

VOLUME I

KALAM

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TAMIL NADU



POSSIBILITY
PASSION
PARTNERSHIP

STUDENTS' MAGAZINE 2016 - 2017

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Vice-Chancellor's Message



I am pleased to know that Central University of Tamil Nadu is bringing out the first issue of the University magazine Kalam. True to its vision, so aptly encapsulated in its title, this magazine will function as an inscription of the novel thoughts budding in the fresh minds of our students and a harmony of their original voices.

A young university such as ours must reflect the energy, dynamism and imagination characteristics of student, faculty and staff. I believe that the publication of this magazine is both a result of and an impetus to the blossoming of new ideas within our academic community. I hope that this magazine evolves into a forum that promotes a healthy spirit of enquiry and dialogue amongst all the members of our university community, students; since they are the nerve centre of innovation and creativity.

I congratulate all the contributors and editors involved in the making of this magazine for their efforts and hope that their collective endeavour serves as an encouragement to others to participate in the writing of this new and exciting chapter in the unfolding history of our university.

Registrar's Message



***I**t gives me great pleasure and pride to introduce the first issue of the official magazine of CUTN, Kalam. The first step in any journey is always an act of courage and imagination, and the publication of this magazine is one such act.*

The magazine will serve as an avenue for students, staff and faculty to express their individual creative instincts and hone their critical acumen; in addition, it will also function as an open platform for the free exchange of ideas and opinions that concern the university community in particular and our society at large. Our university promotes learning not only within the classroom but also outside through a liberal interaction between various disciplines and schools of study.

This magazine embodies that same philosophy and vision for the creation of knowledge within the university by offering a space for students and teachers to come together and share their views in the truest spirit of scholarship. The magazine also reflects the rich diversity of region, language and culture that CUTN symbolizes by encompassing the voices of students from varied backgrounds.

I hope that the magazine emerges as a vibrant domain for interaction and expression within the university and wish the editorial team great success.

CoE's Message



I am glad that CUTN is bringing out the first issue of its annual students' magazine Kalam. A magazine of this kind will bring out the curricular and extra-curricular talents of the staff and students of the University and provide an opportunity to explore their creative potential. It is going to be another feather in the cap of CUTN.

I am glad to know the overwhelming participation of students in the making of this magazine. Sometimes the process is more important than the goal, I believe. Students' learning of a professional process of working will go a long way in shaping their outlook for future endeavors.

I extend my greetings and best wishes to the staff and students of the University and confident that this will grow from strength to strength with every issue.

Finance Officer's Message



***K**alam—the students' magazine is a feather in the cap of CUTN! A first of its kind; will not only serve as a forum for exchanging of information, ideas, concerns and creative solutions but help in binding various stakeholders of CUTN together.*

It is a magazine with a difference. A magazine professionally planned and executed. Finalizing its objectives, selection of name, designing the logo, devising a work process, deciding work ethics, involving of students and staff; all have stamps of high degree of professionalism. Thing that impressed me the most is its inclusive approach.

I congratulate the editorial team of Kalam and CUTN for such a noble initiative.

Message from Dean (Academics)



Kalam—the students' magazine of CUTN is a welcome step!

Indian higher education is going through a different time. Institutions are facing with a challenge of cut throat competition both internally and externally. Employers want ALL IN ONE! Graduates should have more market oriented skills, multitasking ability, creativity & innovation to solve practical problems at the same time to be aware and responsible.

To address those issues, the learning objectives are being slowly changed. A number of innovative steps are being taken to make students a more active participant in learning, aware of their immediate environment, responsible to society. Emphasis is being given for the exploration and development of their creative and analytical faculty which would come handy in problem solving at the workplace and real life situations.

Kalam is a step in that direction.

It provides students a platform to voice their concerns on various issues, express their creativity and analytical skills apart from creating a community sphere for peer learning. I extend my heartfelt thanks for the editorial team of Kalam for their hard work and CUTN for the first ever students' magazine of the institute.

Message from Dean (Students' Welfare)



I am immensely happy and delighted to know that CUTN brings out the first issue of its annual students magazine Kalam. I express my sincere thanks and congratulations to the contributors of this first issue and the editorial team for their tireless effort in bring out the magazine in time with articles from faculty and students. This is certainly an important happening in the infancy of CUTN, as the future course is, by and large always determined by the initial steps taken.

I am sure that this magazine “Kalam” will trigger the young minds to think, create and contribute more for the future issues. I deem it a great privilege to congratulate again the entire editorial team.

Please accept my heartfelt congratulations on the publication of Kalam.

Editorial



It is a great honour to be the first student editor of *Kalam*—an annual students' magazine of Central University of Tamil Nadu. It is designed to be an outlet for creative impulses and analytical skills of students, work as a bridge among different departments of the university and act as a house-journal serving public relations functions of the organization. When I was entrusted with the responsibility of magazine in the middle of the semester with such noble and bigger goals, I was a little jittery. Nobler and greater objectives need greater commitments for its fulfilment. However, with the active support of our beloved Vice Chancellor, Prof. A.P. Dash; Registrar, Dr. S. Bhuvaneshwari; Controller of Examinations, Dr. A. Ragupathy; Finance Officer, CMA (Dr.) B. B. Mishra; Dean (Academics), Prof. T. Sengadir; Dean (Students' Welfare), Prof. S. Nagarajan; editorial teams of teachers and students the job seemed a cakewalk.

For a first students' magazine of the university; it was important to put in place a full proof, workable system in place to pull off the job in time which will set a precedent for future endeavours. While working, we came to realise that an effective system was not the only thing required to take an initiative to its logical conclusion. There are so many other factors including Man-Management—the effective handling of people directly or indirectly involved in a venture: their skills, time and most importantly their expectations is key to its success.

We are fairly happy with the quality of articles we received both from students and staff of the university keeping in mind the time constraints and their prior engagements. *Kalam* will be better and better with time. Apart from the stated objectives, the magazine makes a pledge to provide space for innovative and abstract outbursts of students and staff. It will be insulated to any kind of political, gender, racial, ethnic bias and offer a platform for an objective, factual, balanced exchange of views for a progressive and positive impact on CUTN community.

I thank all for their contribution for making *Kalam* a reality. I urge everybody to participate wholeheartedly in this great churning of creative ideas.

Anju John
Editor

2nd year MA Mass Communication



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ENGLISH



Papers & pixels

When I was a kid, my father would take me to his friend's book shop at Lakshmi Complex and I would browse through immense titles and run my fingers along the spines of the books just for the thrill of it.

Panoramically, I would say that book shops and libraries are a macroscopic engulfment of fabricated lives. There was a time when I would select my books by fervently glancing at the four-lined description given by the publishers and literally sway on my toes while my father too read it for approval before purchasing it.

Later, on the way home, there was an irresistible tingle of anticipation to start reading the book. I would take a few hours or a maximum of two days to finish my book, which always left my mother with a look of stupor that said – "We just bought you that book."

The flush of exhilaration when I was at a book shop was unaccountable. There would be innumerable books facing me and the sweet pain was that my parents allowed only a couple of books to purchase at a time. Ergo, the selection was arduous. The best part was beholding the vivacious cover pages of each book. They ranged from titles embossed cover pages, glossy cover pages, minimal themes and so

forth. They played a major role in my book selection at the book shop and hitherto they have not let me down.

Through my early teens, I enrolled in a library owing to my rapidly growing need for books. While reading the library's copy of *The Great Gatsby* I stumbled upon

dried, yellowy tear drops embedded on the page where Gatsby dies. Then I noticed that physical books – unlike virtual books – absorb anthropoid feelings. Similarly, in a copy of a Stephen King novel at an electrifying phase, I found the page

“

Physical books – unlike virtual books – absorb anthropoid feelings



gently crumbled. Some books are dog-eared, some are not, some books are filled with remarks along the margin and some are highlighted; books define the reader. Poring over literary collections virtually is something that I have not been able to wrap my head around.

But lately, I have been consecrating my time reading e-books and PDF versions because they are mostly free of cost and easily portable within an app of my phone unlike the considerably dense books. The perusal of virtual editions of books has brought tardily evolving eye pains and headaches. Hence, I decided to go back to the hardbound copies and paperbacks. It is after sometime that I realized how bereft I have been of the papery texture, the compressed spine, the myriad of curves through


each page and the evident fragrance of each word. Books on Kindle, laptops and phones are well movable but the bends and curves of a physical book are pertinacious. I hope this occult war between physical books and e-books comes to an end because it is understandable that each variation has its own rewards and limitations. Yet I sense an abstract compulsion to impel my view that a 'book' regardless of its definition, is bound by stacks of papers filled with stories to tell and wisdom to impart.

Janani Sree Ganesh
2nd year IMSC Economics

CREATIVE CORNER

Photo: Shwetha Pramod
1st MA Mass Communication





Most loveable person in our apartment

“Aging is not lost youth but a new stage of opportunity and strength”
-Betty Friedan (1921-2006)

In Africa, it is said that when an old man dies, a library vanishes. The proverb may vary across continents, but its meaning is equally true in any culture. Older persons are intermediaries between the past, the present and the future. Their wisdom and experience form a veritable lifeline in society.

Respect for the aged is the part of Indian way of living. In Indian literature, the aged are termed as 'Vridha' and it is divided into Tapo Vridha – Advance in penance, Kala Vridha – Advance in age, Jnana Vridha – advance in knowledge, and Dhana Vridha – advanced in wealth. The Upanishads insist that every human being respect his father, mother and teacher all through life. The two great epics of India, the Ramayana and the Mahabharat show the young seeking the advice and blessings of the aged in all happenings of life. In many parts of the country, it is a part of culture that in all auspicious activities, the young touch the feet of the aged and get their blessings.

In Indian tradition, an individual's life span has been divided into four stages, which are Brahmacharya – learning in the state of celibacy, Grihast – family life, Vanaprast – detached family life and Sanyasa – renounced life. Indian people have to show their utmost respect to the aged living in the third and fourth stages. At the age of 60 one enters Vanaprastha and is expected to renounce his role as the head of the family and withdraw from all the pleasures of the family life.

The 60th birthday is considered to be unique in the life course of a person as everyone would felicitate the new old man. In the stage of Sanyasa, one should have renunciation of the material world. The person would be a part of the world but not a user of the comforts of the world. Traditionally, decades ago Indians lived in joint family system where siblings and their families lived together under one roof under the guidance of the senior aged persons of the family. Due to the impact of education and industrialization, there was a tremendous change in the social institutions. Family is one of the institutions which have undergone many layers of changes like joint family, nuclear family, single parent family, and it continues on and on. Traditionally, the joint family in India took care of the aged and this practice started to diminish due to urbanization which caused an exodus of people from rural to urban areas and from urban areas to foreign countries.

Due to the absence of community support in the form of kinsmen or the extended family, and an inability to continue to earn their living, the elderly are often rendered destitute, if not financially, from a pragmatic perspective. The “aged” (60 years and older) population in India is the second largest in the world. In India, ageing could be perceived as a transition from one set of roles to another set of roles structured by the social system.

The process of ageing is not similar for all. Some per-

ceive the aged as "decay" whereas others perceive the aged as the guardians of our society, foundation of experience and knowledge and resource of traditional values, norms and cultural practice. In the year 2001, there were about 76 million elderly people constituting 7.7 per cent of the country's population. By the year 2020, it is estimated that the population of the elderly will increase to 142 million, or about 11 per cent of the country's population. According to 2011 census, Kerala has the highest proportion of aged population followed by Punjab and Himachal Pradesh occupying the second position and Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra hold the third position. It is the responsibility of the state, NGOs, society and family members to make them lead a meaningful life. Let me describe the lifestyle of our neighbour Ramu Ammal, who is 68 years old and the most

na and Mahabharata stories. Sometimes she composes songs and make them sing about Lord Rama. They enjoy her company. Parents also feel happy when they see their children with her, because they are sure that she will take good care of them.

During festivals, she makes the kids enact a drama about Rama and Krishna. She does not allow the children to spend money on costumes. She teaches them to make crowns, bows and arrows etc. with leaves and paper. Usually, the drama is staged under the shade of the banyan tree. Parents are the audience. She also makes the kids sing songs and tell stories. As soon as they come from school, they have their milk and snacks and come to Ramu Ammal. She makes them play, run and listen to stories and after an hour, she asks the children to go home and study. She often makes the children play traditional games like Thaya kattai, Paramapatham, Shovi Urutal and Pandi Attam, which improves their mathematical and analytical skills.

Ramu Ammal teaches the skill, and attitude and also instils the values and ethics in the minds of children through stories, songs and games. She enjoys her retirement by spending much of her time with the children rather than with television or unnecessary gossiping. She also gives recipes of traditional food items to the neighbours and she is the most wanted person at the time of festivals. Almost all the kids visit her home to give sweets during Diwali and Pongal. Since she is with children she feels happy and healthy. She is not a burden to anyone, and everyone in the apartment respects her as she transfers the knowledge, skill and attitude from one generation to another generation.

Dr. J. Raja Meenakshi
Assistant Professor,
Dept. of Social Work

Some perceive the aged as "decay" whereas others perceive the aged as the guardians of our society

loveable person in our apartment.

Ramu Ammal had worked as a medical assistant in a Primary Health centre and got retired. Ramu Ammal lives with her married daughter in our apartment. There are many children in the apartment. Some mothers have new born babies. Since Ramu Ammal had worked with babies in the health centre, she knows how to handle the young babies when they suffer from cold, cough and other illnesses. The young mothers always approach her to bathe their babies. At anytime she is ready to attend the calls of kids and young mothers. On weekends and holidays, the children sit around Ramu Ammal to listen to her Ramaya-

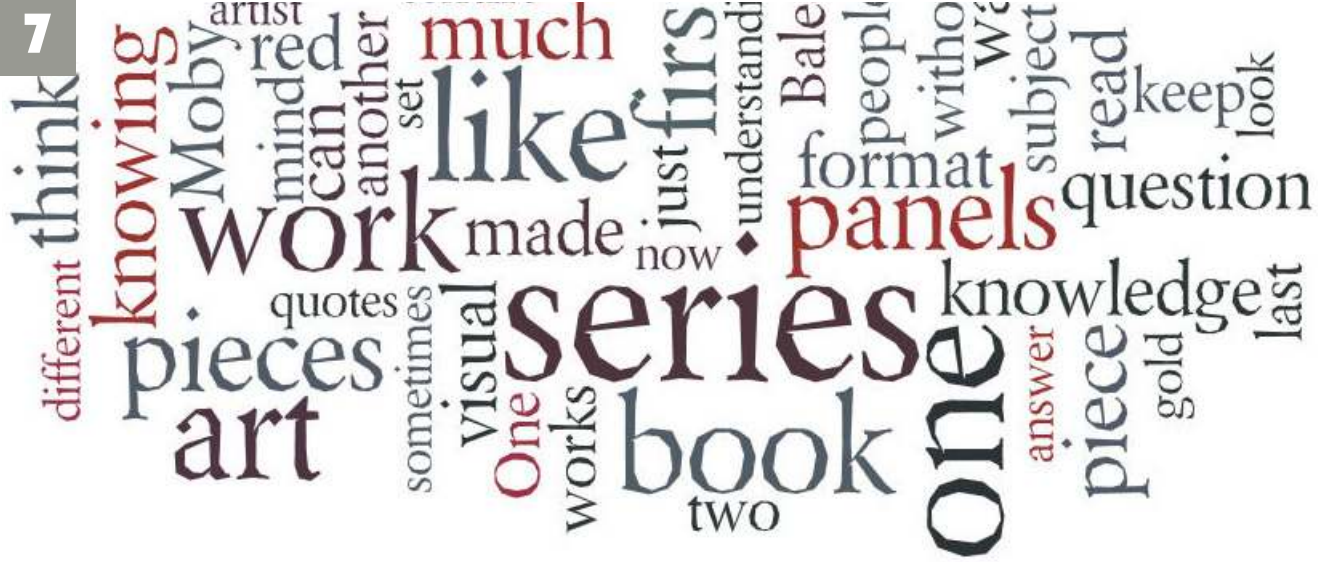


Together

You are my bestie forever and the love of
my life. You are different-
you make me happy,
you make me laugh.
Sometimes we have problems,
sometimes we fight,
sometimes we cry-
but you are always with me...
When I'm sad you are
always there to make sure I'm okay.
Thanks for being there for me.
We love each other
and we always will.
Sometimes I wish to have you
in my life forever,
till the end of our life, together!

(This poem is dedicated to my best friend
Shamshiya Begam)

D.Aruna
2nd year MA English



A moron's affair with **oxymorons...**

Of all the literary devices I have come across, oxymorons interest me the most, but let's talk about ironies. Ironically, talking about the already trending topics is a trend these days. I didn't realise how much of a trend irony was until a friend pointed out. After a great deal of contemplation I was convinced that ironies are present everywhere.

Romantic poets describe suffering as a prerequisite of literary life. Keats wrote, "Do you not see how necessary a world of pains and troubles is to school an intelligence and make it a soul?". When we're sad we tend to be more creative and to a writer, creativity is happiness. So, technically, feeling sad makes a writer feel happy. I thought this was the most ironic fact about literature until I heard 'Lovecraft' was an author who wrote horror fiction.

The ultimate goal of a man's life is to be happy. The general belief is that success will make you happy. But does it, We spend most of our lives worrying about grades, ranks, placements, salary, marriage, responsibilities and what not. We are so busy running after success that we forget, happiness is primary. We fail to see that without happiness success is as good as failure. Here, the cliché phrase "poor but happy" might be significant. But then, ironically enough, "poor but happy is not a phrase invented by a poor person" (Mason Cooley). Every kid wants the

toys the other kid has. We don't change much even after growing up. Your neighbour's wife always seems prettier than your own. Irony being not able to remember the proverb you learnt in elementary school that 'a bird in hand is worth two in bush'.

Speaking of what we learnt in elementary school, brings back the memories of lessons which claimed that 'honesty is the best policy' or preached about kindness, helpfulness or the victory of good over evil. By time the kids start to look for the actual motive behind someone's kindness, and realise that diplomacy is the best policy and that practical is very different from theory, it's already too late. Ironic, isn't it? I read somewhere that the Bible is the most shoplifted book in the USA. People pray to a female deity for a male child. Need I say more about how ironic our behaviour is when it comes to beliefs?

Politics is the most ironic of all fields. Practise war in order to attain peace, support social equality and reservation at the same time. Can't think of more examples, politics isn't really my cup of tea. Ironically enough, I'm a person who doesn't drink tea and still uses the phrase 'isn't my cup of tea'. You should have figured out that I'm not trustworthy when I said, I am interested in oxymorons but started talking about ironies.

Ananya Ishani
2nd year IMSc. Economics

La
La
Land

REASERA

and the OSCAR goes to...

Have you ever wondered why it took so long for Leonardo DiCaprio to win an Oscar? How did *Moonlight* win the Best Picture Oscar award, when *La La Land* was not only the strong favorite going in to the evening (or early in the morning, in our case), but also picked up the Best Director award? The answer has nothing to do with misadventures surrounding envelopes, and everything to do with the arcane subject of voting systems.

Economics explains this blemished voting system as Arrow's Impossibility Theorem. This theorem has proved to be a profound, disturbing result mainly because it bores witness through some complicated mathematics. But in simple words, Arrow's Impossibility

“

Many awards have been nominated to movies and crews whom we felt were unworthy

Theorem is a mathematical result (under certain assumptions) showing that there is no scheme for aggregating individual preferences into a valid set of social preferences (or simply called the Decision or Result).

One way to select the Academy Award nominees and winners is by using a system called "instant runoff" which is a part of the Arrow's Impossibility Theorem. The nominees are mostly selected through this process. Assuming that 250 movies were released in 2016, each voter selects five nominees out of the 250 eligible movies, in order of preference for, let us say, the best

picture. All movies without any first-place votes are eliminated. The votes for those films with the least first-place votes are reassigned until five nominees have enough. Another con of this system is that a movie could win the Best Picture even if 79% of the voters hate it so long as they split their votes evenly among the losing films.

In the language of Academy Awards 2017, it's highly likely that the Best Picture race turned out the same, usual Oscar-ish way where the heavyweight (depressing, dark, somber nominees) overhauls the lightweights (musicals and comedies) – that *La La Land* got more first-round votes than any other picture, with *Moonlight* coming in second. But this was a nine-way race decided by single transferrable vote, so the first-round outcome, while interesting, is far from decisive.

In the Best Picture voting, the first-round winner is much less important than the broad consensus. A lot of people loved *La La Land*; a lot of people hated it and if you were me you'd have slept through it. So while it surely did very well in the first couple of rounds of voting, it simply lacked the staying power needed to win.

Basically, given the single-transferable-vote system, the thing which mattered is what happened to the votes for pictures like *Manchester by the Sea*. If that was your favorite movie of the year, or if you originally voted for, says, *Fences*, then there's no way that you will have ranked *La La Land* above *Moonlight*. As the list got shorter and shorter, then, the vast majority of the votes which originally went to other movies ended up being cast for *Moonlight*, while *La La Land* picked up many fewer.

Hence the result: *La La Land* got a plurality of the



Source: <http://www.theday.com/article/20170226/ENT09/170229403>

votes, but serious dramas (the Heavyweights I was telling you about) got a majority. When that happens, La La Land will win a prize like Best Director, which is decided in the first round, but (happily for Moonlight) it will lose out for Best Picture.

So the next time you are watching the elite Oscars at your leisure or watching it bunking classes like me, don't let it fool you. Over the span of 80 odd years and above of Academy Awards, many movies and crews have been nominated for awards whom we felt were unworthy of it, or the curse (apparently) as to why DiCaprio didn't win an Oscar until a

year ago or why Will Smith is just a two-time Academy Award nominee or how Rocky won over Taxi Driver or Emma Stone over Meryl Streep after her arduous performance in Florence Foster Jenkins (which I presume would have definitely required grueling practice) or brace yourselves for the best blow: Ishtar over The Godfather!

So the Oscar goes to... definitely not its voting system!

Janani Sree Ganesh
2nd year IMSc. Economics

Kalam: The people's choice!

Finding a suitable name for the magazine was a very interesting, challenging and a responsible task. We wanted a name that would capture the essence of this great land, the people, their culture; compliment our basic objectives and of course be appealing!

Realizing the importance of the work, we chose a democratic path. We sought for suggestion from all and sundry by sending emails to them stating our objectives. We were overwhelmed by the response. Hundreds of names with their justifications poured in. *Kalam* was the clear-cut winner.

Kalam has different meanings in different languages. In Hindi, the name represents the pen. In Tamil, it represents open field, wider platform. A 'pen' or a 'platform'; *Kalam* is going to give students a solid platform to pen various write-ups to express their creativity and analytical skills.

Naveen Vetrivel & Malini Srinivasan
1st Year MA Media & Communication



GST

The biggest tax reform yet

The Goods and Service Tax bill was passed in the Parliament in August 2016 and became a law after the President's approval the following month. 16 years after it was first conceived, it is undoubtedly the biggest tax reform in independent India's history even though its effect on the Indian economy is yet to become clear. However, much can be read out from the way it has been designed. GST is a consumption tax based on the 'destination principle' in which tax is levied on the supply of goods and services. It is a 'single taxation' dual-VAT system that would bring about a unified market which may translate into lower business costs. It is a necessary reform considering the existing complex tax structure (Indirect taxes sum up to 30-35%). It would be simplified into either the Central GST (CGST) and the State GST (SGST) or the Integrated GST (IGST). In the long run, the lower tax burden could translate into lower prices on goods for consumers.

There have been many debates going on about the GST- mainly that of the anti-federal nature of the bill (that states would lose their fiscal autonomy and have to "go with begging bowls to the Center"), the IGST (on inter-state trade) and how it is to be shared between the Center and various states, the various rates under the new tax system, especially the Revenue Neutral Rate- the rate required to maintain the state's current revenue level and the Standard Rates now fixed at 5%, 12%, 18% and 28% (The need for uniform rates itself lacks a rational explanation. Many experts have voiced the need for a differential rate of GST above a certain minimum floor rate for each commodity or service (as in the European Union), the various products exempted from the bill such as petroleum and alcohol (whose present share is 40% of the Total State Tax Revenue) and the structure of the

GST Council (which discriminates producing states who are already set to lose a major chunk of their revenue sources due to the reforms, permanently).

Essentially, the GST is expected to bring about a surge in India's economic growth, mainly due to its better tax compliance (from an increased tax base and better tax collection methods). But it remains just a novel idea. The question we must ask is about the design and implementation. It is discussed at a time when among 121 crore Indians, only about 51 crore filed income tax returns in 2015-16 and an even smaller number, only 1.3 crore individuals, paid income tax. Ironically, the much sought out Direct Tax Code Bill was disregarded before bringing in the GST. The dependence on Indirect taxes today is as high as 67% with only a 3% decrease over the past 60 years. By shifting the tax burden from the producers to the consumers, the millions of poor in India, GST becomes a regressive tax reform that would increase the rate of inequality (unless there is a rise in Direct Tax to GDP ratio over the rise in Indirect Tax to GDP ratio).

All of this when put together questions the rationale of the government in introducing the GST. The most fundamental of all concerns is expressed by Kerala Finance Minister Thomas Isaac: "When the Value Added Tax was launched, the industry did not pass on any benefits to the people. So how will it be done this time? What steps will the government take to ensure that it does not happen again?"

Ruthu C.A.
2nd year IMSc. Economics



Are we alive?

Every morning we wake up. We wake up from sleep. We wake up from dreams. We wake up to work on our dreams. Nocturnal ends. The day starts. The same routine each day. Every single day. We walk fighting the winds, sun, and rain. Every single day. Are we alive just because we wake up? Or just because we are eating, breathing and operating our bodies? Every single day. Are we cognisant of the fact that a soul exists inside this body of flesh and blood? A soul which is free yet trapped. Do our body and soul have the same goals and desires? Has anyone of us given a thought to that? Any single day?

No, we haven't. Our bodies are too busy functioning to fulfil its goals and desires. There exists a brain and a mind. The brain belongs to the body and the mind belongs to the soul. The brain works tirelessly for the body to achieve what it wants. What does it want? Every single day?

It wants to study, work, invent, design, build, compose, plan and analyse. It wants to be fed, clothed and be taken care of. It wants sensuality and intimacy. These are just goals and desires of our body. Not our soul. What does our soul want then? It wants to think, meditate, explore and develop awareness. It wants tranquillity and mental wellbeing. It wants to express

emotions, love and care (of residing body and surrounding bodies). It wants to heal and grow. Every single day.

Fulfilling desires of the body gives us pleasure while those of the soul gives us happiness. Pleasure is short lived. Happiness is long lasting.

Our physical body cannot exist without a soul but the soul can exist without a material body. The body will become weak and perish. The soul will flourish forever. Is it not important then to consider the goals and desires of our soul as well?

Pause for a moment and grasp the soul in you. It is the inner soul that comprehends the world around us and the inner mysteries of life. Our soul is the reality.

The body will go to sleep again. It will turn dead at the nightfall. But the soul is conscious of the world and of itself.

A happy soul and calm mind will make accomplishing goals and desires of the body a beautiful journey. A journey called life.

Purnima R
3rd year IMSc. Economics

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-Editorial Team, Kalam



In the nest of her dreams

The rays of the scorching sun were directly falling on my face that morning as I was carrying a partially damaged umbrella. In the nick of time I had a glimpse around the corner of my eye. It was a giant bird flying right under the sun. “Albatross, an albatross, look over there, an albatross,” I shouted out of excitement. “There is no Albatross here,” said my friend, who claims that he has seen a bigger bird than this when he was in school. Soon, I realized that CUTN is a nest for birds, especially during the migratory season. The pond in the middle of the tall bushes near the new hostel is a centre of attraction for the purple bird, white bird, blue bird. Yes, I don’t know the names of the birds because I never wanted to. When we went for a photo-shoot on a weekend morning, a bare tree was occupied with the same huge ‘albatross’ birds, not two or three but more than ten of them, neither a pelican, nor a stork but beautiful in frame. But if you have seen the super diving of a pied-kingfisher to catch its prey after fluttering and floating in the air for some time, your curiosity to learn about birds will have wings. Where to begin? How do I begin? Does anyone do it in the campus?

That was the right way to end our evening conversation- to see how ‘actions speak louder than words’ because after knowing about the snake from two juniors, Hima Nair broke the chat and rushed to the spot at mess corridor, without any delay and helped it to find its way back to green. I realized that instances like this are quite natural for her for she is an ornithologist, one who studies birds. Thanks to my senior for introducing her, it was just before the monsoon hit the skies to drop the migratory birds at CUTN campus that I had an entertaining conversation with this “parrot” from

I.MSc. Life Science, who loves to share knowledge and is adventurous. “Yes, I used to get sensitive before when people called me names. Not anymore,” says bold Hima, who has faced many rough experiences that made her what she is now-an ornithologist.

First Flight

Her home at Kasargod, Kerala is a nest for birds to come and help themselves to the food and water that her family keeps on the branches of trees. As a child, Hima once rescued an Indian Pitta that was hurt while migrating and the bird still visits them annually.

To her, birds are not pets but siblings to whom she talks “to rejuvenate while in pain.” Instead of a half-an-hour walk, it takes her two hours to reach her Granny’s place, as she shares her feelings and stories with all the birds while exploring.

Her parents encouraged her with books and references about birds. Thus, she developed her interest by recording her observations, adding checklists, attending forest camps and doing internships in premier institutes like Salim Ali Center of Ornithology and Nature and Wildlife Institute of India.

Life @ Campus

CUTN has a great role in moulding Hima’s love for birds. She was reminiscing when she talked about the regular cycle trips she took, in dawn and dusk, to see her dear birds of our area. “This calm delta region where our campus is located is free from flex boards, multi-storeyed buildings and lights. Therefore, I was happy collecting data and recording my observations since my fresher year.” Her face was a poignant reminder of the atrocities we do to nature. “Now I don’t see birds like kingfisher as much as I did after the canals got concrete walls. Maybe it might have found a new bank to nest” she said.

“
To her, birds are not pets but
siblings to whom she talks
“to rejuvenate while in pain”

Into the Wild

Instead of amusement parks, Hima prefers forests at Ranipuram, Wayanad or Munnar, to spend vacations with people of same interest. A regular participant in camps, she now takes classes for such gatherings. Sitting idle is not her cup of tea as her interests extend to photography, compering, craft using scrap and knitting bags. I could see her excitement when she described the surprising moment of seeing around fifty fawns that popped up one by one from the bushes. "That visual treat made me so frozen that I forgot to click a picture," Hima shared her 'wild' experiences and memorable moments. She is always thankful to those trips with her family that helped her spot her favourite birds unexpectedly or to see a rare bird flying up in the sky. She is good at identifying birds from a distance, remembering their names and their characteristics. With the help of her Department, Hima is in the process of publishing her records and data about birds. A member of various organizations like Exploring Nature Through Birds (ENTB), Green Earth, Hima always has the fear of losing what the Earth possesses. "Animals will attack us only in retaliation when humans poach them for fun." Hima is one among the thousands who stand to save nature and she wants more youngsters to join the force. "Birds will starve in summer. You can keep a grain box

and a bowl of water in your courtyard and spread happiness" a small tip she gave to drive home.

'Hima'laya

Hima is now at Himalayas for her dissertation on birds. The weather might have been intolerable but I guess the winter migratory birds can take care of acclimatizing her to 'Hima of Himalayas'. She is happily fulfilling her dreams of spotting some rare birds during her sojourn at the mountain ranges. She once said, "Going alone can make you feel insecure but it shouldn't pull you back from achieving." People have asked her to stop chasing her dreams for being born as a girl but not once has she given up this flight. The chat began amid her preparations for a field visit she had to accompany with Dept. of English to Vedaranyam. "I assist in trips so that I can share knowledge, learn from questions and think about new ideas people put forth." As the 'parrot' continued talking, I realized that it can converse in different languages. Surely, I will 'cage' her someday for bird-watching with a bird before it flies higher.

Shwetha Pramod
1st year MA Mass Communication

CREATIVE CORNER



Photo: Shwetha Pramod
1st year MA Mass Communication

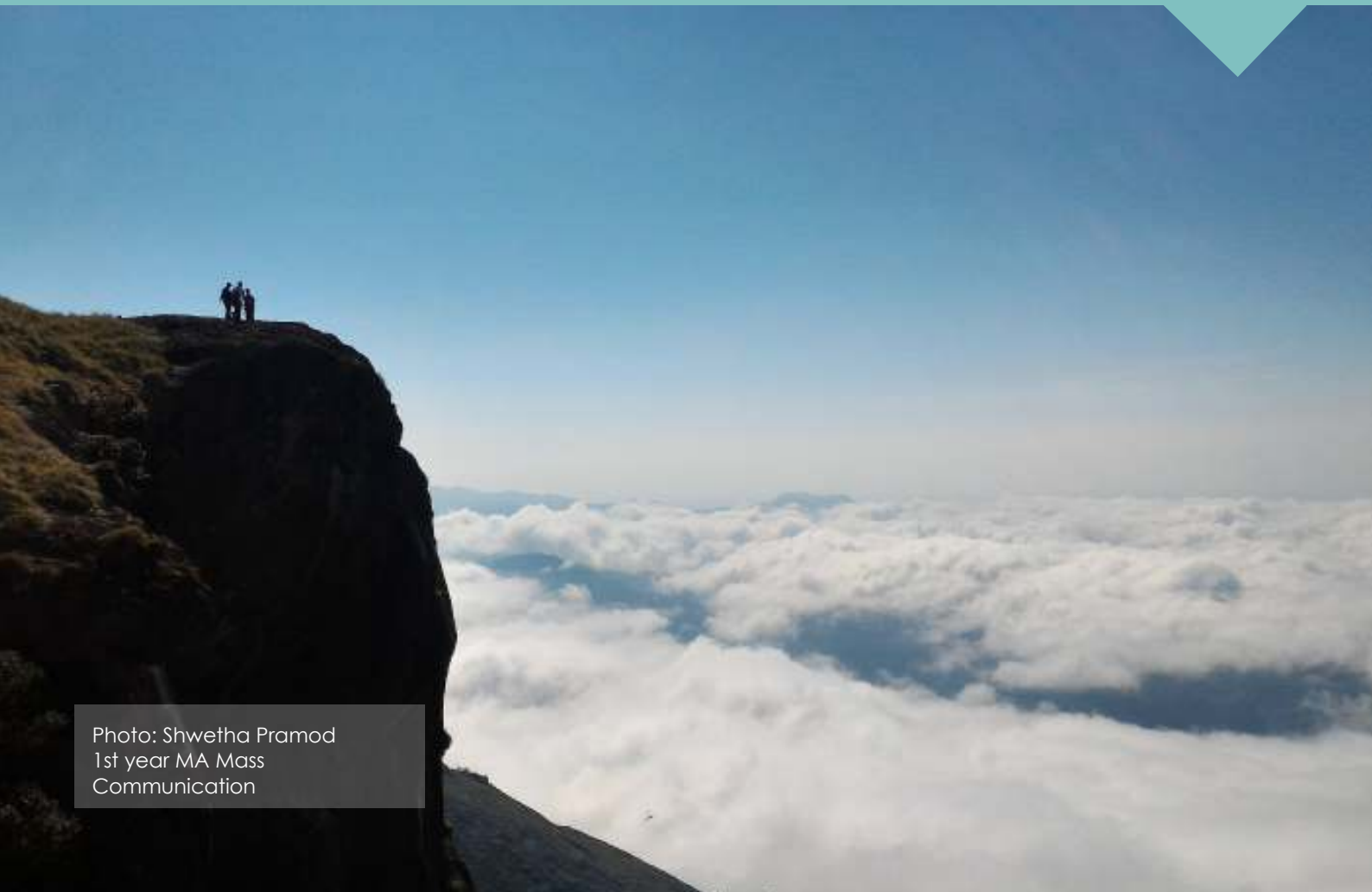


Photo: Shwetha Pramod
1st year MA Mass
Communication

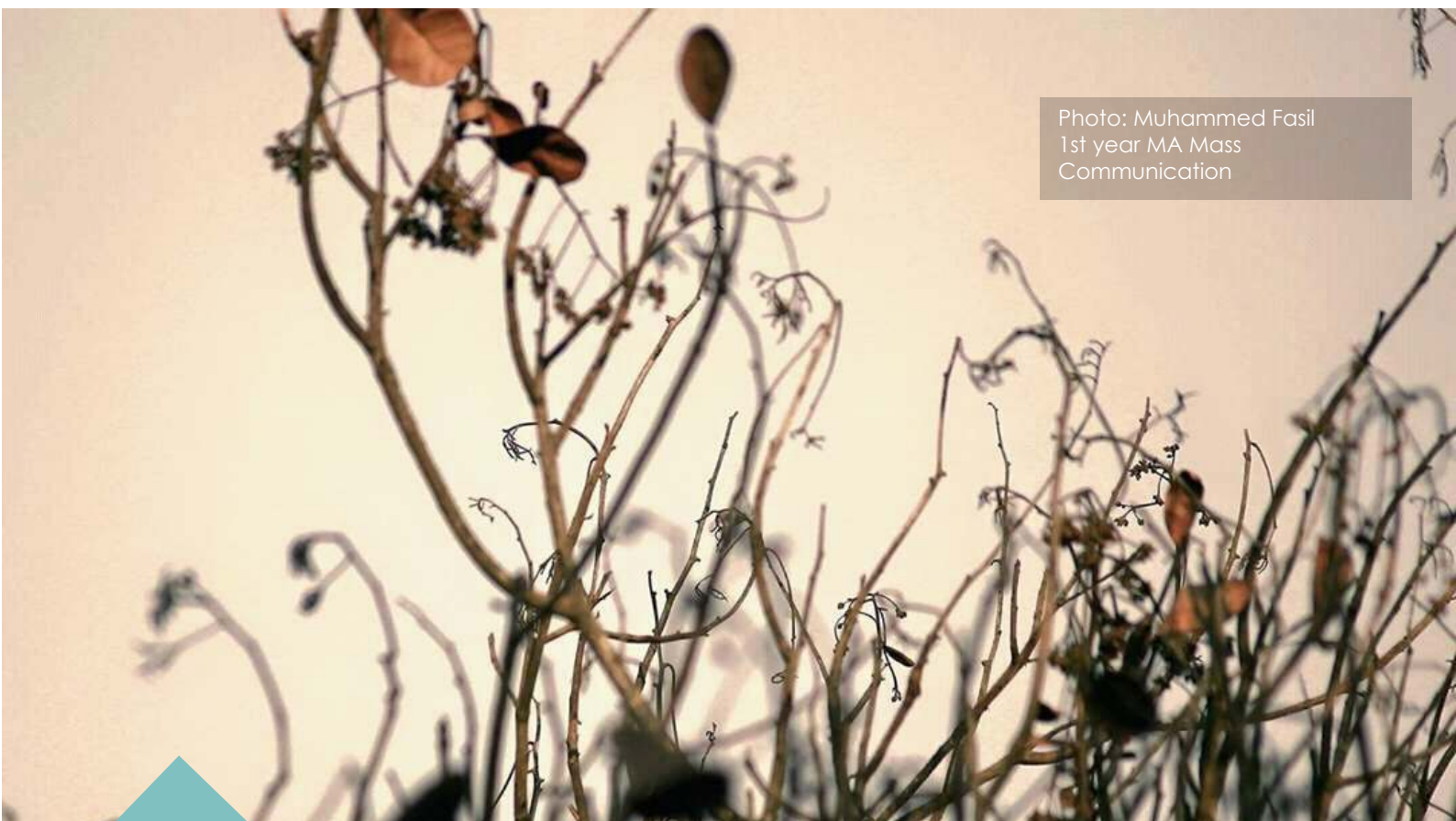


Photo: Muhammed Fasil
1st year MA Mass
Communication



Photo: Muhammed Fasil
1st year MA Mass
Communication

Logo logic!

I'm glad that the logo of the magazine generated unprecedented curiosity and observations from various quarters. It gave us a strange sense of satisfaction as we could able to stir the still hearts in some way! Many questioned the logic behind it. I thought it's time to demystify. After days of brain storming sessions, we decided on some principal elements: The banyan tree, olive branches, nib of a pen, human hands, and slogan—partnership, passion and possibilities. Our designer, Mr. Naveen V, student of 1st year Media & Communication, did a wonderful job by putting various components of the logo together.

The banyan tree in the logo symbolizes the personality of a benevolent ruler who looks after all those under his care. Olive branches symbolize peace. The human hands represent coordination and team work. The nib of the pen stands for avenue to express one's ideas and thoughts. The color, blue signifies creativity. Yellow is the color of joy, happiness, intellect, and energy.

Hope, we have succeeded in producing a logo which complements the basic objectives of the magazine that wants to provide the students a platform to express their creativity, forge a strong bond among various stakeholders of CUTN and project the immense talent of CUTNians to the outside world.



Malini Srinivasan
1st year MA Mass Communication



The little boy and the seed

“What is the matter with this boy?” asked the woman in green faded sari looking at him placing her left thumb and fore finger on her chin in surprise.

“He has swallowed the seed of a custard apple,” replied another woman who gathered at the boy’s hut along with the other women folk of the village in consternation. She wore a chequered blue sari and looked rather old. The boy seemed to be hardly thirteen named as Nagesh. For this reason he stopped going to school for a week in fear of being mocked at by his mates.

“If he has swallowed the seed, it will come out naturally while defecating. Why bother?” The first woman in faded green sari said adjusting the fringe.

“But it did not happen. It has got stuck in the neck, in the food pipe, right behind the larynx and it has stayed there for a week. The boy feels it, he says.”

“In that case, the remedy lies in eating bananas or taking plenty of water. The banana will push the seed inside while water dashes it into the intestines. Once it slides into stomach, it will come out in the morning while relieving.”

“The boy has tried these two ways. But the seed has not stirred, it has remained at the same spot behind the larynx. He has also tried another way by consuming more lukewarm water in two or three gulps and later inserting two of his fingers as far as they could reach in the gullet and pulled out the water from intestines. But the seed has not fallen out. It has stuck

there only as if taking revenge up on the poor boy.” The conversation went on between these two women as others watched and listened intently in utter disbelief and surprise. “Well, nothing could be done at this juncture. It should come out on its own”, said another woman in the group.

The women parted as the dusk fell over the village. But the boy felt downhearted as he listened to the word, “Nothing could be done.” These words enhanced his apprehensions. He did not see any relief from the seed immediately.

The boy sat on the cot and ate his small food consisting of rice and pepper rasam prepared by his aged mother. She too sat at his cot as if worried deeply about the life of her son. It became a serious concern for the mother. The boy had no father and his only sister was studying in a welfare residential school far away from the village. She was not informed of the plight of her brother in fear that it might disturb her concentration on studies. However, the village comprising a population of hardly two hundreds was afflicted with this development which they had never seen before nor had ever predicted. Two or three women were on the belief that the boy must have been possessed by a spirit in the guise of a seed. All kinds of rumours were afloat in the village, and the boy had certainly become the topic of discussion and worry, and soon this had spread to the neighbouring villages like bush fire.

Soon an exorcist from a certain village was summoned on the advice of a woman who lived at the other end

of the street, lined with thatched houses. The exorcist with a huge vermilion disk mark on his forehead between the eye brows and three chaplets around his neck, one was made of feathers and flowers, another of some stones of mixed colours, and the third of rudraksas (used as prayer beads in Hinduism and Buddhism) with magic talisman at the end arrived on the scene. He held a magic wand in his right hand and brass bowl with water in his left hand. The boy was seated in front of him and the exorcist uttered some incoherent and undecipherable words. Later he lifted the wand and rolled it on the back of his neck and placed it on the larynx and muttered loudly, "Get away, you bitch, you swine, come out, I will show you who I am. Come out, you bitch. You cannot escape." He used all foul language by placing the magic wand on the larynx. Yet the boy did not move a little. He passively submitted to the exorcist's tantrums. Yet, "nothing could be done," lingered in his mind. The seed remained where it was, perhaps it had its comfortable zone for resting. Undefeated, the exorcist tried hard to drive the spirit in the form of seed from the boy's neck. He circled the magic wand around the boy's face and neck clockwise and anti-clockwise and later offered camphor burnt in front of him. On his command, the lady in the hut brought a copper plate on which he poured a little water and mixed it with turmeric and kumkum and with a camphor burning in it he circled it around the boy from head to toe and ordered the lady to take out and throw it in the backyard. All this ritual was over in an hour or so, he collected money and trudged homewards as if he had literally driven the seed.

Yet nothing could be done. The boy's condition persisted and there had been no improvement in whatever form. The boy sat on the cot like a convicted patient, more worried and dejected. Was there no way out? Should I suffer like this? The boy ruminated thus. Caught in such disturbing thoughts, the boy fell back on the cot and soon slid into sleep. The mother too lied on the floor and slipped into sleep.

Now the nightmarish ensued. Soon the boy found heavy bulging on his neck, and it grew enormously as if like a swollen balloon. It must be trying to find space within its zone by spreading its roots as far as it could. "What business this seed has in my neck. For more than a week! It is resting there as if crowned." Soon, the seed went down inside the stomach where it started sprouting. The sprout was growing by sucking the juices that came from the liver and all organs of the body. It became a plant, and now it was growing with its roots going down, stretching into the intestines, touching the walls and breaking them. The seed was now completely burst, disappeared, only in its place a huge peepal tree had emerged. The tree in the stomach! Something unimaginable! The boy bore a tree, instead of a stomach, and carried it round the village showing its contours. Soon the boy became the talk of the village. The woman who suspected the seed as devil now got her convictions firmed up, and the boy was literally transformed into a tree, the head became the rolling stock of brazen fruits. What a metamorphosis! The boy in tree shape lay at one corner of the

village, and soon the women folk started worshipping, propitiating by breaking coconuts and offering camphor harati.

It was a joyful ride for the boy, he woke up at the call of a cock in the neighbour's hut. His bowls rumbled and he rushed out and relieved in the backyard. To his great surprise, he found the seed. The morning broke, the same women folk gathered round the faeces and celebrated in broad smiles merging with the soft cool light. The boy in great relief as if conquered the death collected the books and headed towards school.

Dr. K. V. Raghupathi
Assistant Professor
Department of English

CREATIVE CORNER

Photo: Muhammed Fasill
1st MA Mass Communication





No more moon

Moon was my first wonder. In my childhood, most of the days I ate my dinner wondering how the moon is so amazing. I tried my best to catch the moon. I had a strong feeling to touch the moon which never happened. In my school days, again I came across the story of the moon, when I heard the story of Neil Armstrong who put his foot print on the Moon, I got the feeling of touching the moon with my own hands.

Now I fear, because we have built a super power nation with our scientific advancement, but we are destroying Nature. There are many examples in our history, where some of our scientific inventions have paved way for massive destructions. Humans have the most precious gift in the world, the sixth sense which is unbelievable. If this exploitation continues, then earth would no more remain a heaven to live in.

Can we think of one more place which is close to earth has a suitable climate for habitation? Let us assume the answer is yes. Now let us take the liberty to think how life would be on the moon. Before that, let us have a brief look at the evolution of mankind.

When the earth evolved, photosynthesis started taking place, which led to the evolution of organisms. Humans evolved only centuries after, but they changed the world. Nature has given us everything in boun-

ty, but what have we given her in return? We are exploiting almost all the resources available on the earth. Do we have any future without these resources? Why don't we preserve the nature? It is our duty to pass on the resources to future generation.

Now coming back to life on the moon, man would create a suitable atmosphere for human habitat. Again, bountiful nature will give us everything suitable for mankind. Is there any chance that we will preserve nature on the moon?

“

Can we think of one more place which is close to earth has a suitable climate for habitation?

How would the life on the moon be if everything is plentiful and everyone lives without any human insanity of exploiting the resources? Nature would nourish, will give living organisms all they wanted to survive. Everyone would be treated equally. If we are unable to preserve the resources on the earth,

what are we going to do in the upcoming environment on the moon? Are we capable of taking care of the resources?

I'm not against development. Development is necessary for us. Conducting research on the moon and other planets is necessary. But if we establish an interplanetary habitat, this will in turn increase human greed. Like Earth, we will again exploit the nature of the moon, if we have an option to live in there.

Malini Srinivasan
1st year MA Mass Communication



Buried alive

I could feel my limbs touching some slimy, watery substance. It's so dark inside yet there is a sense of safety I could feel. Wait! There is a sound I can hear, lab-dub lab-dub! It's a heartbeat most similar to mine. I guess it's of someone too close to me. I can hear some distinct voices of people talking to the one I am with. There is a harsh, rude voice. I hear him warning the caring stranger of mine. But, why?

I have started to swim and the space around me has widened. I can tap my limbs against the surface. But, whenever I do so I feel my caring stranger patting me and trying to calm me down. This feeling is so pleasant so serene. I am so eager to see my caring stranger. I want to know how she gets to know the every movement and fulfills all my wants. I hear her saying; she wants to give me a beautiful life as beautiful as I. But we both have never seen each other. Yet how much is she so sure of me being beautiful. She sounds to be too eager to hold me in her arms.

If she is so happy of my birth, why does she get so panic, so stressed whenever she is warned by my rude stranger who makes her end up with crying and praying for my life? Why is she so scared that I will not be wanted when my rude stranger will get to see me? I don't think there is anybody who would not want a beautiful child. I have heard the caring stranger saying it makes her very happy as I am beautiful. So, even the rude stranger will be happy after seeing me.

I was not thinking of my appetite. But, she understood I am hungry and is feeding me now. I can feel she is upset now. I don't know if she is hungry or not. But she is definitely not in a good mood to eat. She is trying to console herself to eat for me. I can hear her repeating "things will work out, everything will be fine". I wish to be like her. I want to live the life she desires to give me.

“

I hear her saying,
she wants to give me
a beautiful life as
beautiful as me

Ah! I am strangled, this place is so narrow. I can hear my caring stranger screaming with pain. I am scared. I hope I am not hurting her. I can hear many other voices now, even closer. They are helping my caring stranger in the process of giving me a life. Oh! They have caught hold of my

head; I hear them assuring her that I am fine and will be with her soon.

I am suffocating, I am out. But, in the hands of a stranger. I am gasping to breathe. They have turned me upside down. I am crying. I never cried when I was there in the slimy fluid. I am now placed near her heart. She is so soft. She is hugging me tight. She sounds happy but I can feel her being caught in a strange fear. Her heartbeat reveals it.

Now that room is occupied by many strangers, I again hear the rude stranger's voice. His eyes reflect no love for me or for my caring lady. I hear him screaming at my caring lady. I hear the other voice saying, they should have not waited for nine months to see a girl

child being born. They should have done this earlier.

I am so scared; I wonder what they are going to do with me? I hear my caring lady pleading the rude man for my life. I don't understand, it's she who has given me a life, then why should she plead somebody else for my life? The rude man has succeeded in snatching me from her arms; he hits her so hard that she falls down unconscious.

Their hold is so painful. These voices are talking of dumping me somewhere. I can see them digging the earth. This place is so scary. Dried leaves, rotten smell, dead flowers. The rude man is now placing me into the dug earth. I don't want to be killed. I have just been given a life. I am crying as loud as

possible. There is nobody to save me.

I feel the soil all over me. I am suffocating. I realize this time my suffocation is not going to give me a life instead it's going to take. I remember when I was there in the caring lady's womb I was eager to come out and live. I feel like going back to my safest dark place as I have understood I was safe there. The darkness there was to give me a life unlike here beneath the earth. These people won't let me live. But, I am sure as long as I had been in the womb of my caring lady she would have not let me die.

Sachi Sharma
1st year MA English Studies

CREATIVE CORNER

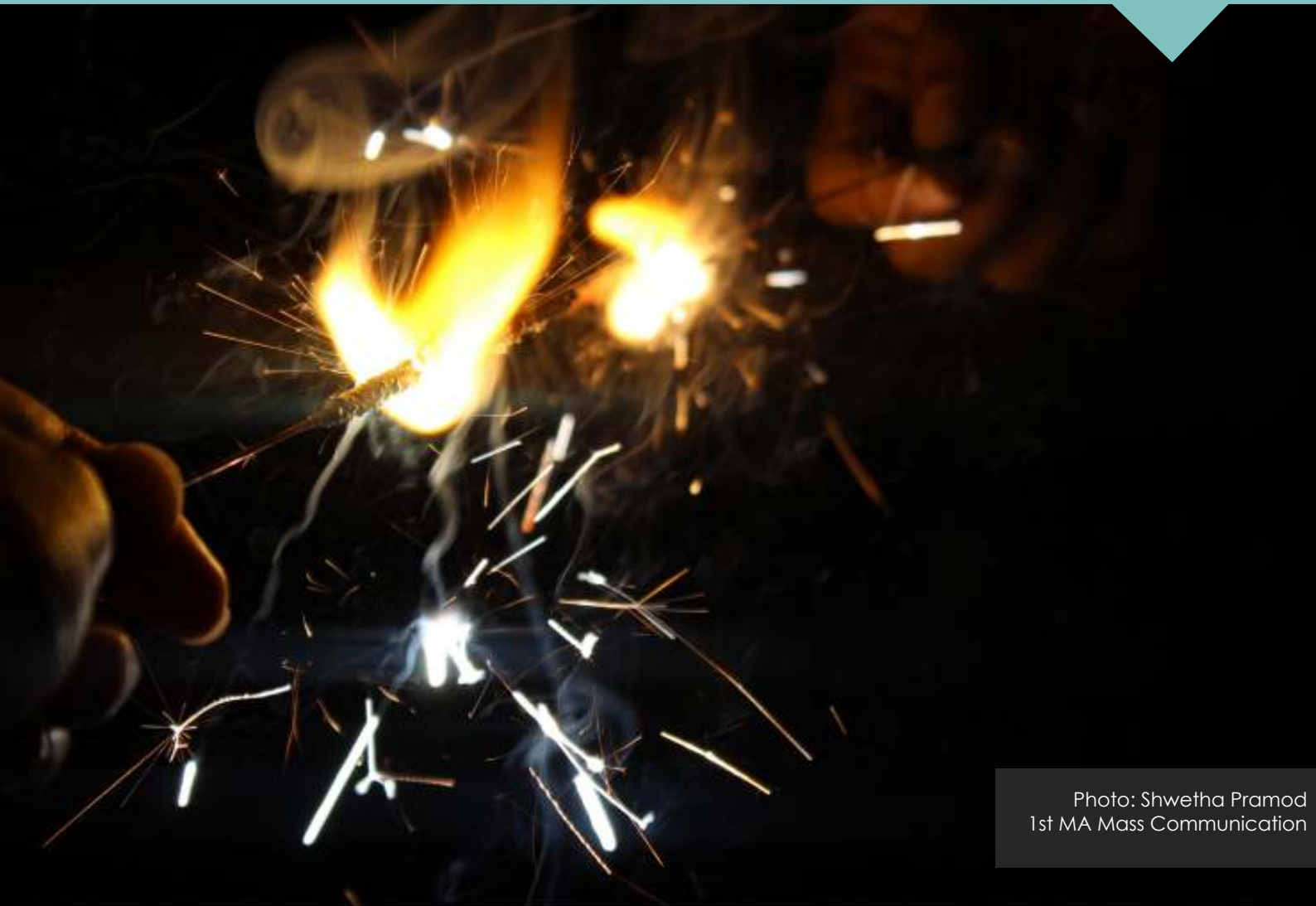


Photo: Shwetha Pramod
1st MA Mass Communication



An unknown girl's cry in an unknown village in an unknown land

This is my cry in wilderness:
 Cry for the precious I lost in tender age.
 I asked them to let me walk freely
 At least the freedom enjoyed by a street dog.
 Instead they told me to save my skin within four walls.
 I asked them to teach me in my language
 Instead they gave me the language of violence.
 I asked them for books to thwart pain
 Instead they taught me how to hold guns.
 I asked them to teach me Geography and History
 Instead they told me it was immoral.
 I asked them to teach me mathematics
 Truly, they taught me in the language of ammunition and weapons -
 One bullet plus two bullets is how many?
 I asked them to let sunshine fall in my face
 Instead they said the sun is masculine.
 I asked them to let me see the beauty of my own body
 Instead they said the first sin was already bitten by Satan.
 I asked them to give me a little share of their freedom
 Instead they in thirties took me to an unknown place and robbed my body.
 I asked them to free me thereafter
 Instead they used me as a chattel.

Dr. K.V. Raghupathi
 Assistant Professor
 Department of English

Worms

I found a worm under my skin
A tiny, black, wiggly worm!
I wondered how it found its way!

The empty street
called out to me.
I could not ignore
the whinings of a hurt puppy,
decided to tend to it
But the appalling scar made me
regurgitate.
The rotten wound wrenched my stomach out.

Now all I could see
were red, clotted patches of blood,
the clamped veins,
sticky, sticky nodes.

I tried running,
but the worm had laid eggs
they tied me, trapped me..

Finally, I succumbed
My voice found me back.

But the worm has devoured me already
And all that was left was my "self".



Convo at a Facebook chat

Samyuktha
Vishwanathan (Active Now)

FEB 3 AT 7.15 PM

Hai SAMYUKTHA

FEB 8 AT 4.47 PM

Hello , how are u ?

FEB 16 AT 9.40 PM

Hey, what's up ? How's
your day?

MAR 1 AT 12.01 AM

Congratulations, you have
successfully wasted 2
months this year.

MAR 7 AT 4.03 PM

Had tea and snacks?

MAR 16 AT 5.53 PM

Hello !!

You are online but not
responding

MAR 28 AT 10.42 PM

Good night, sweet dreams

MAR 30 AT 11.33 PM

Hey how's your day,
Samyuktha ??
Hello, are you there ?

SamyukthVishwanathan
(Active now)

MAR 31 AT 1.43 AM

Hello

Excuse me madam?

Why are you not replying?

I'm not that type of wrong boy.

I've been messaging you for
2 months but you're not
at all responding.

Don't mistake me, I just
messedged you because
exept you no one is online.

And I'm not sleepy.

These are the only reasons!

(Seen at 1.46 AM)

Smart enough kiddo

What smart?

I told the truth!

Then what about the previous messages?

That was for an intro

Ahaa..

Feeling sleepy?

**Nope, just scratching down the
news feed.**

Just text something
to me till you sleep



Samyuktha Vishwanathan (Active now)

Actually

Samyuktha Vishwanathan (Active now)

I had a nice sleep in the day itself. So it'll take more time. You can go to sleep.

Aahaa

MAR 31 AT 2.03 AM

Same reason for me too

Yeah, I saw, everything memorized

Mmm

Magizhchi

Ah! you took 2 months to reply me!

Then, are your parents asleep?

Ohh

How great you are

Nope, they've gone to Bangalore on a business trip.

So, for 2 months you didn't see my profile. How great you too are

Oh, what about your bro or sis?

It's not like that, I saw your profile but I forgot the details. Now I revised.

I'm the only daughter of my parents.

Aahaa, interesting!

Is it ?? Are you alone at your home ?

Yep !

Feeling sleepy ?

MAR 31 AT 2.08 AM

Daredevil! Even I'll be a bit scared!

Too much

*Hello, are you there?
Samyuktha madam, slept ah ?
(Seen at 2.10 AM)*

Hey, WhatsApp number please.

Too too much

He came inside. Someone broke the door and came in my house.

OK! I understood, hereafter I won't ask again. Forget it

Hey seriously? Or playing with me

Hahaha...

He's wearing black coat and suit I'm serious ! I don't know what to do.

Then, which college?

Didn't you see my profile?

Oh sorry I'll see, wait

Samyuktha Vishwanathan (Active now)

Do you know him??

**No! I don't know! I can't see him!
I'm very scared!**

Don't be scared. Where are you now?

**I'm in the bedroom.
I locked the door inside.**

Good. Call 100 fast! Inform them.

**Shit! My mobile is in the hall!
I have only my laptop with me**

*Ahh! I'm with you. Nothing
will to happen to you*

**Oh shit! He's knocking the door
continuously as if he's gonna
break it. Do something please!
Help me please!**

*Don't panic. Text your address.
I'll make a call.*

**No. 16, Galaxy apartments,
Text fast!**

Samyuktha Vishwanathan (Active now)

*Hello!
What happened?
Anything serious?
Hey! Are you there?*

MAR 31 AT 2.27 AM

*Is there everything alright?
Hey reply please!*

**Yeah, calm right down
He went away**

*Ohh, thank God this ended up
I was too afraid for you.*

Mmm.

*Take your mobile and inform
the police first. And also tell
your parents and neighbours. Say
everything to them.*

Sure.

Do it fast! Now!

Ok I'll do it

*And my sincere advice to you is
hereafter please don't be alone
at your home. OK?*

Definitely I'll follow your words

*That's good! Go and make the
call first.*

Mmm OK.

*One sec... How did you find out
that he's really gone?*

MAR 31 AT 2.34 AM

*Where are you now?
Samyuktha! Answer me!
Is this really you?
(Seen at 2.39 AM)*

You cannot reply to this conversation anymore

Suriya Vasanth
2nd year IMSc. Economics

In our pursuit to make *Kalam--*
a magazine of excellence, we
seek your valuable feedback at
cutnmag@gmail.com

Advantages of reading!

A leader is a thinker, a person whose judgment is developed to be well-versed and confident. Such balance only comes through reading. Books open to us a world where we meet new characters, hear new stories and encounter new traditions and lifestyles. Through reading, we get new ideas and thoughts and learn many things which can shape our characters and mould us into better human beings, critical thinkers and independent learners. Reading broadens the thinking horizon of a person, improves vocabulary and cultivates sensitivity towards people of different cultures.

Reading makes us disciplined, increases our creativity, increases our memory, helps with our concentration and increases our focus. Reading is considered to be one of the best habits and hobbies that one can inculcate. It is an inexpensive hobby and a means of entertainment; the best part is that it is available anywhere, anytime. With the popularity of TV,

computers and the internet in recent times, the habit of reading has taken a backseat. However unlike them, reading is an active mental process – which makes you to use your brain. By reading, you think more and become smarter.

With so many benefits of reading, we can say that reading is always a beneficial activity with absolutely nothing to lose from our side. We can gain tons of knowledge from it. It takes a lot of efforts to develop this habit, but if we start right now over the period of time we will gain interest, see the difference it makes! It is therefore important that this habit be developed among all of us for a well-grounded education.

Happy Reading!

D. Elavarasi
(Ph.D.) Research Scholar
Department of Education

CREATIVE CORNER

books

Photo: Shwetha Pramod
1st MA Mass Communication



The rain

I dreamed of the rain, and it has gone
The sores in my sore, they have grown
I'm sure they aren't bees
Since there is nothing sweet

I dreamed in the night and dawn
I kept that secret with me and won
Once she came and said
The love in her heart has bloomed

Yes! Now the rain has gone
And the hornbill is alone
People said I don't have a brain
Yes! But a heart, and I do have pain
They call it heartbreak
But it's strange, seems they are fake
I don't know why they call it heartbreak
When all my body parts feel alike

Mohammed Shafi
1st year MSc. Chemistry

