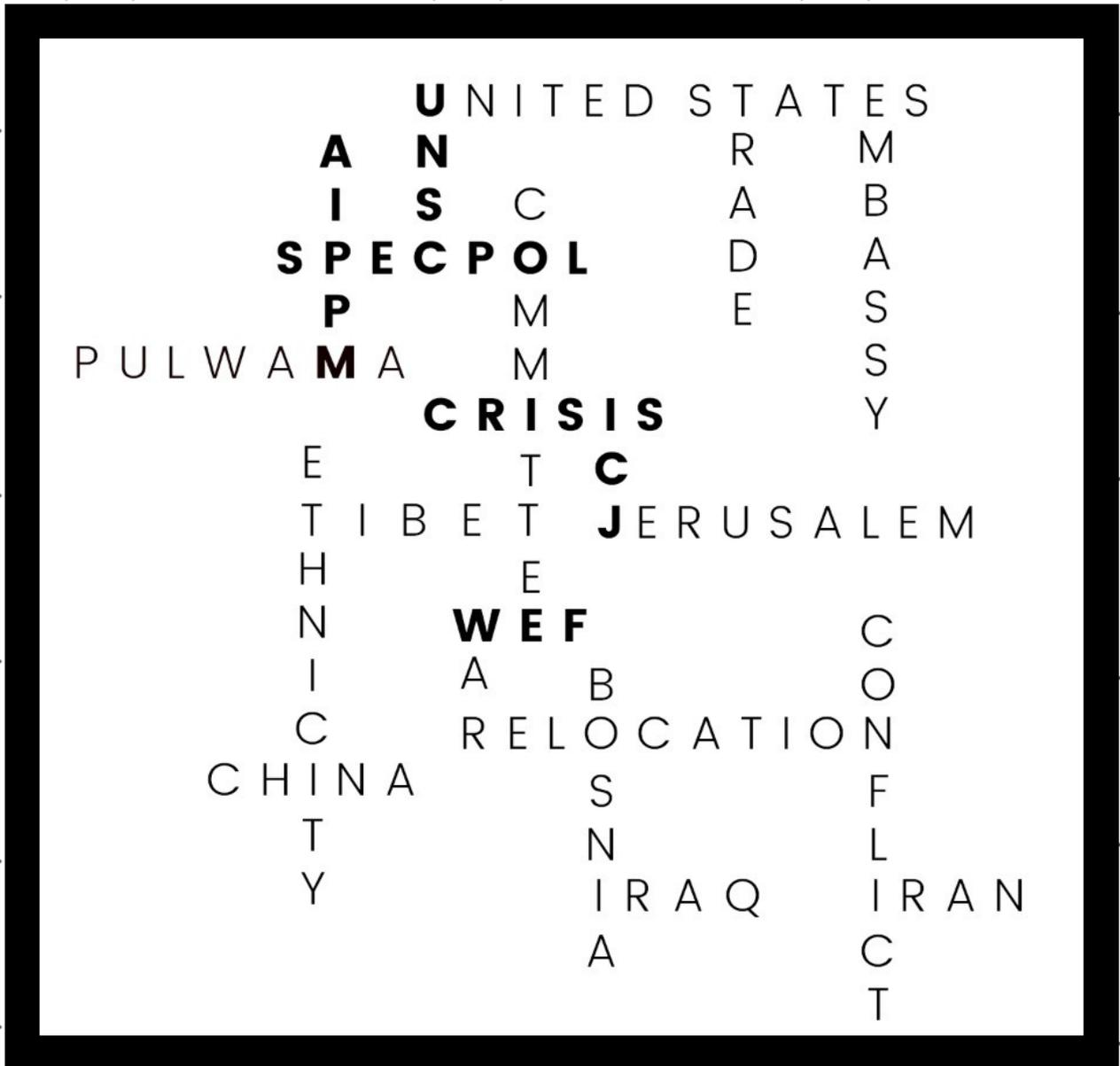


SBSMUN2019

# THE FOURTH ESTATE



PRE-CON ISSUE

# CONTENTS

1. "A Window to the World" by Ananya Anurav
2. "Playing With Fire in Jerusalem" by Diva Dutta  
Gupta
3. "The Right to Write" by Tanya Gupta
4. "The Price of Prosperity" by Aleena Islam
5. "Cooking Conflict in Chaos" by Tanya Vijeshwar
6. "Censor\*\*\*p" by Aditi Bagga
7. "Oiling the Gears of War" by Yuvana Sahi
8. "A Clash of Cultures" by Ananya Khera

# A Window to the World

*Ananya Anurav comments on the gender divide in the field of journalism*

A major source of outrage is the gender divide that plagues every domain of our society.

It is particularly worrying that journalism, which is the public window to the rest of the world, isn't free from this malaise either. One finds that journalism is rife with gender divisions in more ways than one.

While studies show that women constitute the majority in training for and entering the field of journalism, most journalism pieces one encounters have been written by men. By looking at the disproportionate numbers of reporters and sources, as well as the contribution of stories, bylines and credits, the profession appears to be male-dominated. Women journalists suffer a wage gap, similar to most other jobs, and struggle in rising to senior positions.

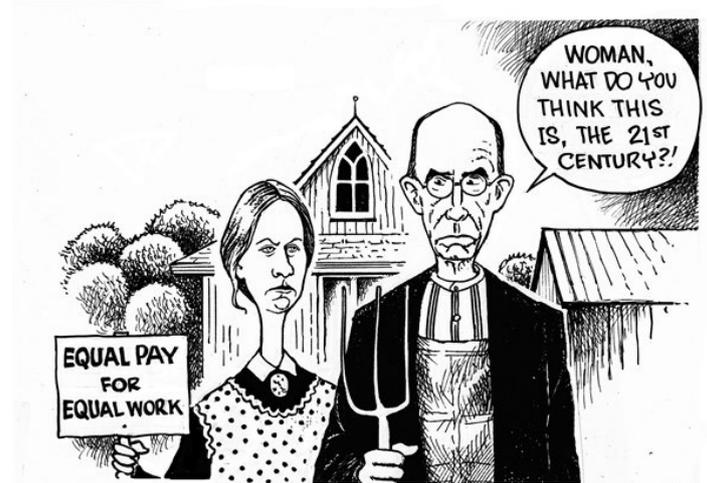
A gender divide can also be seen concerning what topics are covered by whom. While a large number of women write on lifestyle, health and education, topics that most commonly make headlines, such as politics, crime, economy and sports are dealt with by men. This automatically leads to reduced prominence of women in journalism, and further reinforces the stereotype that these fields are meant to be dominated by men.

Studies conducted in recent years show that only about a quarter of the subjects covered or interviewed in the news are by females. The key reason for this is that fields of regular and in-depth coverage, like the justice system, law enforcement and politics, are also male-dominated. Thus, finding a publicly known male figure as a source is more convenient, as opposed to a female one. Moreover, as a result of this system, many women are denied the platform through which they could potentially gain the required visibility to publicly speak on such topics.

Additionally, even coverage focusing on women tends to emphasise unrelated aspects of their lives, rather than their professional contributions. These often surround traditionally "feminine" topics, like beauty or fashion, or even love interests, trivialising their image.

Despite persistent efforts for their elimination, our society remains plagued by gender biases. Thus, journalists showing indifference to this means their compliance with their persistence. It is not surprising that journalism, as a part of our society, is gendered.

However, as an essential part of the media, journalism should ensure more diversity (and hence accuracy in representation) in its participation and coverage, as well as work towards discrediting in-built stereotypes. People involved in this field today must recognise their critical role in influencing society, and hence work against, rather than reinforce, its underlying misconceptions and inequalities.



---

# Playing with Fire in Jerusalem

*Diva Dutta Gupta analyses US-Palestine relations*

On May 14th 2018, President Trump and his administration officially opened the United States embassy in Israel. This controversial and provocative decision is not just a change of address from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem but will also go down as a historic event.

For years, the United States has been threatening to take this step. After facing serious backlash from world leaders, no US president ever implemented it, until Donald Trump. The move is said to have been built on the political root of division and hostility. It has been billed as dangerous, divisive, ill-conceived and ill-informed.

The US has been a silent yet massive presence in the decades-old Israeli-Palestine conflict.

Many say Israel is a "strategic ally". It was not until the move of the embassy that the real stand of the US became clear. Officially recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, it pitted huge numbers of people against the US. This pushed them even deeper into the conflict. Making ties with Israel visible, an action that led to extreme violence at the Gaza border.

As much as this move surprised and disappointed world leaders like the Pope, it has equally shocked the Middle East and possibly some of the countries the US barely has power over as well. The decision could cause a chain reaction, mostly regarding the allies and enemies of Israel.

Since the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty had immense American aid in 1978, relations between them and the US seemed to be strong. Unlike Saudi Arabia, Iran is one of Israel's greatest enemies. Experts say, to balance Israel's missiles, Iran's threat to go nuclear is a dangerous fallout. They are all extremely anti-Israel which logically leads them to be at loggerheads with the US. The move has further deepened the animosity that the militant groups like Hamas (of Palestine) and Hezbollah (of Lebanon) have towards the US. Both groups are a major force in the politics of their countries and are virulently anti-Israel.

This one decision affects the lives of millions. Inflamed emotions and hostility have led to a spike in violence and dozens of deaths. With Palestinian authorities figuring out their complicated relationship with the US, the US also must rethink its standing with the rest of the Middle Eastern countries. While strengthening some bonds, other ties are being cut off and could have severe consequences. In an effort to "create peace" amongst Israel and Palestine, the conflict pushes itself deeper with even more entangled relations with the US.



# The Right to Write

*Tanya Gupta analyses the nature of free press in India*

Freedom of the press refers to the principle that media and press should be able to freely exercise the right to write, portray and report whatever they want in whichever form they wish to publish it. This means that the governing authorities, political parties and social groups can neither alter the media nor can they prevent its publishing.

Reporters Without Borders is a non-profit organisation based in France that releases an annual Press Freedom Index in which they publish global rankings on press freedom. According to the 2019 PFI, today India ranks 140 out of the total 180 countries that are taken into consideration after having fallen two ranks.

There are many reasons behind the low rank awarded to India, the main one being the multiple murder cases of journalists in 2017 and 2018. Gauri Lankesh, the editor of a regional weekly, was shot to death because of her bold and honest writings against popular Hindutva leaders. Chandan Tiwari, a journalist covering corruption in a rural employment scheme, was beaten to death and later died in a hospital. The most recent case was the murder of Shujaat Bukhari as a casualty of the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir.

There has been an increase in allegations of sedition or anti-nationalism against journalists and reporters in the last two years as espousers of Hindutva and Hindu nationalist attempt to purge all manifestations of “anti-national” thought in the nation.

Kishorechandra Wangkhem, a Manipur based journalist was jailed for a year without trial, under the National Security Act for making remarks against the Manipur CM, N. Biren Singh and PM Narendra Modi on Facebook. Wangkhem is one such example of the many citizens being implicated in cases of defamation of political leaders.

The above cases illustrate a true picture of the oppression faced by individuals who propagate controversial thoughts in India. Journalists are threatened and censored from publishing controversial matters. We, the public, are denied the actuality of the working of our ‘transparent’, democratic government. We are denied the truth.



# The Price of Prosperity

*Aleena Islam weighs the consequences of India's retaliation*

The Pulwama attack, which eventuated on the 14th of February, 2019, was one that shook the nation. At least 40 personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were killed in a suicide bombing (organised by the Pakistan-based terrorist group Jaish-e-Muhammad) in the Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir.

A few hours after the attack, the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, reacted by condemning the actions of the terrorist group responsible and promising a 'befitting reply' to the "perpetrators of this heinous act and their patrons". Mr Modi also appeared on television to reassure the nation that the terrorists responsible would pay a 'big price'. Additionally, he gave freedom to the military to decide their response.

While the group responsible was based in Pakistan, there had been no confirmation of the Pakistani government's involvement at the time. It was assumed that this act was a direct threat to India, and Modi reacted with this assumption in mind, stating that 'the neighbouring country cannot destabilise India'. He also urged other nations, on behalf of India, to isolate Pakistan and removed Pakistan from India's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status. At the time, this would have been politically appropriate. However, following an official statement from the Pakistani government, India's response, based on a supposition, was deemed extreme.

Four days later, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, in fact, did issue a statement addressing that the Pakistani government had nothing to do with this reprehensible act.

Both Pakistan and India are nuclear countries. Had the situation continued with the aggression that Modi introduced, a nuclear war could have been a possibility.

Another major issue that was left unaddressed by the central government was the discrimination Kashmiris are facing. All across the country, several cases were reported where a considerable number of Kashmiris were being harassed. However, no one in a position of power spoke about this actively, and even the members of the opposition remained silent. During such testing times, it would have been advisable for Modi to have spread a message of unity and brotherhood.

While this nationwide incident did call for a certain level of aggression, our reactions appeared to have been short-sighted. The anger felt by the citizens and expressed by Modi was valid, but it could have been communicated in a more decorous and ethically appropriate manner.



# Cooking Conflict in Chaos

*Tanya Vijeshwar sheds light on the roots of the Gulf War*

The Islamic Republic refers to the principle of rule by Islamic jurists. This implies a system where clerics serve as the head of state and are obliged with several powerful governmental roles. Iran formed the world's first Islamic Republic in 1979 following the Islamic Revolution where the Monarchy was replaced by the Islamic Republic led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Khomeini was the first Supreme Leader of Iran. He called for Islamic revolutions across the Muslim countries, including Iran's neighbour Iraq.

Several conflicts cumulated to cause the Iran-Iraq war, one of which was the threat that Iran's Islamic agenda posed for Iraq's Arab nationalism. Saddam Hussein feared that Iraq's Shia majority would be influenced by Iran to form an Islamic Republic (despite having a Shia majority, Iraq was ruled by Sunni Muslims). As tensions grew the final straw was Saddam Hussein's claim that Iran had violated the Algiers Protocol, which effectively rendered the protocol null and void.

War broke out on 22nd September 1980, when Iraq invaded Iran, beginning with surprise airstrikes on Iranian airfields followed by a ground invasion the next day. Iran retaliated with an air attack on Iraqi air bases and infrastructure.

The Iran-Iraq War was a turning point in the history of the Islamic world. The Iranian government presented the war as a "glorious Jihad" and a test of Iranian national character. Iranian soldiers were promised by Khomeini that they would automatically go to paradise - 'al Jannah' - if they died in battle. This portrayal helped consolidate the Iranian Revolution. During the war Iranian citizens rallied behind Khomeini, stabilizing his position and helping the Islamic Republic gain popular support. This caused Iran to reject Iraq's offer of a truce in 1982 and led to the continuation of the war.

After a long and bloody war, peace was restored by 20th August 1988, along with the earlier Algiers Protocol. As an aftermath of the war, Iran's Islamic Revolution was strengthened. According to the Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the war helped "awaken the people and to fight the problems that threatened the revolution."



# Censor\*\*\*p

*Aditi Bagga comments on the development and importance of the freedom of the press in the modern age*

Freedom of speech is the cornerstone of a good press agency for a variety of reasons. It allows journalists to interpret events, speculate various outcomes and provide a fresh take on topics which may not have crossed the minds of the general public. Besides this, the freedom of press should, ideally, guarantee the accuracy of information and reports of ongoing matters without omission of parts which may alter one's views. It is a crucial factor which determines the credibility of a press agency and ensures that the audience does not receive false information.

Freedom of the press also limits the power of those who possess it as they can influence the public. This leads to many attempts to tamper facts in the news before it reaches the public. It may also result in bribing journalists, cartoonists and photographers to release only news which gives the audience a false impression of those indulging in malpractice. However, most people who seek to limit the said liberty, do not succeed in these endeavours.

Fortunately, this liberty is gradually becoming more and more prevalent in press agencies and most agencies put forth articles, cartoons or pictures which have not been modified and do not contain inaccurate information or facts. As countries progress, fewer people have the power to influence the press and even fewer attempt to use it.

This makes people more aware of current affairs and helps them make informed decisions. Moreover, it helps those who will use positions of power for public benefit to replace those who abused said power. This change in authority will, in turn, prevent the misuse of power, thus increasing the freedom of the press. This process can be drawn parallel to the domino effect where one small change leads to another, hence resulting in a space where people have accurate facts. Then it is they who have the ability to safeguard the correct use of power.



# Oiling the Gears of War

*Yuwana Sahi explores the fundamentals of the Iran-Iraq conflict*

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 saw the country transform into the Islamic Republic under the rule of Ayatollah Khomeini. The monarch, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, was overthrown by the people, motivated by their unwillingness to continue under his rule and the radical changes he was making. Amongst many attempts to undermine him, one of the most notable was the storming of the US embassy as a protest against the West and their influence. Ayatollah Khomeini, who propagated greatly against the Shah's rule, took over. The Sunnis (the larger of the two branches of Islam) were an oppressed people in the new state of Iran.

Saddam Hussein had become the president of Iraq in 1979, the year of the Iranian Revolution. A Sunni himself, he felt religion and politics did not belong together and did not propagate anything of the kind. However, following the Iranian Revolution, Saddam became increasingly suspicious of the Shia population in his country. He was apprehensive that they might be inspired that they may be inspired by the Shias in Iran and attempt to overthrow him, too. He saw Khomeini's influence as a threat to his position and power.

Iran became an unstable state following the revolution: its economy was in shambles due to the fall of the Shah, Iranians had lost valuable trade partners in the West as a result of their siege of the US embassy; Ayatollah Khomeini had demoralised the Iranian armed forces. All in all, Iran was in a state of absolute chaos. Saddam saw this as an opportunity. He aimed to catch Iran at its weakest as it would then be a win-win situation for him as he would both curb the influence of Khomeini as well as earn millions from the Iranian resources.

Moreover, Saddam would gain a huge territory if he succeeded. Iran had a large coastline that allowed it to have easy access to the sea. There were several ports which had been enabled for ease of exporting oil. If Saddam gained this, he could save huge amounts of money spent on transportation of oil. Furthermore, on the topic of oil, Iran had its own oil-rich sectors, which would only contribute largely to Iraq's economy, if captured.

Saddam was expecting a war he could breeze through. While Iraq had trained personnel and modern weaponry, it was no match for the fanatic behaviour displayed by the Iranians. Iraq was in for a bloody, gruesome conflict, which resulted in neither side gaining anything except the loss of a million lives.



# A Clash of Cultures

*Ananya Khera examines the disarray that rose from Yugoslavia's grave*

The Bosnian War was an ethnic conflict that ravaged the former Yugoslavia from 1992-1995 marked by the systematic mass rape and murder of Bosnian Muslims by Serbian nationalists. The experiences of genocide in Bosnia are often credited to a dual operation of feelings of ethnic and individual nationalism in the country.

After World War II, Bosnia became a federal republic of Yugoslavia when Yugoslavia was united under the authoritarian dictator Josip Broz Tito. However, the tensions between the three main ethnic groups in the newly formed republic: The Bosnian Muslims (or Bosniaks), the Catholic Croats, and the orthodox Serbs continued but were managed under the leadership of Tito. It was only after his death in the early 1980s that Yugoslavia disintegrated, fanning the fire of ethnic hostility.

As the representatives of ethnic nationalism, the Orthodox Serbs felt that they were genetically superior to the “non-Serbs” who were predominantly Bosniaks and they took on the responsibility of ‘cleansing’ their state through genocide in the name of their national duty. In the 1988 Belgrade speech, Milosevic identified Bosniaks as the “internal enemy”, a gesture eerily similar to Hitler’s pre-WWII demonization of the Jews in Germany. After Bosnia’s declaration of independence in 1992, Serbian forces besieged Sarajevo and began the extermination of thousands of Bosniaks which continued for three years.

The number of Bosniaks killed is disputed but it is an undeniable fact that their population was dramatically reduced through ethnic cleansing. The fact that this genocide continued for so long without international intervention is appalling. Even more disturbing is, how successful the Serbs were in reaching their goal. It has been agreed upon that besides nationalism, there were other factors like the opportunism of individuals, the removal of regional power and a failing economy that affected the fate of the country. However, the role of nationalism cannot be blatantly ignored. The beliefs of the leader and how those beliefs were transmitted to the general public, strongly affected the on-ground implications of the genocide. As a self-described nationalist, The French President Emmanuel Macron said, “Nationalism is a betrayal of patriotism”.

The fluidity between the two concepts must never be ignored or forgotten and a clear distinction is mandatory for peacekeeping in the contemporary politics.

History has proven that nationalism can motivate average people to commit atrocities. In the case of the Bosnian War, the Serbian commitment to ethnic cleansing and state expansion resulted in the heart wrenching genocide of innocent men, women, and children.



# THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS

## Journalists

Aditi Bagga

Aleena Islam

Anant Narayan

Ananya Anurav

Ananya Khera

Divya Dutta Gupta

Kavya Sharma

Mehek Pandita

Mishka Ghei

Samara Sahi

Tanishq Upreti

Tanya Gupta

Tanya Vijeshwar

Yuvana Sahi

## Cartoonists

Anaanya Poddar

Anannya Garg

Gauri Singla

Geetika Sehgal

Myra Chawla

Nadia

Suhani Agarwal

Suramya Singh

Zenia

## Photographers

Aadi Chawla

Abhimanyu Sareen

Ajnaa Gautam

Aryan Bhartiya

Gopika Kohli

Hana Fahim

Keshav Vij

Maanya Agarwal

Sameera Sethi

Siya Jatia

Shyla Chopra

Viraj Malik

Kanak Kantor

Assistant Editor

Meyha Bishnoi

Editor-In-Chief

Kavya Joshi

Assistant Editor