The Oliphant

WELHAM BOYS' SCHOOL

FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

Think about it "We live in an age when unnecessary things are our only necessities."   -Oscar Wilde

EDITORIAL

Filling the shoes of the past Editors-in-Chief was a dream I wished would become a reality. However, I still feel that I am taking a plunge into the unknown. Especially under these circumstances, unlike past eleventh graders taking over this role, this transition is accompanied by prodigious uncertainty. At this crossroad, I feel like I have to wake up from a seven-month-long slumber and ask questions which I doubt other editors ever had to ask. Grade 11 is one of those times when we figure out how we want our last year of school to be and collect cherished memories. I regret missing out on the slow transition into the role of Editor-in-chief and enjoying the numerous school events with my batchmates. All in all, the time that we lost was one of the most defining ones and major decisions are yet to be made. Now, we venture forth with nothing but ambiguity as our gaslight in the fog.

Following in the footsteps of my predecessors, I read past editorials to find inspiration before I penned this piece. I hoped to understand the significance and historical prestige of this magazine. I have been told that it is the 'voice of the people', but during the pandemic we need it to be something more. The traditional cohort of students connected by a fabric of trivial yet essential things such as morning assemblies, inter-house competitions and cheering for the various school teams, has been divided into tiny forums on social media. Losing that link has been detrimental for everyone. Students are plagued by nostalgia to return to the fields and hostels, and resume those nightly strolls along the Marine Drive. After an elaborate 'online' attempt to stop our world from drifting apart, the need to reforge this link is even more of a priority.

Sitting at home we think about coming back to school and remember the best of times. It gets most of us to board a long train of thought. Various ideas are embedded in these memories; they are possible answers to the question all of us ask: how do we want our school to grow? With the astonishing amount of time on our hands, maybe this is the best way to navigate through the obscurity clouding what is yet to come. I hope you take the time to write about what you think and send it to us. After all, the board aims to serve you along with its intriguing columns, an opportunity to introspect and write about the unique ideas and emotions that connect you to this institution. Remember, the weight your words can carry is only limited by your imagination and in some way, all of us carry Welham within ourselves. Though a requisite is self-belief, no idea is inferior irrespective of its origin, you just need to take pride in expressing it. I hope with the help of the following pages we can make some sense out of this nerve-racking ambiguity and mend the missing link.

On the other hand, some people would say good riddance to the disease that continues to plague most of us. Godspeed to those travelling back to school.

Signing in,
Viraj Lohia
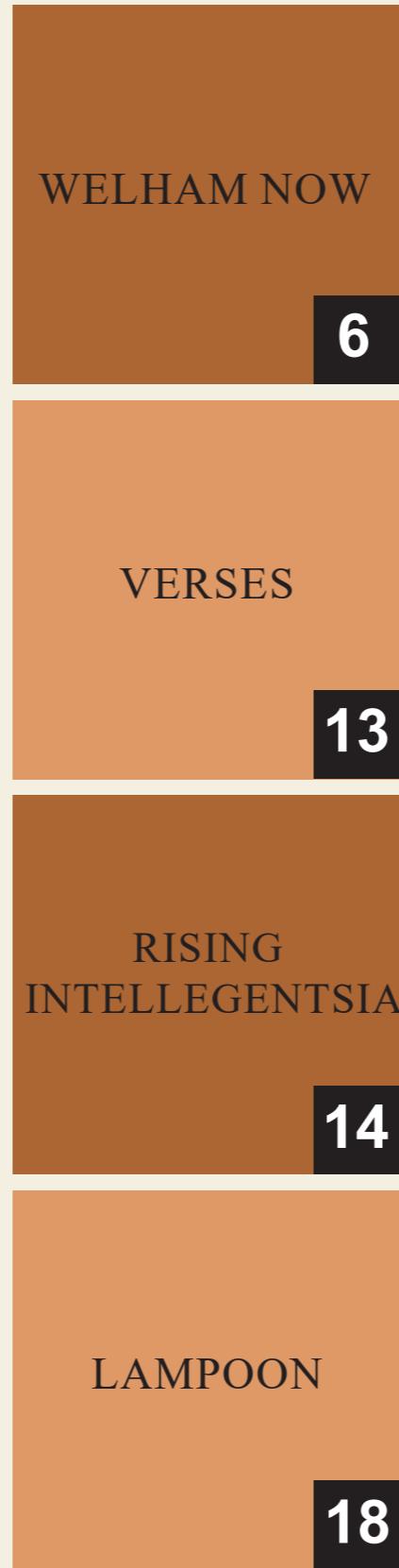
MUSIC REVIEW

Tell me love is endless, don't be so pretentious
Leave me like you do"

Can you imagine writing lines like these at 16? These are one of the many soul-stirring lyrics written by Billie Eilish, a prominent pop-singer and songwriter. She is 18 now and has earned recognition that people associate with artists like Drake, Justin Bieber! She has over 64 million followers on Instagram and an enormous fanbase. 'Bad guy', the single from her album 'When we all fall asleep, where do we go', reached the top of all charts and saved her a seat at the crest. She is the youngest artist ever to win Grammy Awards in all four major categories. But what is it about the music that makes her gain so much attention and appreciation? If I had to describe her music in 3 words I would say that it is unique, edgy and soothing. Having a genre diversified album was certainly a plus one for fans as it ranged from genres such as trap music, electro-pop, indie pop and whatnot. I believe that to rule the music industry you should have something about your music that makes you stand out from the rest. Billie has that capability and she is already wearing the crown. Her music has changed the whole pop industry into something no one would expect. However, many people don't know that she started her career by posting her single, 'Ocean Eyes' at the age of 14. A very important fact about her career is that her brother, Finneas O'Connell is the one that arranges and produces her songs till date. 'Ocean Eyes' became an overnight success and it's not easy to deal with fame especially when you are dealing with depression at the same time, which Billie unfortunately was.

When Billie was young she wanted to become a world-known dancer but due

Album: WhenWe All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?
Singer: Billie Eilish
Producer: FINNEAS

to some serious injuries, she lost her ability to dance and could no longer pursue that profession. Just after this depressing incident, her brother thought of including her in his song, 'Ocean Eyes' which synced flawlessly with her voice. This kicked off to the start of her career and she made collaborations with singers like Khalid and then released another song, ' Lovely' which reached number 64 in the Billboard Top 100 and reached several countries. Billie says her music is affected by a disorder – Synesthesia (a neurological condition in which information meant to stimulate one of your senses stimulates several of your brains). She states that the visuals are just as important as the music. Looking at her album it is clearly visible that every single video of hers is uniquely shot and is beautifully formed in her own mind. She directs her own

videos and takes it all in just one shot which is a real talent. For example, the song "Bury a Friend" gives us a very dark feeling while "Xanny" on the other hand is quite a pastel and white. What stands out in her album are the different aesthetics in each video. For example, when I think of 'You should see me in the crown' I recall spiders, 'All the good girls go to hell' reminds me of fire and feathers and 'bellyache' paints my mind yellow. And this is the exact power of Billie's album. It leaves a mark and conjures unique imagery with every song without blending into a monotone of teenage melancholy.
The lyrics in all of her songs are extraordinary, powerful, thoughtful and very poetic. The words in each song add a whole new meaning to it and the music arranged by her brother behind the scenes gives it perfect support. Another very important reason as to why you should catch up to her music is because she is the future of pop and her style is a class apart when compared to other musicians. She hides her body in layers and layers of baggy clothes and defends it by saying this way the world will never judge her by her body but her music. Not to forget that Billie's voice in her songs is magnificent, magical and unreal. Secondly, this album has 14 songs that have already topped all charts and won many awards. To conclude, this album is something you shouldn't miss out on!

-Savi Singh
 XI

T.V. SERIES REWIEW
DARK

"Yesterday, today and tomorrow are not consecutive, they are connected in a never-ending circle. Everything is connected."

What are your expectations of a time travel story? Movies often experiment with the concept of parallel universes and alternate timelines but take only a linear approach. When we factor in the idea that every character's actions, be it in the past or the present, influences the story in the future, the whole narrative changes. Dark executes this with near perfection and in my opinion, that is what makes it a revolutionary piece of art.

'Dark' is set in the German town of Winden, where a young boy named Mikkel vanishes, 33 years after the disappearance of his father's brother. This brings back to surface the troubling history of the town. We get to know about the relationship between four families and as we delve deeper into the show, intriguing secrets about each generation as well as unexpected connections reveal themselves. Soon the plot develops into an intricate puzzle, jumping from one timeline to the other and confusing the audience with unfathomable twists, something most people love it for.

Moreover, 'Dark' has a myriad of philosophical ideas within its storyline. For example, it made me realize that our perception of things is binary. We let our thoughts be based on dualism. Entrance, exit. Black, white. Good, evil. Everything appears as opposing pairs of the same concept when this is not so. Throughout the plot, there is no clear differentiation between good and evil because the show wanted to convey that everything is just a matter of perspective. It also touches upon the age-old riddle of killing baby Hitler and is able to blend

Creators : Jantje Friese, Baran Bo Odar
Cast : Louis Hoffman, Lisa Vicari
Genre : Mystery / Thriller
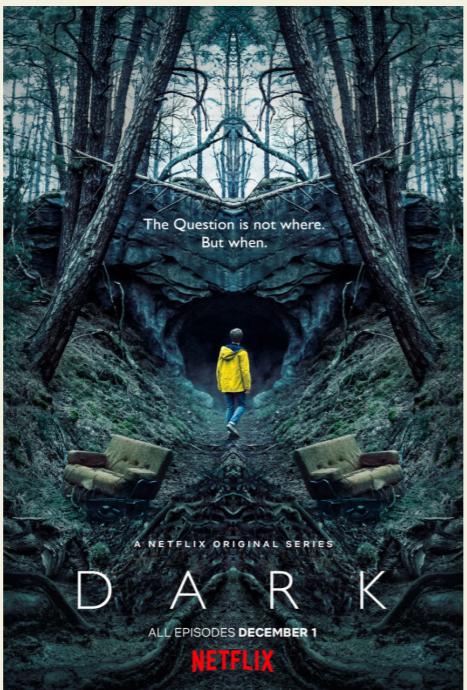
supernatural elements from productions like twin peaks, stranger things and back to the future - all into a fairly different plot. The showrunners have meticulously incorporated symbolism and ensured that it is clearly visible to viewers for example the significance of the number three which indicates the three eras - past, present and future. This is also the logic behind keeping the number of seasons limited to three. Beneath the mystery and obscurity, at the core of dark, lies the very simple message of how we never actually have free will. Dark's storyline is built around the characters trying to control events

in another timeline in the hope that it resolves their problems. Their actions, however, have no effect and they end up causing the same events which they were trying to prevent. A character at a point, comments- "We're not free in what we do, because we're not free in what we want." The story writers of 'Dark' have used this very idea to create a supernatural drama, which even Stephen King recommends as a must-watch (in a tweet). When it comes to filmmaking, the story itself cannot account for a good viewing experience. But the creators have ensured that every aspect is flawless. Be it the stellar cast or the adept background score, every element has been planned and placed in a manner that captivates the audience. Even rain plays a major role by complementing the suspenseful tone of the show. All in all, dark leaves little room for mistakes, a rare accomplishment nowadays making it a timeless series, quite literally.

I think the best way to describe 'Dark' is that it isn't a show you watch, it is rather a show you solve. While interacting with people, I often realized that they considered this series to be too cerebral or confusing. But my perception of it changed as soon as I started watching it. Solving this show is not as challenging as some people might consider it. In fact, just going with the flow will put things into perspective. All you have to do is watch with an open mind and enjoy as each big revelation (numerous by the way) changes your notion of what cinema and storytelling can achieve.

-Arnav Goel
X

MOVIE REVIEW
SOCIAL DILEMMA

In the 21st century, almost everyone uses social media and it plays a very integral role in our life. It is not something which is strictly a fundamental necessity for life, but we have come to include it in our list of necessities as much as any other utility, which is pretty fascinating. The sway of social media in our quotidian life is a critical and intriguing discussion and it is essential to deliberate on it.

There have been a lot of conversations going on regarding mental health, human psychology and why are these related to social media. To portray and elaborate about the relationship between all these, Netflix has come up with a documentary 'The Social Dilemma' which is a phenomenal documentary depicting how social networking websites have influenced our lives, both positively and negatively.

The basic plot of the documentary revolves around how social media companies use people as products so that they can monetize on a large scale. It also reflects how human psychology is used as a medium by these social networking companies to increase their production and monetization. There are many things which are portrayed very beautifully in this documentary and which is extremely captivating to watch. The best thing which I discerned about this documentary was that there was an authentic act in between the interviews to elaborate about how these companies monetize, by taking in the use of human psychology to manipulate us so that they can monetize the consumer even

Director: Jeff Orlowski
Producer: Larissa Rhode
Screenplay: Jeff Orlowski, Davis Coombe, Vickie Curtis
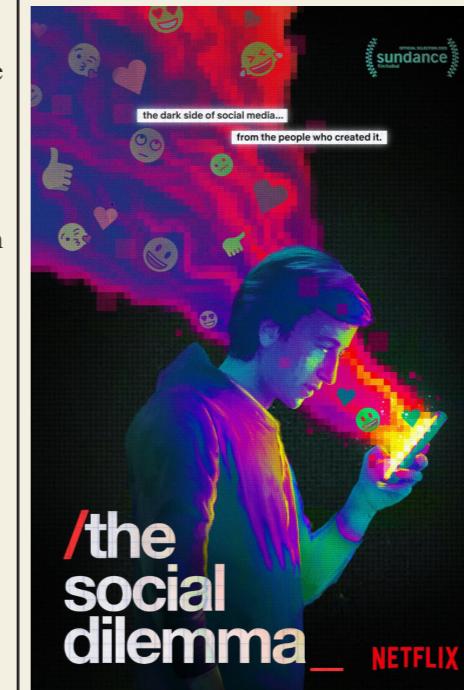
more. I believe that all of this is just a 'moneymaking competition' and the tech industry, in general, is pretty corrupt, both morally and financially.

There are many sub-topics or sub-plots, for example, how fake news is circulated, between political parties, and the political groups which lead to many violent protests and how this eventually leads to the danger of many lives. The documentary has shown many instances for clarification, like, for example, the circulation of fake news at the beginning of the Coronavirus

pandemic. Another interesting example was about the political groups in the United States of America, 'the Democrats' and 'the Republicans'. It portrays the spread of fraudulent news, hate speeches within the groups, which leads to violent protests, and many more. All of the examples were extremely intriguing and thought-provoking to watch. I don't particularly appreciate watching documentaries, but this one was entertaining and thought-provoking, that is the reason I want to recommend this to everyone out there. After a lot of scrutiny, I only found one thing which I didn't like about the documentary. I didn't particularly appreciate that there were less of Indian examples and none of the speakers talked about the Indian perspective. I would have liked it even more, if there were any or more of it, because of the conversations going on in our nation, that would have made it even more delightful to watch. Indians are, after all, one of the largest users of all kinds of social media in the world. Overall, it's a lovely watch, and it can quickly grab your attention, as it is highly relatable to many of us. It has got great reviews across the internet and as per my perspective, it deserves to be in your watchlist.

-Pranay Singh Dhaka
IX
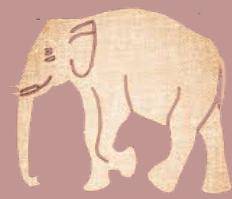
WELHAM NOW

•The Welham Family warmly welcomes the students of classes 10th and 12th rejoining the school on the 1st of November.

•The School Hindi Debating Team participated in the Miss Linell Memorial Inter-School Hindi Debate, held on the 13th and 14th of October hosted by Welham Girls' School. A hearty congratulations to the team upon reaching the finals, the team comprised:
1) Sannidhya Agarwal
2) Prakhar Dixit
3) Shubhankar Dhulia

•The School successfully conducted it's first-ever Online Mid-Term Assessment, held from the 1st to the 12th of October. Kudos to the examination department.

•Kudos to the music team for securing the 1st Runner Up Position in 'Taal Tarang', an online cultural fiesta hosted by D.P.S Jaipur. The team comprised:

1) Diya Bahuguna
2) Savi Singh
3) Luv Juyal
4) Sara Moudgil

•The School participated in the Platinum Jubilee English Debate held by the Scindia School, Gwalior. The team emerged as Quarter-Finalists.

•Congratulations to Aarav Upadhyaya on being adjudged the Best Delegate at All India Political Parties Meet (AIPPM) at the MGDMUN'20.

•The School participated in the eSAIMUN (SAI International Model United Nations Conference) The

Awards Won are as follows:

SPECIAL MENTION
•Shubhankar Dhulia and Arnav Goel - United Nations Security Council
•Abhyuday Tulsyan - United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
BEST DELEGATE
•Trayambak Pathak - Special Political and Decolonisation Committee

•The Oliphant commends Satwik Agarwal on winning the Speed Coding event at Hackathon- CODE HACK, organised by Strawberry Fields High School.

•The School triumphantly hosted an Online 'Young Social Entrepreneurs' Conclave' - Sustainnovation from the 21st to the 27th of September.

•The Welham Family congratulates **Ms Shibani Arora** upon the release of her debut book of poems - "**REVERIE. A DELUGE OF THOUGHTS**"

•The Cyber Security Cell of the Dehradun Police Department conducted an enriching and interactive online sessions on Covid 19 and its impact on Cyber Security.

•The Welham Volunteering Inclusive Education Programme with the AASRA Trust hosted captivating and interactive sessions on the course of the past few weekends. We hope that this becomes a continued effort.

• Arnav Goel and Shubhankar Dhulia participated in the St John's Interschool Debate-hosted by St. Johns High School, Chandigarh- and won the runners up trophy.

The 4Gotten Generation

I don't know if you will ever read this, despite it being published in the Oliphant. Many of you are so busy with smartphones, watching Netflix, playing games, chatting with your friends on Instagram or just scrolling to feeds of celebrities that reading an article falls way down on the priority list. However, if you do happen to chance on this, please read it thoroughly. This is important and this is about your life. You are wasting your life on your phone. Yes, you come to be the first young generation in India's history that has access to smartphones, cheap data, and you are spending hours on it, every day. Check your screen time, which often averages 5-7 hours a day and that too when we spend 4 hours in online classes and that makes 10- 11 hours a day. 11 hours a day is ⅔ rd of the productive waking hours of your life. Like cigarettes or other drugs, this phone addiction is chipping away your life, bit by bit. It's damaging your prospects and messing up your brain. If this continues, our entire generation will become a 4Gotten Generation, a whole generation hooked into 4G, aimless in their life and clueless about the future of the nation.

These are the top 3 negative effects of this addiction. Number one, of course, is the absolute waste of time, which could be utilized on more productive things in life. Imagine saving 3 hours a day from your phone and spending it on anything---fitness, learning a skill, studying more, doing an internship or dedicating that time for your passion. If you did it consistently, you will surely achieve something. Number two, watching mindless stuff dulls your cognitive faculty. Our brain has two areas---cognitive and emotional. A good mind is where both work well, once you watch junk, the cognitive brain disengages and is employed less. You soon lack the power to think, reason or argue something logically. You no longer see different points of view, process multiple scenarios, evaluate pros and cons or make the right decision. You function together with your emotional brain alone as your cognitive brain is numb. The charged content on social media, the polarisation, the instant fandom and intense hate for celebrities or politicians, to an extent where the emotional brain is in control and there is no reasoning. People who work only with an emotional brain don't do well in life. Three, constant hours on the screen kill your motivation and energy. Success in life comes from setting goals, staying motivated and dealing hard towards your goals. However, watching a screen makes us lazy. Deep

down, a fear of failure sets in as you're unsure if you'll put in the work anymore.

To cope, we try to find a reason why we can't find success in life. You try to find an enemy- a kind of villain responsible for our life not being what it could be. Yes, the system is unfair and rigged. However, dalliance venting on social media won't assist you. Working on yourself will. Stop complaining and start creating, create a better life for yourself, and create a better person, ask yourself are you doing your best? Are you working as hard as you most likely can? Keep that wretched phone away until you create something of your life. Winner finds a way out of that unfairness, you can too. Unlike hard drugs, smartphones are legal. We can keep one in our pocket. The phone is useful for information, shopping or online classes. It can be used to grow and learn. But it also can literally destroy a young person's life and even a whole generation. It's up to you whether you use it judiciously or not. Imagine the generation that got us independence. How cool were they? They were out there, fighting to set India free from the clutches of British subjugation. But today, does the youth actually care about what truly impacts us? Or do they react emotionally to things?
You, the future of India, will decide the answers to these questions.

 Get off that phone, engage your mind in productive and creative things and make something of your life because no one will do it for you. Be the generation that strides ahead and doesn't find itself on the path to being forgotten...

-Parth Tiwari
 X

The Covid Update
an eye-opener

So we are eight months into the pandemic, how is it going? It seems like yesterday, 16th of March, when we were told at the morning assembly that 'we are going to fight this together, the school is the safest place and we won't shut down, we will go on.' A couple of hours passed and we found ourselves sitting at the Main Field steps, waiting for the inter-house cricket match to commence, Jamuna vs Krishna. Even before the first over started, the match had to be stopped and we were summoned to the Peacock Stage. We waited there quizzically, standing in the scorching sun, waiting for the announcement, and the rest is history…

As I am typing this out, looking back and trying to make sense of the past eight months, a notification strikes my eye. It's a mail from school (nothing new) but this one struck out and really caught my eye; it read out 'Communication regarding Reopening of School for Grades X and XII' yes that's right (panic? not quite so). The very question of reopening has clouded over all of our minds ever since the day we returned home, it was supposed to be mid-April back in March. I remember it getting shifted to May 31st, then September and so on, but it turns out the moment has come and one must decide on whether to go back to school or not (it's upon the parents ultimately.) I personally miss school and reminisce about the last Founders, the Football season, Diwali at school, and all the Debates and Seminars but the question of going back on November 1st is pretty one-sided, you've figured it out by now.

At the time of writing, the global COVID 19 case tally stands at 42,055,863 active cases and 11,41,567 deaths. For India, the tally stands to be over 7,000,000 cases and over 1 million deaths. Powerful economies faced difficult problems, India's growth in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year alone going down to 3.1% and the global economy expected to shrink by over 3 to 5 per cent in 2020(The Economic Times) – the steepest slowdown since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Suicide rates are reflecting broader economic, socio-cultural and political realities, the impact of COVID 19, with India having the highest rate in South-East Asia.

India's unemployment rate rising to 27.11%. COVID 19 unquestionably has had a huge impact on every aspect of our lives, but look around we're still lucky to sit in our rooms, open up our laptops, attend classes, talk to our friends and family even participate in online events, watch movies and even take exams, it's truly a privilege.

COVID 19, a global pandemic, a nationwide lockdown, being home quarantined--these unprecedented events certainly made me ponder and I wondered that when else in our lifetimes would we have the opportunity of being home for the majority of the year (eight months and counting), when else would we have the 'time' that we have now and quite frankly we're living through the times that are unquestionably going to be part of the history books to come, so years from now we can narrate the stories of how we completed endless series on Netflix and across online streaming platforms, had online exams (which certainly were a success, for everyone alike), had the chance to be home for the longest time period but the question still is, what did we do? If it's still a blacked-out blur for you, it'll hit hard when it's time to catch the next flight to school, it'll hit hard and you'll wonder where did these months go, what did I do. I'm saying it now, we still have a long while, months to come before we're back and it's 'business as usual' we have the 'time'. So why not make the best of it?

See you next Year
-Shubhankar Dhulia
 X

New Game, New Rules

We often compare Esports to gaming, These are two entirely separate things. Esports requires a specific set of skills and training and is considered a professional sport which involves salaries and a specific pool of prize money. Gaming is regarded as more of a casual activity, primarily intended for enjoyment. Though esports is also entertainment, there is a lot of hard work and dedication that an e-sport athlete puts in to become a professional. An esports gamer practises and hones his skills for hours to perfect his movements. Esports is an entire industry and is growing exponentially. This means that the jobs surrounding esports are continuing to become much more plentiful, similar to the growth experienced by other professional sports. Being an esports athlete is a viable career in many cases. If you play a popular game and are good at it, you might just have shot at becoming an esports athlete.

Many people confuse a professional E-sport player with a content creator or a streamer. There are players like Ninja and Shroud, which have left the competitive scene completely to pursue content creation. On the other hand, there are players like Scout and Mortal, who dedicate much of their time to esports. I personally feel that being a content creator and being a professional player cannot go hand in hand. This is because the time and energy commitment needed in being an esports player is too great to engage in side activities like content creation.

The main thing before starting to play a game professionally is to decide when the game would die out. Take the Clash of Clans -- it was just about to thrive in the E-sport biz, but suddenly PUBG comes up and takes over the gaming community by storm. On the other hand, we also have games like- DOTA 2 and League of Legends and Counter-Strike: Global Offensive, which have been there in the competitive arena since the 2010s and are still being played professionally. More games will hopefully continue to gain popularity, and people from around the world will be able to build their careers in the esports industry. When talking about games, another thing to note is if the Tier-1 Organizations like Team Mid Solo (TSM), Fnatic and Cloud9 are showing interest in the game. This is because to make a game grow to a professional level, the interest of organizations and sponsors is a must.

Earnings is also one of the factors that a player must consider. You have to make sure that the money you are making out of playing professionally is consistent and good enough for you to survive in the e-sport arena.

However, when I talk about gaming in India, it is still at a very nascent stage. There aren't as many opportunities. We need to note that playing games is not the only segment of the industry; there is also a textile industry for gaming and separate management industry for gaming. Game production is a separate industry and GFX is an independent industry. Many people and companies are working on these things, but there isn't much if we talk about jobs and opportunities apart from playing games. One hit to the industry has been on PUBG-M by the Central Government. A lot of young, talented individuals had invested a lot of time and effort to reach new heights in the game, including tournaments held internationally. They represented India at a global platform through PUBG-M. What has actually really disturbed and irked me is the fact that there are so many people rejoicing at the ban. It reflects how little truly people understand, or even want to understand the world of gaming. We can still find an alternative but what about those who pursued this game professionally, spent loads of time, effort and resources into it?

Gaming is quickly evolving into a primary entertainment market, especially big multiplayer games like PUBG, CoD, Apex Legends. This whole idea of "it's just a game" doesn't apply to anyone who decides to go pro. It's like comparing gully cricket players to professional ones. Keeping this in mind, I think that it's going to be very risky if you want to pursue gaming full time and you don't have the knowledge and experience. Gaming should always be a secondary option because it takes a lot of time. You also have to ensure that you have a reliable backup, it can be in the form of a family business or your academics.

Your Move
-Vihaan Shukla
 X

Unconventional Opportunities

Every prosperous person got famous by desperately and consistently clutching on to opportunities. At our school, we too have many opportunities to look out for. Talking about co-curricular activities, if you want to debate, you can go to one of the many debates that our school participates in. You can also take part in a MUN (Model United Nations). You can opt for MUNs that are held regionally or go for more coveted international ones. There are also Round Square conferences and I.P.S.C sports tournaments. These opportunities help students develop as individuals and forge their personality as they help them discover who they really are. They make students a more promising version of themselves. I believe that any such opportunity has two parts: preparing for it and subsequently accomplishing the goal you set out for. If you do not learn anything after winning something, then that win is not worth it.

In junior grades, we might not win as many times as we expected ourselves to but we do get a chance to prepare ourselves for the future. As juniors, we might not get a chance to go to a lot of competitions or conferences but we do get a chance to learn. In that sense, juniors have many opportunities. We have workshops which help us with the basics, we have student-run societies and clubs in which we are helped by our seniors. We also have various events designed especially for and many more to improve them to be better. Juniors have seniors who also are eager to teach juniors. Opportunities are not always about going for a professional event and winning, opportunities are there which make them learn for future as they are going to be taking charge in that field but the pre-existing mindset of juniors make them obnoxious and they do not opt for opportunities they should try for. Events are not about winning, they are about achieving acquaintance. People want to walk on the path of winning, they don't want to walk on the lustrous path of knowledge. We need to realize that winning and learning go hand in hand.

Coming to the inference, sometimes juniors should be given opportunities to participate in competitions because there is nothing like actual, hands-on experience. They also give juniors more drive and incentive to learn. They might also learn when they go out and there isn't a dearth of opportunities for provision. Lastly, opportunities will come in many ways. In the harshest situations to the most complex ones, you just need to grab them all no matter what and not turn a blind eye to them.

-Siddhartha Patro
 VIII

The only way out is 'in'

The diminishing air,
Asphyxiates her.
The glass begins to eat up,
The empty space.

Helpless, like a paraplegic,
She watches it outshine all else
The hope in her eyes,
Like constellations in the Stygian sky.

She rubs her eyes hard,
Anticipating that she'll come out,
Of this nightmare,
Of confinement and dyspnea.

But all she sees are phosphenes,
Like sapphires and emeralds
Raining down in front of her eyes.
She still tries to leave,

The desiderium, reflected off her eyes.
Like the caged bird, she is still singing,
But of things 'once known',
Singing the song, of freedom and hope.

Enveloped by futility and unbroken glass
She can't breathe deep, so she asks herself,
"How long can one chase a dream,
Until it becomes a nightmare?"

And like a helmsman,
In a drowning submarine,
Her only escape,
Is death itself…

In the last few moments,
The moments of satori,
She realized,
The only way out is in.

And she plunged into her thoughts,
Flickering, like dying candles.
Thoughts, an escape that resides,
within us.

-Manvi
 X

The Imminent Change in Public Speaking

Communication is thought of as being the backbone of any society and public speaking is a highly developed and evolved form of it. It allows us to form meaningful connections, influence important decisions, and accelerate change. It is a vital skill to have and hone in a world like ours. Public speaking, however, has now been redefined on many levels. What was thought of being an in-person activity has now morphed into something that can be done in front of a computer while fulfilling the same goals. Personally, I think that online public speaking will be a better way of learning and engaging in it. One significant advantage would be the facilitation of active research during debates and MUNs, something that was absent in the conventional in-person model. We can narrate our speeches just by seeing from our device`s screen and can enjoy many other benefits that make online debates and public speaking at large much more flexible.

Let us now compare both these models of public speaking. Frankly speaking, I have now realized that what had I assumed about online public speaking was just a mirage. In the long run, it ruins our ability to develop very promising skills that would have been developed with the original method. What we unknowingly do is enter our comfort zones and never actually try to stretch ourselves. We will not be able to develop effective speaking skills and form ingenious ways of persuading people. In simpler words, we will never be able to get over the fear of 'public speaking'. Another drawback that comes attached with online public speaking is the absence of the usage of expression. During the traditional model of public speaking, we use many expressions to persuade or influence people. But in an online model, the involvement of expressions is not much and we lose the essence of communication. As we are online, no one knows what we are doing behind the screen. Thus we take advantage of this fact and make excuses which cannot be denied, the most common excuse being 'network issues'. We all know that the pandemic will end soon and we will have to shift back to the original way of doing it. And what happens if we become habituated to this model? In face to face interactions, we will forget to expand our horizons and not be able to employ the nuances of conversation and persuasion.

The true purpose of public speaking is to enhance our ability of thinking and consequently presenting those thoughts. Since communication is an integral part of life, our method of developing communicative skills should also be considered important. If the current model of public speaking continues to dominate, then many essential conversational skills will be lost, which will have an adverse effect on our social development.
-Rakshit Khurana
 IX

The Unbridged Bridge

I lay still – lifeless –
Amidst the four walls smeared with blood
Of the murder of a woman's identity
Suffocated under her relentless screams and undying reluctance.
Walking the walk of shame
With yet much dignity and pride
The dominant perpetrator,
So staunchly expunging a women's modesty as if
It was the harvest that grew in the land that was all his and none of hers.
What breaks me is not the pain but the emotion
The idea of being scarred with a label which I would carry for a lifetime,
One which society frowns upon,
One which involves verbose misinterpretations
Breeding questions on the character and morality of a woman.

As I walked out that door
Having done what she asked for
I could laugh a little louder having fulfilled the desire of a woman.
I see the torment that she shows and the judgmental visages that outlook my laughter
But what has she left me to say:
Smeared lips, and dancin' on the floor,
Aren't they significant enough?
Grateful much was she supposed to be instead of
The anguish portrayed on her pale face,
Yet without any complaints,
Without a bellyache,
I walk right out the door
Content.

Look around and so you'll see –
An uncanny world with a veil on its face:
A society advocating pretence with fletched wings.
In the generation of #MeToo and Equality
Stray in the wilderness men with the absurd thought
That they hold the power to flaunt a women's word against her body
With an Ego mapping Everest
And Consideration making its way to hell.

-Aaryan Mahipal
XII

VE'R'SES

Gaslight in The Fog

Two Poems. One Heading. You Be The Judge And Jury

A place where happiness was visible by naked eyes,
The path which guided many,
Is now blur and full of lies,
For it was amidst the gloomy mist.

The girl didn't listen,
Because she blindly believed in the way,
But she had been led astray,
And the fog started consuming the very essence of her joy.

Tears dripped down her eyes,
She lost her will to exist,
And the thought of loneliness consumed her,
But this wasn't the end.

The once abysmal fog,
Was penetrated by lights marking the path,
Now, the gaslights guided her,
And save her from the dark.

She was once again full of hope,
To find a place called home,
But little did she know,
That the gaslights are a part of the fog illusion .

(There is no way out,
If you follow the gaslight in the fog)

-Trayambak Pathak
IX

The starting seemed comforting
The mortal felt rare,
After the thundering
 He felt pain which he could not bear

Notes are written everywhere
his cup has little drama and a little dare;
Pondering day in and day out
Sometimes in the four-walled room, sometimes around the roundabout.

 There are questions in the air
But whatever his creed says, he is familiar with
so he contemplates to and fro
Those questions, faded by time

Something is special about the dusk
The moon certainly seems to know it all!
"May I ask you?" waiting since he was six.
For the bleached dye, makes him recall.

 Too much envisioning won't make it easy
You at times will fall in the falls
For you shall finally find
Your gaslight in the fog…

- Viraj Mahajan
XI
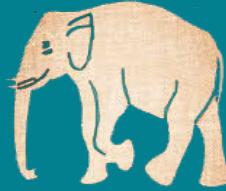
Rising Intelligentsia

The Digital Herd

Socio-Political Activity In The Age of Instagram

It is not often that the beliefs and ideas of a citizenry can be redefined not by the direct effects of the conditions of status quo on the citizenry, but rather the means of spreading the beliefs. Equally unique is the observation that a medium for the spread of ideas can force conformity to pre-existing notions and pre-established conclusions onto its users which is essentially the exact opposite purpose such a medium is meant to serve. These observations have forced intellectuals and academics to take a closer look at the activism of any kind in this internet age. Broadly speaking, the effects of mainstream culture prevalent on the internet can be categorised into three groups- nauseating political correctness, concrete issues and reverse-censorship. All three of these borrow heavily from each other.
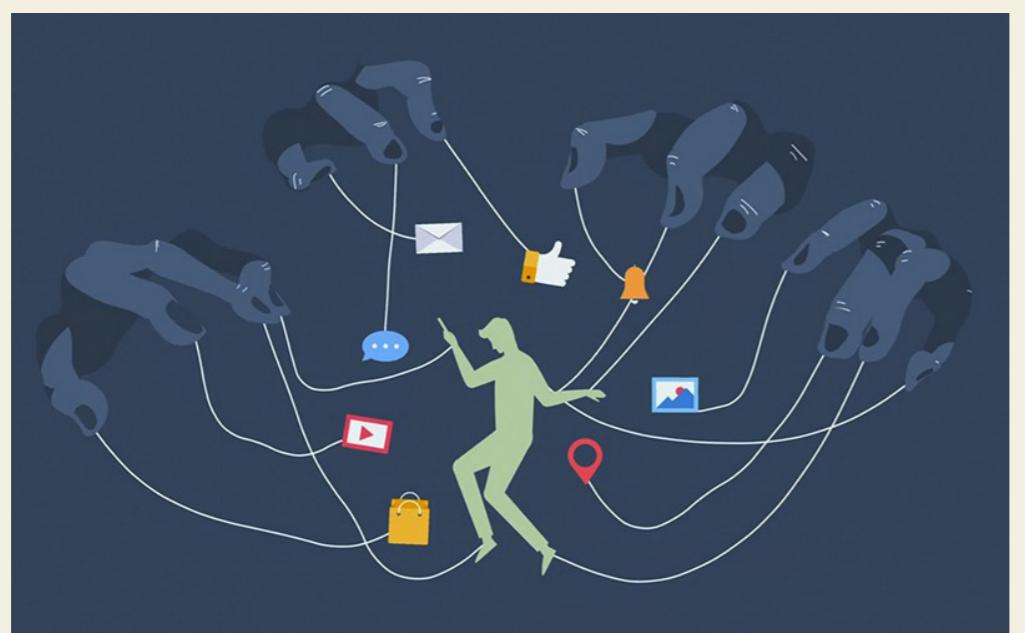
The internet has not been particularly kind to unconventional opinions. It has, in a sense, created a false line of best fit for ideological inclinations. This stems from the fact that adherents to a different ideological line are routinely subjected to false realism or even sheer ridicule. That everyone is expected to be politically correct is indirect acceptance and even endorsement of the status quo and its corresponding zeitgeist. And the fact that the definition of political correctness varies through time and geography makes this particular characteristic even more vivid. The metaphor "little knowledge is dangerous" rings alarmingly true here, because those new to politics and internet culture at large are indoctrinated with politically correct and conformist beliefs and made to fit into the aforementioned false line of best fit. The scatterplot of ideological inclinations would ideally have to be, well, scattered, but the internet bubble puts it in a straightjacket to fit its own 'politically correct' standards.

The selective democratization of the internet and thus, ideology has also alienated real and concrete issues from public discourse and discussion. The class with a largely undisputed monopoly on the flow of information on the internet remains largely unaffected by real-world issues that continue to plague a large chunk of humanity. This creates a bubble of conjured and fabricated issues within the already existing bubble of privileged internet users. Rather than focusing on real-world economics and development, the internet finds it easier to divert attention to abstract issues that do not directly affect the masses. In effect, this alienates a hefty portion of the population from the primary venue of political discourse in the 21st century, i.e. the internet. And by distracting the public eye from issues that are directly affecting the lower classes, the internet snatches even political relevance from them. This further increases the rift between the haves and the have-nots and subjects them to a cycle of political irrelevance, but I digress. Even if we do not subject issues like these to a classic Marxian examination, the graveness of this problem cannot be overlooked. Moreover, the instrumentality and complicity of the internet in acting as the medium for this alienation cannot be mistaken. By providing an unfair edge to ingrained and entrenched 'politically correct' bubbles, it has only rubbed salt on deep wounds.

The last observation I have made concerning the internet and its effect on political activity at large would be censorship from the wrong side. Historically, censorship has been associated with conservatism and even authoritarianism. But the internet has again flipped consensus on this issue. Today, the voice of censors is as 'liberal' as it is conservative. Borrowing from the argument about political correctness, any mention of so-called politically incorrect terms in mass media or even on the internet has come to warrant mass backlash. Any truly liberal community will never tolerate censorship from any end of any spectrum. In the eyes of the true progressive, the outcry over the use of transphobic stereotypes in the yet-to-release Laxxmi Bomb was as unwarranted as the demand for censorship of certain scenes in the movie Padmavat. While the origin and extent of both cases might be radically different, the goals of both campaigns can be thought of as being the same. Constraints on artistic expression should be considered intolerable in the kind of society the internet bubble seemingly aims to achieve. But, in practice, they have betrayed many such ideals. The internet of today is a symptom of false liberalism, in the sense that it is intolerant of views that are not characteristically liberal.

These observations make the internet different from any previous medium for the spread of ideas. Newspapers have historically been thought of as independent and accommodative to all ideological inclinations. News media has its fair share of ideological deviation from the assumed norm. It is only the internet that has normalised conformism, albeit of the 'progressive' kind.

Readers of this article may find it difficult to pinpoint its motive. The article is neither strictly ideological nor particularly conclusive. No 800-word piece of writing can claim to have done either of those things properly. This article is, however, a set of observations made with a largely elementary understanding of technologically and consequently the nitty-gritty of the internet and its associated algorithms. What I have aimed to do throughout its course is a superficial analysis of the impact of the internet on society and thus, politics.

-Samanyu Raj Malik
 XI-HUM.

'Our school actively imbibes the quality of social service in its students'

Welhamite Speaks

It has been seven long months since this pandemic became a global crisis. The whole world has been in a state of turmoil since the month of March when the lockdown was first initiated. The amount of suffering that it has caused is unfathomable. Most of us are lucky enough to have been brought up in privileged families, protected from the suffering caused by the outbreak, but not everyone is as fortunate. As this becomes the new normal, it's time for us to help who are facing the brunt of this pandemic. The silver lining of this pandemic is it will let the ingenuity of the human spirit flourish as we try to find new solutions in these unprecedented times. Although our school has been doing its share of community outreach programs, the action of some has allowed us to ask ourselves; Is what the school has been doing enough? Moreover, are students realizing the importance of social service? I believe that it's time to step up the game.

Welham Boys' School is one of the most prestigious education institutions in India, with a diverse community from around the country. It is expected that our outreach programs will be one of the best too. The partnership between the Aasraa trust and our school has existed for a long time. They conduct the 'Each One Teach One' program at our school, in which the volunteer teachers from the Aasraa trust make use of our classrooms to give basic primary education to underprivileged children from around the neighbourhood and teach them basic etiquettes. These children are even provided with a cup of milk and bananas as refreshments. The students, however, are only responsible for bringing these refreshments from the Bethany (dining hall) to the academic block. The students must have a more active role in the running of the program. Until and unless there is no real interaction between the students and those children, there is no learning outcome for students. Students will never understand the importance of social service because they won't be aware of their capability to make a change. The aim of community outreach programs in schools should be to create a direct channel of communication between students and the underprivileged kids that will result in a mutually beneficial relationship. They learn from us and we learn from them. The volunteers from the trust could create a workshop to teach Welhamites how to conduct these classes, and allow for smaller class sizes so the underprivileged kids get more individual attention. This will also allow the students to have a more personal connection with the children they teach. 'Behtar India'-- the initiative launched by the media giant NDTV is the most prominent initiative that our school took under its outreach program. Although it was well planned to promote a sense of duty in students and give back to society, it had one major flaw. There wasn't any continuity in it. Social work is something that needs to happen on a regular basis, otherwise, there is no lasting impact on society. This impact is what inspires people to continue to work for the society, because they know their actions have an effect and that there are those out there who need help. Even if we work for one community but do it regularly it will make a bigger difference. This too should be an achievement one should be proud of.

As seniors, we realize the value of the privileges we have grown up with. It is our duty to make our juniors realise this and teach them about the state of the real world. We need to help them understand the stability and support that their parents have provided them. When students like us become self-aware, that is when change begins. Helping those who don't have the resources and funds that we have access to. Every little thing we do has a great impact on the lives of other people. Through the resources that our school provides, we can support those in need. Increasing the quality of our community outreach program will not only give students a purpose, but it will also help them achieve a greater level of personal development. To conclude, a lot more can be done to actively instil the quality of social service in students.

-Aaditya Chandra Gupta
 XI-COM B

Teacher Speaks

High school is a great time to try things that you haven't done before – including volunteering. And, community service is an area of learning where you can volunteer, meaning that you choose to help out because you want to do so. There are numerous reasons why you should volunteer for it. Community service can have a lot of positive effects on students, such as helping them to develop skills, making contacts and allowing them to improve the quality of life of others'.

Students may think it's not worth their time to get involved in the community because it isn't glamorous work, isn't 'cool', requires too much patience and doesn't give instant results. However, there are several benefits that volunteering can give you that no other work can.

Many schools make it mandatory to put in 150-200 hours of community service before they're willing to grant a certificate. Many other schools require service learning. This term describes an approach to education that aims to connect lessons learned in the classroom with real-life lessons learned through community service. It is a practice that allows students to learn more about their personal motivations, practice academic material outside of the context of the classroom and testing, develop critical thinking skills while solving real-world problems and to think about problems and social issues in new ways.

This kind of experiential learning or applying what you have learned in the classroom to the real world has a lot of positive benefits for students apart from meeting a requirement to graduate. These include a better understanding of the value of teamwork, decision-making skills, development of leadership abilities and the gain of practical skills. Additionally, you would be gaining a new perspective on your community and on what life is like for a group of people that is often overlooked: the terminally ill. This could change how you see the world and your role in it. For example, students may learn that they have excellent skills in coping with a crisis or other stressful situations, or may learn that they find taking charge of a team to be a struggle. This kind of exposure to different situations can then teach students how to further develop skills that they have and how to work on areas they struggle in. In particular, students find that they are able to develop skills in leadership, communication, working well within a team and finding solutions for problems.

Many students also find that community service makes them more aware of and interested in issues of social justice. For example, if you spend your days going to school, playing sports and doing homework, in all likelihood you will not spend a lot of time thinking about the problems that homeless people encounter such as prejudice, poverty, returning to work or earning a self-supporting living.

Once people learn more about struggles and injustices that other groups of people face, they are statistically more likely to want to actively take part in making a change in the policies and social structures that keep certain groups from succeeding.

Numerous studies over the past several years have shown that volunteering isn't just good for your mind and conscience; it's also good for your body. By focusing on others' problems instead of their own, students have reported reduced stress and overall improvement in mood and health.

Volunteering can also help protect people from depression during challenging times like the pandemic as it tends to help create a strong support system. Volunteers are physically healthy because they keep active. Certain activities, such as working to clean up a park or a slum can be a good exercise. Studies have shown that especially as people get older, volunteering in these kinds of projects can keep people healthy and can even lessen the symptoms of certain diseases.

Of course, not all the benefits of volunteering are limited to the volunteer. Another big way that people benefit is in their involvement with their community. Networking is another major benefit of volunteering. As a volunteer,

16

17

you will be very likely to meet like-minded individuals who share your interests. In future, these people can be important contacts for writing letters of recommendation and for putting you in touch with the right people for scholarships and jobs.

However, don't volunteer just because you think it looks better. Especially for college applications, admissions officers prefer to see a local long-term volunteer commitment than something that has only lasted a week or two during a summer break.

Finding a cause that you are passionate about is the key. If you have always had an affinity for animals, try working at a shelter or a charity working on animal rights. The more you care about the cause, the more dedicated you will be to continue working for it over a long period of time.

Yet still, you can't eclipse the other side. By this I mean remembering those painstaking days when you began to realise that you cannot change the world over night, where you questioned whether your efforts actually made any difference. Occasionally slipping back into that ongoing cycle of confronting your conscience… I mean who gives us the right to decide what is best for another person, culture or their way of living, and so on. Personally, I would say, don't be afraid of making a change. Ask questions when something doesn't seem right. If you end up doing work that doesn't seem like a good fit, is causing excessive stress or if the experience isn't allowing you to do the things you thought you would be working on, it's ok to leave to find something else. To write this article I opened the CAS (Creativity, Action and Service) journals from my days as a CAS Coordinator for an IB programme a decade or so ago. Every chance to open those journals recharges me and makes me even more determined to continue with my volunteering work, and talk about this with you. Let's go back to the question of how we are doing at social service. Well! I leave you to answer that question now. All I have to say is that even if we have taken a few baby steps in this direction, we are on our way and will be arriving soon but have definitely not arrived, yet. I hope that settles it then.

- Ms. Rashmi Rawat

lasagna

Lampoon

Online Examinations – The next step to take the school online

Mid Term Exams just got over. The students are temporarily free from their worries, the parents are pleasantly surprised, and the teachers (the more experienced ones at least) are suspicious. After the experience gained in the EOTs, the school came up with a variety of tactics aimed at ensuring the honesty of our students (which, of course, is not contested at all). These were, obviously, unrequired, and moreover, unexpected. Not that anyone from the student community was complaining.

The Students

It was heartening, at least for the Oliphant, to see the students redouble their efforts before the exams. Various social media platforms, from WhatsApp to Instagram (and even Discord) must have surely noticed the uptake in the class groups formed by students eager to score well. Apps like Snapchat benefitted from an upsurge in downloads. Memory on smartphones has suddenly become too precious a commodity to be wasted on loads of Instagram and WhatsApp texts.

The group 'study' sessions left some Welhamites elated, and others dejected with their findings. The need to 'stretch ourselves' (old ones die hard, and we don't have new ones) and finding the answers buried deep in the texts was of paramount importance. So, some students found loyal study buddies in ed-tech apps like Byju's; and online forums like Brainly. in were rediscovered. The reliance on toppers for help in preparation was replaced by the trusted relationship with technology.

Along with a few challenges, this new mode of taking examinations also leads to a variety of discoveries for the students. One of them was the preference for listening to music while giving the exam. Why else, obviously, would many students be so keen on wearing air pods and other (poorer) earphones. Some students were seen jiving to beats and with their pens moving at the same rate. Obviously, humming to the tunes was looked down upon by some teachers and some students who forgot to mute themselves found out the hard way.

The Departments

The errors in the internet connection of almost all students can solely be attributed to the increased usage nationwide. For some reason, it seems various network providers, all over the nation, decided to simultaneously engage in repairing their lines during the examinations. Despite facing so many problems, the faculty emerged victorious in bringing the school to us at home. The Oliphant commends the combined efforts of Ansari Sir's upcoming examination department and Prashant Sir's I.T. Department whose importance is ever-growing (the reopening is surely just a minor setback). The recently filled position of the Ganga-B housemaster is also a testament to the increased trust placed in the valiant knights of the I.T. department (while the lack of damsels to save is disturbing, it is not at all surprising).

On the other hand, the two-man squad of the examination department has to adopt a more decentralised approach. Their vigilant eyes would miss the spectacle of the Activity Centre cluttered with chairs and tables (those were the days). We can imagine them cringing when their meticulous work was associated with the Covid-19 video (better late than never, Indians do love that saying). The timing of the video would even make the Indian bureaucracy proud.

The Teachers

There were various kinds of teachers seen during the exams. The more arduous ones who were dedicated in their attempts to "help" the students give an online exam had their eyes constantly glued to their screens. Coordinating between the cameras and the sheets uploaded by the children, the teachers had to overcome technical difficulties that The Oliphant doubts they had ever heard of. Some were questioning students on why students consistently forgot to charge the batteries of their devices just a day before the exam. Moreover, why did the batteries always give out at suspiciously inconvenient times? It seems that God does, indeed, work in mysterious ways.

The Lampooner

FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH