

TESS 2019 brings Cinema alive!

Imana Bhattacharya

The students of Symbiosis Centre for Media and Communication came together for their annual film festival, The East Side Story (TESS) on January 23 and 24, 2019. TESS, a two-day festival and a culmination of all facets of cinema, aimed at creating a supportive community of filmmakers by giving students from various institutions from across India a chance to showcase their creative work. The theme for this edition of TESS was, "Cinema through the ages." After a three-year hiatus, TESS kicked off with the most anticipated Cinema Day Celebration – a day when the students had the liberty to dress up as any character from their favorite movie or TV show. Right from picking their best-loved characters to perfecting their outfits, the students didn't leave any stone unturned to get the right look.

The characters that students turned up as was a vibrant range from Spiderman, Hermione Granger (*Harry Potter series*), and Gamora (*Avengers series*) to Mastani (*Bajirao Mastani*), Raj (Raj Kapoor from the iconic Bollywood film *Shree 420*) and Circuit (*Munnabhai MBBS*). "I made everything from scratch, using foil, tape, threads, clear wrap based on YouTube DIY videos. I just wanted to make sure my outfit was perfect", said third-year student Sayali Gatne on receiving the title of best dressed from her batch as the famous Disney character Maleficent. Netflix India recognised the effort of third year students Pranav Krishnan and Mahima Ganesh on Twitter by retweeting their photos. The duo had come dressed as Eric Effiong and Maeve Wiley, respectively, from the hit Netflix series *Sex Education*. Myriad other events



PHOTO/TESS PHOTOGRAPHY TEAM

Students dressed up as characters from the comic universe on Cinema Day at TESS 2019

like a mimicry contest, dialogue delivery challenge, and treasure hunt kept the adrenaline of the crowd high. A 24-hour short film challenge was also declared for interested students. The second day of the event was directed towards showcasing students' filmmaking skills. Eminent personalities like Prashant Pathrabe, director general of Films Divisions of India, Praveen Muldhokar, bureau chief of News 18 (Nagpur) and Avinash Gawai, national secretary of

Public Relations Council of India were present as special guests. "Films are an epitome of expression in terms of communications. It has been an honor to be a part of a festival which celebrates films in this manner", commented Mr. Gawai. Student-made short films competing under various categories for the title of the best film were screened. Another event that caught the fancy of the students was an interactive session on cameras held by Fujifilm.

The two-day event came to conclusion with the declaration of winners and the prize distribution ceremony with an array of prizes being given out. A screening of the cult classic *Pulp Fiction* was set up for the students as a tribute to the art of cinema. As John Travolta and Samuel L. Jackson delivered their now-iconic performances, students watched with rapt attention, wondering who amongst them will be the next auteur of a future classic.

Czech PM unveils Symbiosis Centre for European Studies

Nayanika Mukherjee

Andrej Babiš, the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, visited the Symbiosis Viman Nagar campus on January 19 to inaugurate the Symbiosis Centre for European Studies. The institute is meant to promote the study of European culture, language, history and politics, and offer training and consultancy services to corporations. A tie-up that enables Symbiosis Law School students to opt for a European Legal Studies programme may also be explored in the future.

Babiš is the first Head of State to visit any campus of Symbiosis International (Deemed University). He was accompanied by Marta Nováková, the Czech Minister of Industry and Trade; Milan Hovorka, the country's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, and Karel Havlíček, the Vice-Chairman of the Czech government's Council for Research, Development and Innovation. The event was hosted by Dr. Vidya Yeravdekar the Pro Chancellor of

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ITS'19: Batch 2020 lifts the trophy again

Batch 2020 edged past Batch 2021 to successfully win the title for the second consecutive time

Shivansh Gupta



PHOTO/ITS PHOTOGRAPHY TEAM

An intense match of football between Batch 2021 and Batch 2019 at ITS'19 .

The 2019 edition of Symbiosis Centre for Media and Communication's annual inter-batch sports meet, In True Spirit (ITS) took place from January 28-30, in the Symbiosis Old and New Viman Nagar Campus. The matches took place in the morning and evening on the first two days, with the third day being entirely dedicated to the event. However, the Badminton and Swimming tournaments took place at the Lavale Campus on January 18 and the Table Tennis tournament was held in the Viman Nagar A-Wing hostel on January 19.

The build-up to the three-day fest started with the marketing campaigns of all the three batches. This included coming up with the hashtags, designing the jerseys and making the batch videos. Each batch elected their marketing heads, who spearheaded the campaign with frequent posts on the event's social media pages. Batch 2021 got off to a great start at their

(Contd on Page 2)

TOP PICKS



Soni (2018)

Pari Tavate

Soni, directed by debutant Ivan Ayr, is now streaming on Netflix. It's the story of two female cops, Soni and Kalpana, and their lives as women police officers in the bleak streets of New Delhi. Unlike most mainstream films featuring cops or 'women's issues', this slice of life cop drama has no rhetoric, no bombastic declarations of revenge or melodrama of any kind.

Instead Soni portrays an extremely realistic picture about the issues of women safety in Delhi and weaves in gender issues that the protagonists face in their lives. Without any music, the scenes are shot as single takes which beautifully highlight how unacceptable behaviour from men has been normalised by us.



Dear Journey Within

Fables for Grown-ups

Amitabh Dasgupta

Manas Dewan's Dear Journey is two novellas in one book, called Within and Freewheeling.

You can read it from whichever end you wish. The author is a marketing communications professional; his wife, a life coach; both from Pune. Together they embarked on a 20,000 km journey spanning 18 countries across Europe, on a 800cc Ducati motorbike. The Freewheeling part of the book is the fascinating story of this adventure.

The other part of the book, Journey Within, comprises short parables about the people and places that left allegorical impressions on the author. The book is a 222-page paperback in English; and is available for Rs.299.

Dilli Ke Jaan in Pune

Srishti Patnaik



You could be a vegan, vegetarian or a hard-core non-vegetarian. Café Delhi Heights in Phoenix Market City, Viman Nagar.

It has something special for everyone and manages to strike a balance among different types of cuisines—British, American, European and Indian. I started my meal with the tender, juicy Galauti Kebabs that had the exotic flavour of the rich, aromatic spices of Lucknow.

Their Signature dish Rogan Josh served with biryani, caper raita, house salad and Indian bread was comfortably filling.

A rather unconventional dessert—a Motichoor Ladoo cheesecake that melts in your mouth wrapped up my dinner perfectly.



Clockwise from top-left : Movie characters seen on the campus on TESS'19 Cinema Day -Tommy Singh, Bajirao, Malificent, Jasmine and the two Mastanis.

Batch of 2020 Champs!

(Contd from Page 1)

last ITS, the 2019 batch finished third. The story remained the same in Swimming for the senior-most batch as they finished third, while 2020 finished first for the second year in a row and 2021 settled with second place.

On the following day, 2021 bagged the first place in the women's singles category and mixed doubles category to finish on top in Table Tennis.

2019's victory in the men's singles category could only assure them a silver while 2020 finished last.

The junior-most batch continued their impressive run by defeating 2019 in the first Cricket match on day 2.

They eventually went on to win the Cricket tournament after defeating 2019 and 2020 in two back-to-back super over contests. Batch 2020 finished second and 2019, despite a few resilient batting performances, finished third.

For the third consecutive year, the 2019 Futsal team clinched the gold medal in Futsal and finished as the undisputed champions. Their only other victory came in the men's singles category of Tennis. However, the finished last in the women's singles category as 2020 bagged the first place.



All three batches come together to celebrate a successful culmination of ITS 2019

Just like the men's Cricket team, the women's team of 2021 also finished first. They thrashed 2020 in the first match and clinched a thriller against 2019 to finish as the winners of Box Cricket. 2020 finished second and 2019 finished third. On day 2, the Throwball team of 2020 stormed their way to the top with comprehensive victories over the 2019—which finished second and 2020 which finished third.

Living up to their reputation of being

a sporty batch, 2020 finished first in four other sports. They bagged gold in Volleyball, Athletics, Football, Throwball, and Basketball (men's).

The winners of each sport earned five points while second and third place finishes rewarded three and one points respectively. In the end, with a total of 50 points, Batch 2020 were declared winners of ITS 2019. 2021 finished second with 46 points and 2019 stood third with 30 points.



“By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest; Second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest. CONFUCIUS”

'Means-cum-merit based scholarships better alternative than reservations.. encourage corporates to provide CSR funding'

TOI

Introduction of 10% reservation for economically weaker sections of population in private universities is expected to lead to challenges. **Dr. Vidya Yeravdekar, principal director of Symbiosis Society**, which encompasses the Symbiosis schools and institutions under the Symbiosis International (Deemed University), discusses the implications of the announcement.

•What could have been an alternative to reservation?

Instead of the recently announced reservations for economically backward class, a better alternative would have been announcing scholarships. They could have gone for means-cum-merit based scholarships. Universities could have been requested to give a specific number of scholarships, full or partial, to such deserving but economically backward class students. Universities could then approach large corporates which would be able to fund these students through their CSR funding. In fact, Symbiosis has such scholarships for girls of economically backward sections from villages surrounding our university campus.

•Caste-based reservations targeted a group of the socially backward segment of society, whereas, economic backwardness caters to individuals. Will this make any significant change to you?

Caste-based reservations are for the uplift of a particular section of society that really suffered. Economically backward section reservation caters to individuals and is also transitory. Someone who falls under the slab of Rs 8 lakh annual income may not continue to be in that bracket for the number of years the student is studying



Dr. Vidya Yeravdekar

in the university. The minimum duration of an undergraduate programme is three years and it could be four or even five years. Does it mean that every year the university will have to request parents to submit such certificates? There will be a huge misuse to get such certificates. Currently, too, there are some parents who come with smart phones and in cars to drop their children to school, but have taken admission and get free education through the RTE (Right to Education) Act.

•How do you think institutes can adhere to these new policy changes?

Do you have a road map to implement this decision?

We haven't received any formal notification in this regard. We have learnt about this only through news reports. We are not even aware whether students

from 10% quota are required to be given fee concessions. Or else, how would such students afford education in private universities?

The source of funding of private self-financing universities is mainly through tuition fees from students. Self-finance universities that don't get any funding from the government will face quite a challenge.

Eventually, the burden will fall on the remaining 90% students when it comes to calculation of fees which is done by calculating cost per student. Private institutions will face a challenge.

If government wants to implement this they should also provide some funding to

private universities for these 10% students.

The government may also encourage large corporates to adopt this 10% quota and allow CSR funds to be used. Means-cum-merit based scholarships would have been a better option.

•In India, income is taxed from Rs 2.5 lakh a year and the proposed cut-off for reservation of Rs 8 lakh per annum puts one in the second income tax slab of 20%. Does this imply that those who are truly deprived will again be disadvantaged even within this quota?

I don't understand why this Rs 8 lakh slab was considered. Those that are really underprivileged will continue to suffer. The government cannot announce populist schemes merely to please their vote banks.

In education, lives and careers of lakhs of students are at stake.

•The Supreme Court had earlier capped the limit of reservations at 50%. In the current scenario, with increase of reservations being demanded under the OBC quota, will this additional 10% eventually push reservation up to 70%?

70% reservation is irrational. It also draws attention to the fact that merit is not encouraged. Merit should be encouraged in universities. If the government really wants to do something for economically backward students then they should ensure that meritorious students who cannot afford higher education get funding from some viable source.

There can be several ways to do this. Encourage all universities, both public and private, to provide scholarships to such economically backward class but meritorious students. Encourage corporates to provide CSR funding to universities that declare such scholarships. Provide tax rebates to individuals who provide for endowments for such scholarships to economically backward but meritorious students.

Link means-cum-merit scholarships given by universities in the parameters of ranking for universities through NIRF (National Institutional Ranking Framework) or include this parameter in assessment by NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council). This will ensure all universities will provide for such scholarships.

Provide some government funding even to private universities that provide such scholarships and encourage banks to provide loans with very low interest rates or zero interest to such economically backward but meritorious students.

(Excerpted from The Times of India, Pune edition)

Is the decline of Indian Rupee good for Economy?

Arnav Pingale

The Indian Rupee fell to an all-time low of ₹74 in the month of October, while many newspapers and articles deemed this as a major blow to the economy and a large concern for the Indian market currently, there is a reason to believe that the decline of the Indian rupee may be good for our economy in the longer run.

The economic law of demand states that the lower the price of any good, the higher the demand for the same. Every \$1 can buy ₹74 worth of goods in India, this encourages exporters to export goods as they make more rupees per dollar. If they have priced a product \$1000, it would fetch them ₹74,000 as compared to ₹71,000 they were earning earlier.

This also means increased foreign investments in the country as weakened Indian Rupee can buy them more than they could before - A golden opportunity. This will result in people converting their money to Rupees and

with a larger demand for the rupee, its price will go up, thereby strengthening the Rupee over a course of time.

Recently, India has seen an influx of foreign investments, the major one being American multinational retail corporation Walmart.

On May 9, 2018, Walmart announced its intent to acquire a 77% majority stake in the Indian e-commerce company Flipkart for \$16 billion.

In Feb 2018, Ikea announced its plans to invest up to Rs 4,000 corer (US\$ 612 million) in the state of Maharashtra to set up multi-format stores and experience centres.

Foreign direct investment in India grew by 23 per cent to \$12.75 billion during the April-June quarter of 2018-19, according to official data.

We can see that a weak currency is not all bad for developing nation such as India in the larger picture. India has seen major investments and will continue seeing more and also a gradual rise in the strength of the Rupee.

Online Platforms may face censorship by CBFC

Aishwarya Narayanan

Online streaming sites like Netflix and Amazon have gained immense popularity over the years and given Indian producers the platform to create great original content that has not only been recognized locally but globally as well. Such shows being Sacred Games, Lust Stories from Netflix and Comicstaan on Amazon India.

The ongoing debate regarding censorship of online content could prove to be a major setback for these companies and the filmmakers in terms of money and reputation.

It started following a PIL filed by an NGO that stressed on the need to curb the 'vulgarity, violence and crude language' on web series. They believed such content harms Indian culture and morality and that they're used primarily for boosting ratings and add no real value to the story.

If a pre-screening committee is set up to review shows it could lead to multiple issues- it dampens the creativity of producers resulting in ordinary un-original content, consequently

international producers and filmmakers will be reluctant to partner with Indian filmmakers leading to loss of credibility in the eyes of producers all over.

Piracy could also be another outcome, audiences will seek out other modes of watching such content since not everything on the internet can be censored.

Acclaimed film critic Raja Sen suggested that - 'a unified rating system that applies to locally available streaming platforms', is the best way out, this helps audience make a choice about watching content that contains sex, violence or strong language.

Online streaming sites must take their stand and fight this battle of censorship since so many filmmakers and producers have explored their artistic and creative ideas on such platforms and it would be a major step back to introduce any form of censorship.

UPDATE- Delhi HC dismissed the PIL filed by the NGO. Chief Justice Rajendra Menon added, "The online platforms are not required to obtain any license from this ministry and the content on the online platform is not being regulated by Ministry."

SCMC observes R-Day on campus

— Shreya Chowdhary —

The 70th Republic day of India was celebrated in Symbiosis' old Viman Nagar with joy and enthusiasm and the students of Symbiosis Centre for Media and Communication (SCMC), Pune, made sure that it was no less zealous.

The program began with the compere telling the audience about the significance of Republic Day and providing them with some general information about the adoption of the Indian Constitution.

After the introduction of distinguished attendees of the event, Dr. Sreeram Gopalkrishnan, Officiating director of Symbiosis Centre for Media and Communication, Ms. Adhya Sharma, Director of Symbiosis Centre for Management studies and Mr. Sanjeevni Ayachit, Director of Symbiosis Institute for Design, the three directors, accompanied by Colonel C.V. Mohan, hoisted the 'Tiranga'. Following this national custom of hoisting the flag, a melodious rendition of the National Anthem was played.

Dr. Sreeram Gopalkrishnan also delivered a motivating speech about how each and every citizen of India can play their part in their country's progress by diligently doing his or her own job and one does not necessarily have to stand at the border to render national service.

The students of SCMC had organised a cultural program in order to instil patriotism and appreciation for our local art forms in the audience. It included a beautiful medley of popular Bollywood songs 'Ae Watan', 'Kandho se kandhe' and 'Des rangeela', sung by nine students



Staff of Old SVC salute the tri-colour

with two students accompanying them on the keyboard and the guitar, an energetic classical dance performance, a graceful performance on the tunes of 'Khoon chala', 'Maa Tujhe Salaam' and 'Chak De' and finally paying homage to the linguistic diversity of India- a group of singers and musicians took to the stage in order to perform the final piece which sent the spirit of nationalism coursing through everyone's veins.

The students performed the songs 'Bharat Humko Jaan se pyara hain' in Hindi, the Tamil version of the same song called 'Tamizha Tamizha' and ended with a melodious poem in Bengali composed

by Rabindranath Tagore.

In order to show gratitude, each head of the non-teaching staff groups (the security personnel, the house keeping staff, the administrative staff) were treated as special guests and were felicitated individually. The event came to a rather sweet ending when all the children in the audience were invited on stage and presented with a pack of chocolates.

With hearts empowered with patriotism and renewed love for the achievements of their country, the audience and participants dispersed for refreshments, continuing the rest of the celebration for their beloved nation within their hearts.

Czech PM...

(Contd from Page 1)

Symbiosis International (Deemed University) (SIDU), and S. B. Mujumdar, the Founder and President of the Symbiosis Society. Also in attendance was Dr Rajani Gupte, the Vice Chancellor of SIDU, and members of Pune's entrepreneurial Poonawalla family.

After the lighting of the lamp, Dr Yeravdekar delivered the opening address, where she proposed multiple ventures to Babiš and his cabinet. This included the possibility of collaborating on law and artificial intelligence programmes for students. The major proposal, however, was the creation of an Indo-Czech Chamber for Education and Culture. It would be called the Symbiosis Takshashila Chamber, in honour of the ancient seat of learning in Bihar.

Echoing Symbiosis' philosophy of connecting the world, S. B. Mujumdar took the stage to recall Earthrise, the iconic photograph of our planet taken aboard the Apollo 8 mission in 1968. He noted the obvious lack of walls and barriers, and urged the audience to look beyond divisions in the search for knowledge. "Just as there are



Czech PM with Dr. S. B. Mujumdar (R)

airways, highways and waterways, can we create knowledge-ways?" PM Babiš was then felicitated with a scarf and a token of appreciation from the Symbiosis Society, as Mujumdar placed a red Puneri pagdi on the Prime Minister.

International students studying at Symbiosis were then invited on stage to greet and present their country's flag to Babiš.

Dr. Gupte followed, presenting the University's flag to him, after which Mujumdar concluded the ceremony by presenting a United Nations flag as a show of global goodwill. Upon taking the dais, the Prime Minister called it 'an unbelievable welcome'. He then began his talk with a brief glimpse into his career graph, highlighting his government's central policy foci - food, energy, fiscal self-sufficiency, and digitisation—that seemingly mirroring the Indian government. Babiš also mentioned how he had met PM Modi the previous day. He'd found it incredible that the Modi government was managing over a billion people, while Babiš struggled with serving the 10 million residents of the Czech Republic—Mumbai has a larger population than the entire country.

Two students were allowed to ask questions in the audience interaction. Anwisha Thakur from Symbiosis School of Liberal Arts (SSLA) asked Babiš about current trade-based bilateral ties between the two countries, while a student from Symbiosis Institute of Design (SID) enquired as to what design and innovation policies had been employed to enhance the Czech youth's awareness of their cultural heritage.

Addressing Thakur, Babiš felt that investors needed to visit India to deepen relationships, and cited the opening of a collaborative technological centre in Chakan as a step in that direction. As for the latter, Babiš noted it as a good point, and expressed regret that newer architectural wonders had not been built in his country after the Czech Communist Revolution; nor had enough been done to educate the youth about their history. However, he saw it as an opportunity for improvement. The inauguration was one of many stops in an official visit to India that started on Jan 17. The national tour aims to strengthen strategic relations between the two countries.

Madhubani art transforms Park walls



A residence painting the walls of Hermes Drome Society

Madhubani style of painting was chosen. Residents from all ages and walks of life found joy and brotherhood by painting the park walls together. "The whole concept was to break the ice, which we have successfully done," said Sandhir. He added that three new floodlights have been installed.

"Art is very therapeutic; it works as a stress buster and for me, it started as a challenge to learn something new", said Veena Tandon (67), one of Hermes Drome's oldest residents.

The society funded the project which has been drawing visitors, residents of other societies and office bearers to Madhubani Vatika. "People are actually waiting for the next event now. We want to get together and have a good time", said Nancy with immense pride.

— Guneet K. Bedi —

— Niharika Mohan —

Residents at 18-year old Hermes Drome Society turned their otherwise drab looking courtyard to something rather resplendent. The courtyard, formerly known as Red Park was christened as Madhubani Vatika after the residents came together to paint Madhubani Paintings on the walls that line the courtyard boundary. It took a fortnight in December 2018 to complete the paintings. Society Chairman Rupendra Sandhir recruited an art-teacher, Neha Asher and an interior designer, Nancy Thakkar, who is also one of the residents, to spearhead the project with him.

Asher conducted a 3-hr workshop, briefing the participants about the art, its history and how to go about painting it. "(Madhubani) is easier to draw even for non-artists. Anyone can draw it." Nancy said when asked why the



Walls of Hermes Drome Society decorated with Madhubani Artwork

Printer Publisher: Dr Sreeram Gopalkrishnan

Editor: Amitabh Dasgupta

Editorial Team: Batch of 2019 (Journalism)

SYMBIOSIS
CENTRE FOR MEDIA & COMMUNICATION

A publication of Symbiosis Centre for Media and Communication (for internal circulation only)

Write in to thescmchronicle@scmc.edu.in