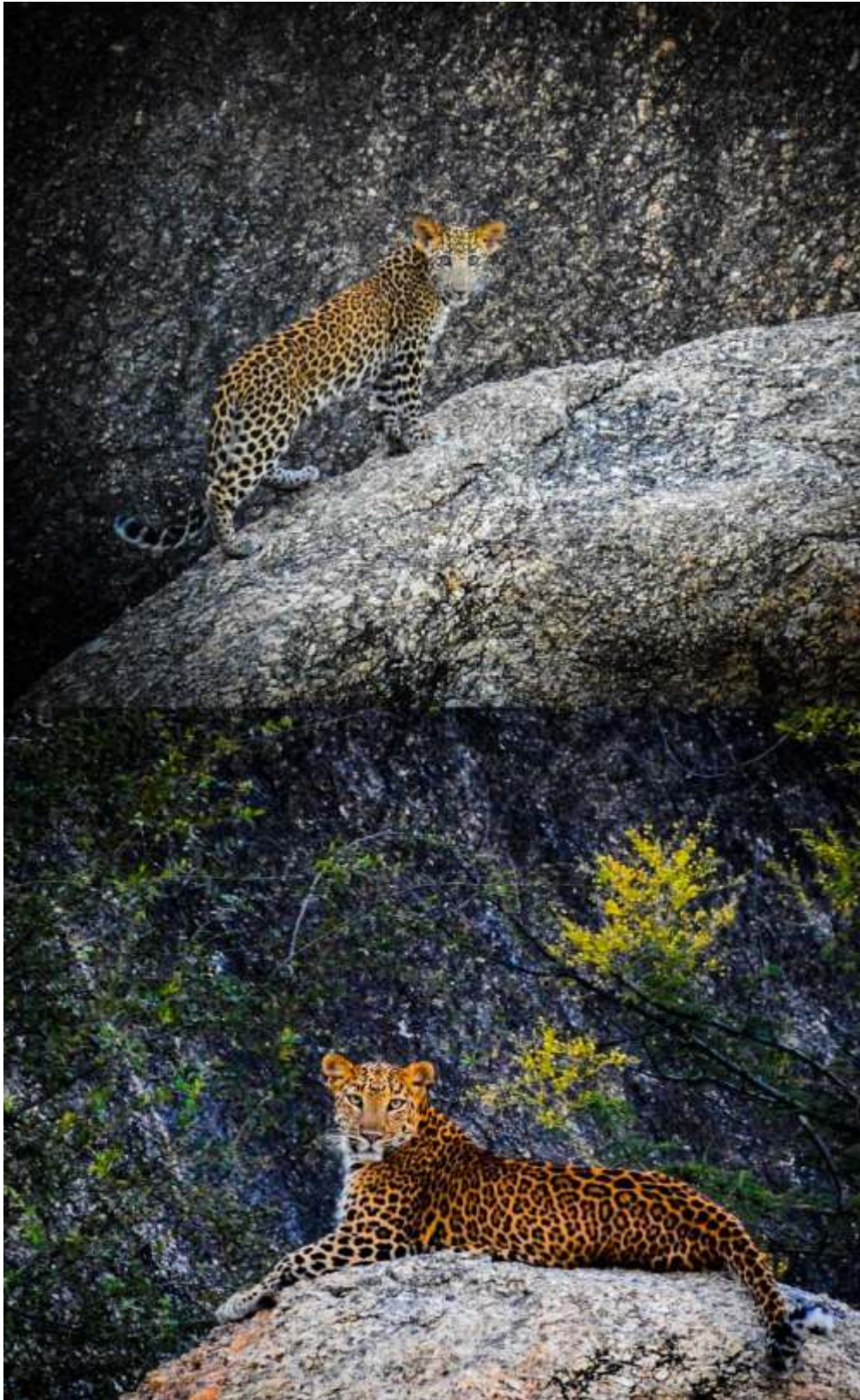
Tire puncture!!! Tire puncture !!! our driver says in the middle of the jungle. So all of us got out of the car and waited till the time he replaced the tire with another one. After fixing the puncture we again sat in our gypsy and continued our morning safari and just as we moved 500 m we saw tigress Laila heading towards us!! These are some shots of her looking at my camera



Jivda Female and cub

Waiting waiting waiting...for the female leopard that was sighted going inside its cave in the morning... It had been around 30 minutes now and there was not even a sight of the leopard... Our driver was confident that the female would come out of the cave at any moment and suggested that we should wait for some more time. Then my brother sitting next to me says "leopard leopard leopard !!!" and my eyes went directly to where he was pointing and then we saw the

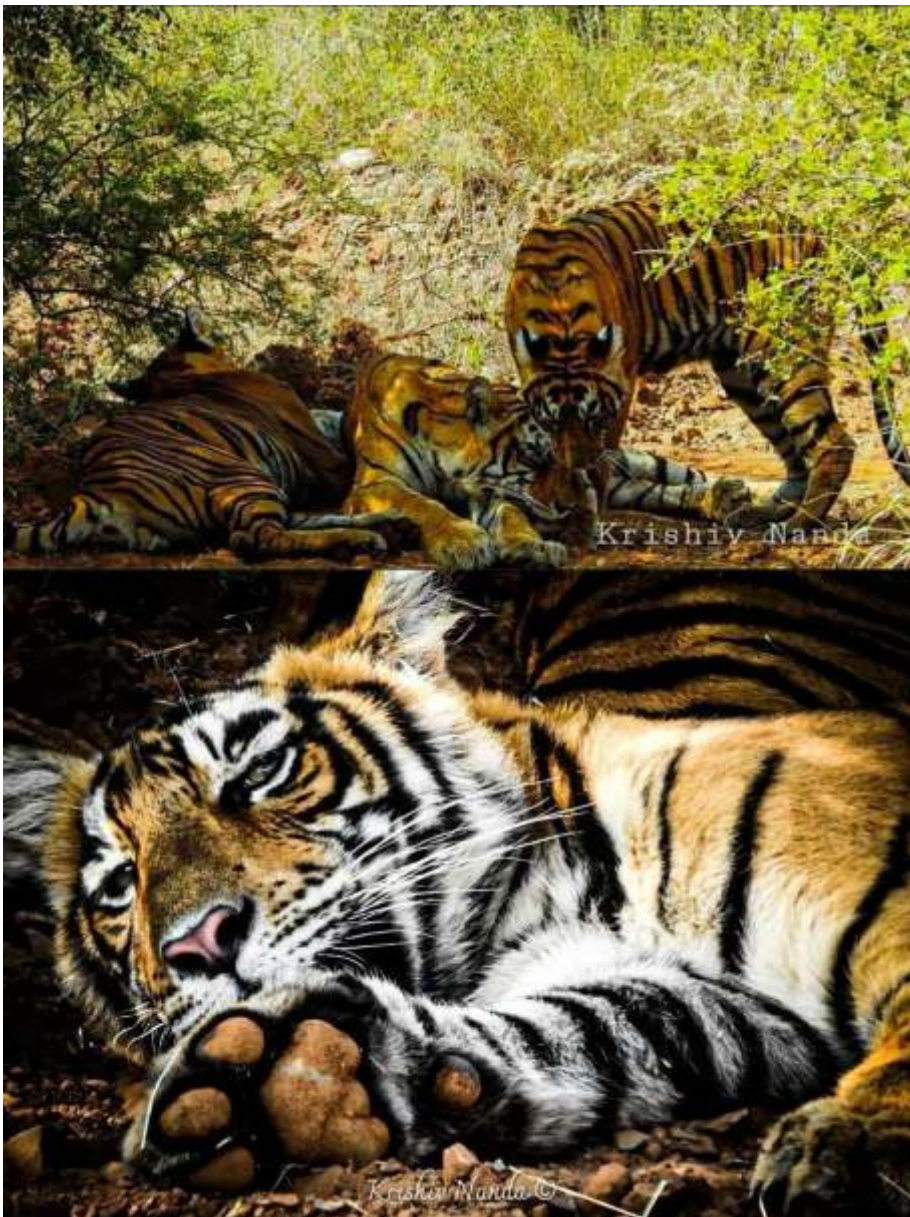
female and her 2 cubs coming out of there cave and sitting on different rocks





Tigress Ladli with cubs

It was a hot sunny day in Ranthambore National Park... and we were expecting Ladli to be sitting in a water hole with her cubs...but after checking all of them and searching every corner of the jungle our hopes were shattered... With about 45 minutes left our driver decided to give "high point" a last chance...Then our driver screams "Tiger on the road, Tiger on the road" and we see Ladli lying on the track in the hot sun...These are some shots of her and her cubs



E Pluribus Unum



193 Member States <> One United Nations

JANUARY, 2022



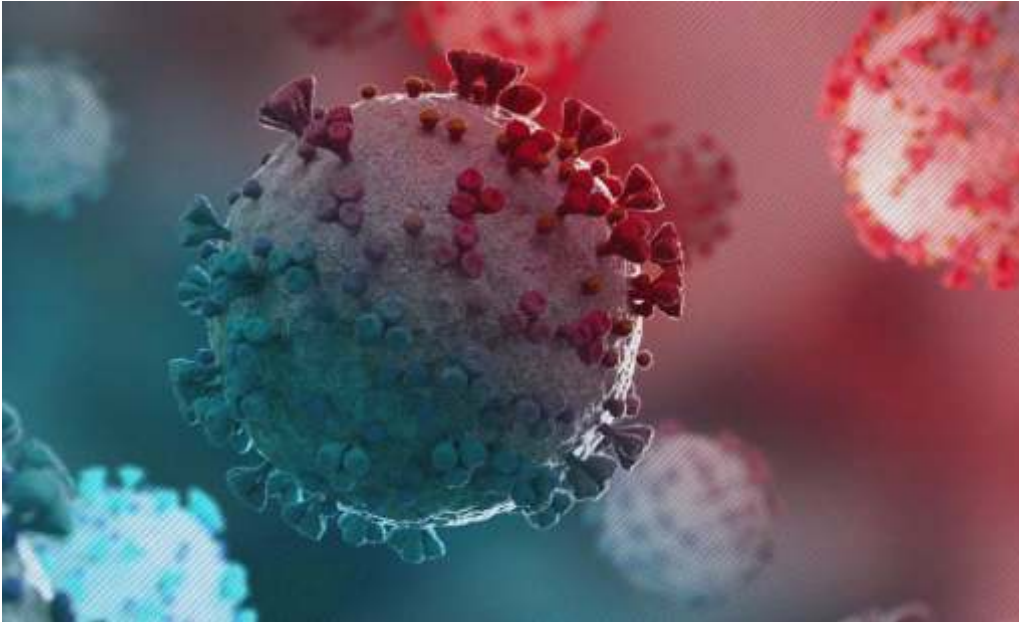
Tigress Shakti

Shakti!! The young tigress from Zone 4 of Ranthambore. We saw her proudly marking her territory, which she has taken over from her mother. Then she had just begun her journey towards motherhood. Now shes the proud mother of 3 lovely cubs in the same zone and bravely protects them from any harm, and is being the perfect mother to them!!



The Omicron Variant

-by Maanya Malhotra, Grade X, SNS Gurugram



COVID-19: A horrible disease, that has controlled our lives far too much for almost two years now. Almost a year ago, we acquired our first weapon against it, the vaccines. A year in, we still have not been able to make it go away. A virus that can be killed by soap, is killing people.

And unfortunately its still going to be here for a bit, if not too long. As the world bears the weight of yet another covid wave, that is the Omicron variant's wave, we have flashbacks to the horrible Delta wave, which ground the Indian System to a halt. Thankfully, we can say with surety now that Omicron has not been as bad as Delta, probably due to its milder nature and owing to the fact that people are vaccinated now.

The first case of the now-spreading Omicron variant was detected on 8 November in Gauteng, which is the smallest province in South Africa. Initially it was called variant

B.1.1.529, subsequently on 26 November 2021 it was dubbed as the Omicron variant.

Here are some popular facts and myths about omicron:

Myth: Vaccines do not work against Omicron

Fact: Vaccines are offering the best available protection against Omicron.

Myth: Omicron is just like common cold

Fact: Omicron is much more dangerous than common cold.

Myth: Previous infection provides immunity from Omicron.

Fact: Omicron can reinfect people who have previously had COVID-19.

Myth: With Omicron being less severe, we are nearing the end of the pandemic.

Fact: The end of the pandemic is not in sight just yet.

It was interesting to see why Nu and Xi had been jumped while naming major variants after greek letters. Logically, after Delta, Nu should have been the next variant, however WHO skipped 'Nu' as it sounded to much like 'New' which would confuse people. 'Xi' was skipped as it is a common surname, and naming a COVID-19 variant after a surname is not exactly something an Internationally acclaimed body would want to do.

Here is a timeline that describes the path of Omicron traversed till now very precisely:

4th November 2021- South African scientists begin seeing PCR tests

where there is an S-Gene target failure, which was reason for concern.

14th-23rd November 2021- Over 70% of sequenced samples from Gauteng province in South Africa were of Omicron making it the dominant variant in the province.

25th November 2021- The variant is disclosed to public, at a virtual press conference. At that point in time, there were 87 cases in 5 countries and 990 probable cases, where South Africa had the most confirmed cases with the number being at 77.

26th November 2021- There were 96 confirmed cases in several countries, some being England, Botswana, Hong Kong and Israel.

27th November 2021- First 2 cases in UK are announced

28th November 2021- 2 cases were detected in Sydney (Australia). The South African President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the nation and highlighted the course of action. He also requested the countries who had closed their borders to reopen. The affairs ministry of South Africa issued a statement, 'Excellent science should be applauded and not punished'.

29th November 2021- India announced that a portion of the stock of its own vaccine (under the aegis of COVAX) shall be shipped to African nations that are gripped by the spread.

30th November 2021- Japan and France report their first case of Omicron. Xi Jinping pledges 30 million doses to Africa, with 400 million more to follow, as a response to the situation of Global Vaccine Inequity.

1st December 2021- USA, Saudi Arabia, Ireland, Norway, South Korea, Nigeria and Ghana announce their first cases.

2nd December 2021- UAE announces its first Omicron case. Singapore preliminarily reports its first two cases.

3rd December 2021- Malaysia announced its first case.

4th December 2021- South Korea battled Omicron and Delta surges after a much-feared superspreader event.

6th December 2021- Fiji confirmed its first two cases of the variant.

8th December 2021- WHO announces that the variant has been detected in nearly 57 countries. Pakistan reported its first suspected case.

9th December 2021- South Africa sees 110% rise and Cuba reports its first case. 13th December 2021- China, Puerto Rico and Pakistan confirm their first cases.

14th December 2021- Algeria reports its first case.

16th December 2021- New Zealand, Indonesia and the State of Palestine report their first case of Omicron.

19th December 2021- Netherlands become the first European country to enter lockdown due to Omicron.

26th December 2021- Omicron is in at least 115 countries.

4th January 2022- According to WHO Omicron is present in 128 country. It also states that Omicron does not cause severe pulmonary

damage like the prior variants.

6th January 2022- India reports its first Omicron related death. This was a 75 year old man with other comorbidities.

12th January 2022- WHO predicts that in 6-8 weeks, half of Europe would have caught Omicron.

To conclude, Omicron is wreaking havoc and our only weapon against it in this long-drawn fight is vaccination. Even WHO has been telling everyone to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

As COVID 19 rises globally, it is concerning that UK and South Africa are the worst-hit. Governments cannot impose harsh lockdowns, as they cannot afford any more damage to the economy.

Schools are still running online in most countries. UK has taken a surprisingly laid-back approach to fighting Omicron, with Boris Johnson making mask-wearing non mandatory.

India is still fighting with weekend lockdowns in place in Delhi. Schools are shut, workplaces are on work-from-home, events are max-capped.

All we can hope for is that with teenagers getting vaccines now, this all just blows over soon.

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