



The CBS Post

BEYOND HORIZON

Endless Possibilities



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CELEBRATING 10 EDITIONS

Talking about the inception of The CBS Post, I believe it began as a retaliation to the fact that our college, though renowned in the corporate world, still didn't quite sit right with the "culture" of a typical DU college. As much as we take pride in being associated with this revered college, we as students could not overlook the lack of voice in our college, something that is potent enough to bind CBS together. With the sole aim of making our voice, CBS's voice heard in and around the campus, the seeds of our society were sown. Along the course, we worked our way to nurture the ethos of reading, writing, journalism and a plenty things to bridge this gap. In 5 years of the society's existence, the 10th edition of our newsletter is a crucial milestone in our individual journeys as the office bearers of The CBS Post, and the entire team collectively. With this, we wish more people who resonate with this cause to join us in the future batches.

Signing off,
Pranami Hayaran
President, The CBS Post



Post'20



Post'21



Post'22



Post'23



Post'24



Post'25



Post'26



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THEME :

BEYOND HORIZON

Endless Possibilities

Beyond the Horizon
There exists a safe place,
Where the inner child seeks solace.
Adulthood comes, hard-hitting like a truck,
Haywiring our minds to be stuck.

Dreams and delusions—melody in a noisy world,
Like majestic coffee gone cold.
A youth dancing in the sunlight,
A rebel kid dreaming of fleeting flight.

Escaping into a world of dreams,
Where no darkness makes you scream.
Beyond reality, I build castles in my head,
Where dreams and passions do not lie dead.

Between hustling for presentations in suits so tight,
I escape to a world soft, kind, and bright.

Beyond the Horizon
There exists a world,
Where no mockings are hurled.
There lies a happy place, not bound by the tick of time—
A wonder awaits, stitched in a rhyme.

I'll chase the stars, I'll chase the sun,
Where there are no limits or boundaries to where I can run.



STAND PARALLEL TO THE YELLOW LINE



- Aaraadhye Krishna Natrajan
BFIA '26

When I was told to write an article on the theme "Beyond the Horizons," I didn't. I forgot about it. Two days before the deadline, I sat down to write. Opened the notes app on my phone and began writing an article that contained so much advice that I was ready to puke. Who was I to tell you guys how to push boundaries? The last time I did anything to make anyone feel proud of me was in fourth grade (scored well on a surprise dictation test maybe?).

Therefore, I decided to take the theme literally. Beyond horizons. Hmm. People cross skylines all the time, and it all begins at the airport. Land of tearful goodbyes and joyful welcomes, and joyful goodbyes & tearful welcomes. It's where major missing happens, and major things are missed.

The airport is a phenomenal place. It's the embodiment of chaos and order. It often sits in the best part of the city, yet, it's not considered a part of it. If you have a layover at Colombo International and go around telling your friends you've been to Sri Lanka, they'll laugh you off (please don't do this, tried and tested). It only counts if you cross immigration, everyone knows that.

However, the only place you can get to know all about the country's culture, is an airport. In just those few square meters, you can discover all the nitty details of a place without stepping foot outside.

Take India, for example. Want to know what Indians are like? They're too many, for starters - substantiated by the painfully long lines at every step. They do not adhere to laws - repeated incidents of coconuts coming out of hand bags, pot-bellied uncles going back and forth between metal detectors, blatant disregard for any signage (ever stood behind the yellow line?)

Indians, on average, are messy, chaotic, and forgetful - it'll be extremely difficult to differentiate between an x-ray image of one of our suitcases and a scan of a garbage dump in the Philippines. We constantly have those who arrive five hours early, only to frantically call Mamas and Chachas to retrieve their passports from home. I myself accidentally checked in my passport. Oh, and ever noticed how you can never hear the extremely loud planes? Our noise, announcements, screaming children, adults screaming at children and just normal conversations drown out whirring

machines with noise levels as high as 140 decibels. That goes to say something.

We are stingy - proof lies inside the bags that look like something stolen from the natural history museum. I once saw a suitcase which looked like it had a fossil inside of it. The dust on it would have revealed secrets from the Big Bang. I could swear that its half-life would be a billion years. Lounges ran so empty that they had to scheme with the government to launch a new type of credit card which would get you lounge access for a rupee. Any food court line would have a constant chorus of how everyone's looting, and how you must not order too much because the home made paranthas would go waste.

We're also religious, evidenced by our chanting, lockets and beads - which only some seem to bring out in public settings.

You'll know which books the country likes to keep on their bookshelf (as showpieces) by visiting a bookstore before boarding your flight. You'll know how much people value time by observing the behaviour of airlines and the staff there. You'll know the most popular cuisines and products by studying the duty free and the food court.

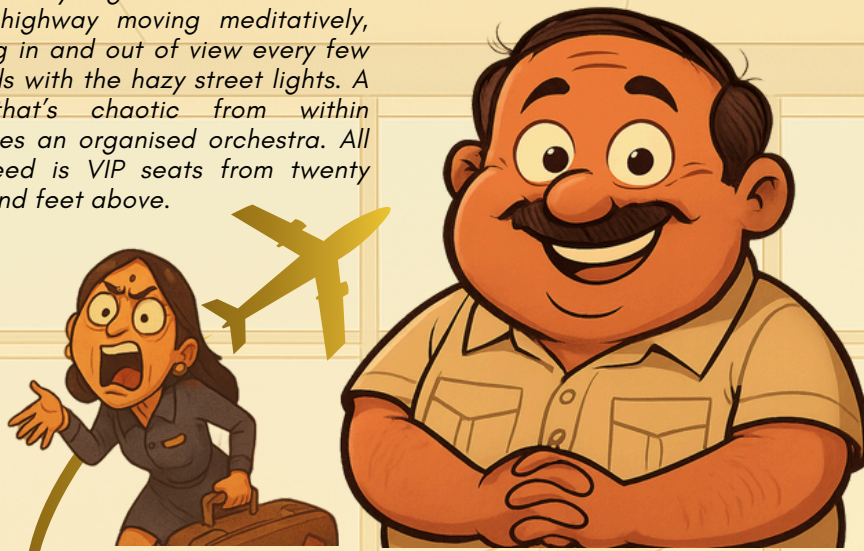




An exception to this rule are shops selling suitcases. Who is buying them at the airport? Every time I look at one of these shops, I imagine an uncle in his late 60s, walking through the gates of an airport with clothes spilling out of a polythene bag, and breathing in a sigh of relief when he sees an American Tourister shop. "Just what I needed today; how foolish of me to forget my suitcase at home."

But what is an airport experience without loud announcements calling for a Mr. Mehta who decided to doze off a few minutes before departure. Without bags that required a thirty-five kilo child to stand on them in order to close their zip. Without the sullen faces of families who were arguing in the cab, their frowns lifting when the excitement of travelling to a new land hits them.

The next time you fly, take the window seat. Maybe a night flight back to Delhi. Just before you land, look out and you'll see a vibrant city. Bright lines of yellow spreading like veins. Neatly organised houses. Cars on a highway moving meditatively, passing in and out of view every few seconds with the hazy street lights. A city that's chaotic from within becomes an organised orchestra. All you need is VIP seats from twenty thousand feet above.



NEW HORIZONS



- *Hrishita Rawat*
BMS '27

Every night I sleep
With my eyes closed
Lost in the deep
There is darkness behind my eyes then
There is darkness when I wake up
My heart beats with an anxiety
It leaves me questioning
Why I breathe or
Whether I am breathing right
Every day I sit in my classes
But I don't want to be there
As it is very ordinary, very boring
Steve Jobs said to be
Extraordinary
Now I am finding ways to be extraordinary
I want to be at the top
Standing

Cause I don't think falling down
Will hurt
When I am there
Horizons, dark horizons
Why are they so dark
And so, so violent
I need to
Give my heart a chance
Everything leaves me
Feeling empty at every glance
I sit myself down
And make myself breathe
Reminder, there is so much time
And so much patience to keep
I will walk the path now
Slowly and calmly
Will color the dark now
In white and hopefulness
Touching those spectrum filled horizons
Is a dream I will treasure
My goal is left now
To pursue them with
Willingness and pleasure



THE INDOMITABLE HUMAN SPIRIT



- *Gaurav Singh*
B.Sc. '27

At the dawn of it all, there was no crown for man to be worn. No throne carved in his name. No gold, no glory. Just dirt and sky and the wild in between. A fragile creature stood at the mercy of beasts, storms and hunger, naked to the cold, toothless to the hunt, he moved like prey in a world built for killers. The wild never crowned him, yet he forced his name into its script. He entered a world that demanded everything and promised nothing. And yet, here he is - builder of empires, seeker of stars. How? It wasn't his brute force. Neither his brilliance. It was his grit.

The man - nameless, forgotten, a shadow etched in prehistory, huddles in a dark cave, the wind howling like death. All he has is a spark. And in that spark, he sees life. He protects it with trembling hands, feeds it with breath and dry grass, and from that spark rises fire, a miracle that would warm generations. He didn't know anything about science. He just knew he had to make it work.

What he had was desperation. Purpose. The sheer refusal to die and leap over the spikes Mother Nature scattered at his feet. That fire not

only saved his life. It lit a path. He represents a story, our story, that began not in triumph, but in resistance. In the decision to fight one more day. And somewhere, in every one of us, the first flame still burns.

The first tool was not a weapon, it was an idea. A stick hardened in flame, a stone sharpened with will and purpose. These objects were not just extensions of hand and bone. They were extensions of thought, of desire. A refusal to accept the world as it was. Then came language - grunts became stories, markings became memory. Words were now used to warn, to grieve, to hope. Language gave us more than communication. It gave us each other. It gave us culture, ritual, myth. It gave us a way to mourn the gone and dream the yet-to-come. With it, we held grief and hope in the same breath and collectively felt one.

We did not stop. From the first shelter to the pyramids of Giza, from the Great Wall that stretched across mountains to the highest skyscrapers that towered above all limits, every brick ever laid echoed a defiance. Studies tell us where we came from, what we looked like, how we lived, but not who we were when the thunder roared, when nature itself denied, and we stood unflinchingly looking into its eye, daring the storm to break us.

Every age brought new enemies, famine, flood, plague, oppression. And in every age, we evolved not just in form, but in fire. That fire lives not in muscle or bone, but in the soul. When Galileo raised his eyes to the heavens and declared that Earth was not the center, he was not just practicing science, he was practicing courage. When slaves rebelled, when women demanded to be heard, when dreamers sketched machines that could fly, they were not anomalies, they were reminders.

Today, our battles are quieter. Loneliness instead of wolves. Anxiety instead of war. Insecurity instead of famine. But the battle is the same. Every time you rise from failure, you are continuing the same saga. Every time you feel like giving up but don't, you are echoing a million year old legacy of resilience. You can't be broken; your history is a testament to this.

If you have ever felt like the world is too heavy, remember - you come from a lineage that survived ice ages with nothing but fire and faith. Your blood remembers the blizzards, the famines, the hopeless winters. It remembers surviving, it is destined to thrive.

There is a reason the stars still pull at us. We are not meant for stagnation. We are wanderers, warriors, artists, builders. Our tools have changed, but the hunger, the striving, is still the same. You are not small. You are vast with history. And there is nothing beyond your reach, not when your blood only knows how to rise disregarding every weight that pulls you down.

We often wait for heroes. But history shouts that the greatest changes came from those who chose not to wait. The young Braveheart who died fighting for his nation. The mother who gave her everything for her child to ascend to success. The reformer who dared to challenge the sick norms. Our genes are loaded with such tales to inspire. You are not meant to copy greatness. You are meant to create it. The next step in human evolution will not be anything new. It will be what every great human before you faced. It will be a decision. A moment when you, in the middle of your own storm, decide to rise.

The truth is that we have always been outmatched. By nature. By fate. By our own flaws. And we have always





overcome. Not by magic. But by motion. Step by step. Minute by minute. Flame by flame.

Human advancement is not a straight line. It is a spiral of falling and flying, of breaking and rebuilding. And still we rise. Maybe you're reading this in the dark, on a day you almost gave up, or thought of it. Know this even now, or ever you are never alone. You carry a fire that has never gone out. You are made of the same substance as those who first found a spark, crossed oceans, and reached the moon. You are not separate from them. You are their continuation.

Greatness does not begin in grand halls. It begins in hunger. In the choice to try again, even if it demands the highest of sacrifices.

Doubts. Failures.
Doubts. Failures.
Doubts. Failures.

Failures, and more failures. And still you're here. Standing. Maybe not proud, maybe not loud. But unbroken. You are never finished, you always bear the torch of the legacy that forced fate to bow. So let the history books say what they will.

The real story of humanity is this -
We did not stop.
We rose.
And so will you.
Because greatness was never about perfection.
It was about persistence.



WHERE DID I GO?



- Safia
BMS '27

I smiled at the sky,
And the dusk sighed in return.
I ran through the fields
In the days with dust and churn.
Barefoot, careless, light as air,
Whispering nonsense
To the caterpillar's hair.
Admiring dragonflies,
A beautiful affair.
I Wonder if I, too, could lift off,
Casually floating up there,
The world sunlit and endless,
Beyond compare.

I still smile at the sky,
Even now some days, I find.
But not the way I used to,
Not that open-mouthed kind.

Dusk replies even today,
But my ears can't catch its flow.
Just slightly muffled by honks,
Those unwelcome echoes, you know.
Some cares, some concerns
Yes, they came as the time did show.

The caterpillar,
More of an insect, somehow.
And dragonflies?
Seldom do I find them,
But I no longer chase,
No longer wish I flew,
Not in the way I once believed,
Not the wings that I once knew.
So I ask:
Where are they now?
Or do they ask me instead?



THE PARADOX OF THE HORIZON



- Lakshita
BMS '27

"Déjà Vu!" Something almost everyone can relate to. Ever get that feeling of - *"It seems I have played this scene before. What do you say, bestie?"* Obviously we can discuss such creepy things with that one person only. Yes the one who matched our level of craziness and now we call them 'bestie'. It is some sort of culture that we've built of setting up a panel discussion and analyzing some deep reasoning with them, which actually makes no sense, most of the time.

Ooh wait! I seem to have gotten off track. We were discussing the sensation of *"replaying scenes"*.

But wait! Are you also wondering, what does *"played"*, *"replayed"* and all, imply here? And that, we aren't any film stars or actors who are doing retakes of a shot which is making us feel like things are repeating? Well, actually we are!! We all are just actors or to be specific "the protagonist of our lives."

In the whole discussion that's happened or is yet to come, what fascinates me most is this 'protagonist,' as all the stuff that awaits is revolving around it. In every scenario, we've seen this individual always unsatisfied, restless and wandering around yearning for more. It might seem like some battle or marathon but that's how it is, for each of us. We are all running in the same path, just differentiated by our objectives. For some, it might be the first step of their journey, while for others, maybe it's their point of satiety, as we call it in economics, or in other words, we can call it their culminating point. But the most confusing part in this whole scenario is that there exists nothing like ultimate satisfaction. Human action is simply too critical to forecast. "The only true pinnacle in their life is death" and on this they have no control (which means it wasn't part of

their plan) Oops! I think I became too philosophical.

Anyways, going further, the next question that arises would be, if it means the lead actor or the protagonist is actually putting in efforts blindly for somewhere he can never reach?

Well, in my opinion - "No!". We all have heard of the horizon. A phenomenon which seems like sky and land meeting at a distance but the closer you go, farther it gets. Similarly, in our life as well, we have that urge along with a grudge to catch *our horizon*. Running in search of achieving that ultimate goal, ironically, which keeps changing once you reach the previous one. In simple terms, we basically are participants of a "no-consent rat race" wherein we are in search of *our final destination* but actually we have to pull away and fight millions of other rats to reach somewhere we aren't even certain of feeling saturated.

So, coming back to the question: whether the tireless efforts of the protagonist are actually a waste of resources and energy. Well, to be honest, it seems so. But on the other hand, I feel, he keeps running on an endless route in search of his horizon or the "assumed ultimate destination" of his life but at the end, when he is disillusioned by the fact- "mortality", he realises, his track was actually a "treadmill" on which he ran a long distance but displacement remained zero i.e., he remained at the same spot, "the origin".

But then there comes the another scenario i.e. "the concept of growth". We are all growing and developing each day. So, at some point, simply giving an explanation that he "stayed at the origin" wouldn't do justice to his journey. Then does it mean he moved? Well, if considering the scenario mentioned a moment ago, then "Yes".

But then at the end he was at the origin itself. Right?
Indeed, yes!

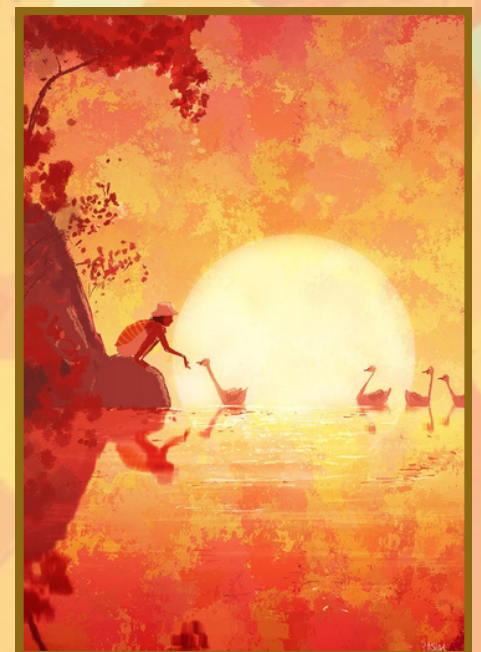
To explore this paradox let's consider another scenario now. Since, we are assuming that he moved but at the end he found himself at the origin. So is it possible that we are running in circles? No beginnings. No endings. Just the endless track.

Does it make any sense? Yes, it does. Life sometimes feels repetitive. Isn't this repetition similar to what we call in fancy *"déjà vu."*

So, now this story stands at the point where we are assuming life to be a circular cycle, which implies that the horizon, which was basically the end, stands at the beginning.

Then can it be said that we've already crossed the horizon, but with the beginning of every new cycle our memory gets cleared off and we simply don't remember going beyond it?

And that, my dear reader, is the ultimate paradox.





WHEN HOPES TAKE THE WRONG TURN



- *Krishika Arora*
BMS '27

On approaching almost every traffic signal in Delhi, one can witness a peculiar scene that is, drivers, overwhelmed by impatience, respectfully pouring the oil, they fry their brains in, over each other. The honking acts as a wedding band chorus as if the red light is not just a signal to stop vehicles but an invitation for people to grace each other with their pent-up emotions. Often, these individuals step out of their cars to discuss certain features: their incomes, the kind of families they belong to, and, in doing so, provide a rather engaging entertainment source for those stuck in traffic. Yet, beyond this spectacle of human dialogue, a silent yet persistent occurrence unfolds, one that rarely commands attention beyond the moment.

Among this chaos, the 'tiny bearers' of India's future make their way through the maze of vehicles, seeking buyers for their discretionary items. These items range from tilaks in steel bowls, and garlands to vehicle accessories and other equipment. These items vary with the location of intersections. Near a temple, one might find children wandering with tilaks in their hands, chanting "Radhe

Radhe". Here, no one questions their religion before accepting the tilak; instead, they act in response to an unspoken social obligation. Human behavior, after all, is shaped by underlying needs. Reputation is one such need. A devotee can always have the tilak applied by the priest inside the temple for free. But in the traffic jam outside, he allows a child to press a tilak against his forehead, not as an act of his devotion, but as a way to momentarily reassure himself or sometimes to those accompanying him that "I care about the underprivileged." One prejudice overrides the other. Social hierarchy overrides religious exclusivity.

This interaction at religious sites forms only a part of the larger picture. Another striking instance occurs when a person donates near a roadside, where a group of children instantaneously forms, their hands outstretched, their eyes lack hope but do gleam with a raw greed: the greed to survive another day, to secure their next meal. It is not the dream of a better future that fuels their pursuits but the desperation to fill their stomachs before the day ends. Their survival is a daily wager, characterised by the mercy of moving

traffic and their ability of moving hearts. It is worth asking: what prevents these children from engaging in alternative, more structured labor? Is it the fault of parents who never educated them? Or is it simply the reality that their families cannot afford the delayed returns of education when the immediate needs of hunger press down relentlessly?

This was the tale of a location where the drivers and passengers plan to spend their leisure time. What happens in places where reaching the destination is merely an obligation? When the light turns red on these roads, handbrakes are lifted along with deep sighs of exhaustion in the monotonous lives. This helplessness is met by someone else's - the child's. With a product in hand, the child expresses his plea through two rhythmic knocks on the window. The first knock on the front seat window is synonymous to a call to God, as if calling upon the driver's better self to judge if what God did to him was right. But the driver, tied to his own struggles, does not feel himself in a superior position to the child like he did in front of the temple. His life is dictated by the commands of his boss, the pressures of deadlines, the constraints of finances. He does not feel privileged enough to extend his hand downward because, in his mind, he himself is trapped. In this moment, he finds relief in ignorance, a convenient self-defense mechanism. Acknowledging the child's existence would mean accepting responsibility for their condition, and in the absence of a social or personal prejudice that can justify his inaction, he chooses to look away.

The second knock, this time on the back seat, is not a plea, it is a statement. It is an announcement to the passengers at large that the driver of fate has already refused him.





The only hope left, the only potential benefactors, are the common people sitting behind tinted windows. The passenger looks up and two questions arise in his conscience. One: Why do these children not resort to other means of earning a livelihood? Well, these children may not know how to read or write, but they can guesstimate better than many undergraduates in Delhi. If they make ₹100 in an hour-long traffic jam where at least 50 cars stop twice a day, their income exceeds what their parents might earn as unskilled laborers. There is no educational expense, no risk of failing in skill-based employment. If they optimize their emotionally charged appeals, they can even exceed ₹100 per hour, an earning potential higher than that of a construction worker working tirelessly in the sun. Where else can such a return on investment be seen?

Two: Is there something deeper?

Something that binds them to this cycle beyond mere opportunity? Is it the negligence of their parents, who failed to educate them? Or is it the system that perpetuates poverty in a way that forces even the youngest to provide for themselves? These are not children dreaming of the future; they are children fighting to secure their next meal, their only hope lying in the loose change resting in a stranger's pocket. They are not driven by aspirations but by desperation.

And so, the traffic light turns green, and the vehicles move forward, leaving the children behind, only to be depended on another set of restless passengers at the next stop. Each person carries their own burdens, their own struggles, their own justifications for looking away. But at the end of it all, you decide what is truly at fault? The child's desperate greed to survive, or the driver's helplessness to care?



BEYOND HORIZONS



- Sagun
BMS '27

**Beyond the Horizons
There exists a safe place,
Where the inner child seeks solace.
Adulthood comes, hard-hitting like a truck,
Hay wiring our minds to be stuck.**

**Dreams and delusions—melody in noisy world,
Like majestic coffee gone cold.
A youth dancing in the sunlight,
A rebel kid dreaming of fleeting flight.**

**Escaping into a world of dreams,
Where no darkness makes you scream.
Beyond reality, I build castles in my head,
Where dreams and passions do not lie dead.
Between hustling for presentations in suits so tight,
I escape to a world soft, kind, and bright.**

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There exists a world,
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There lies a happy place, not bound by the tick of time—
A wonder awaits, stitched in a rhyme.**

**I'll chase the stars, I'll chase the sun,
Where there are no limits or boundaries to where I can run.**



THE LEGEND OF SAMA-CHEKAVA



- Sumit Dagar
BFIA '26



The sun was setting, the fields of Mithilanchal were covered with the golden hue of sunlight on the paddy fields. The fall of the year had arrived, a still winter was setting on the land. Stars started to appear in the sky and beneath the starlit sky, by the riverside, sat a girl, Maithili. The air was filled with the scent of incense and freshly lit diyas. Nearby was Maithili's grandmother, lighting a diya and humming a familiar jingle, "Tohe Badka Bhaiya ho, Sama Khele Chalali" (May you have your elder brother near, as you go to play, oh Sama!). Maithili was holding a bamboo basket which contained some clay statuettes which were of Shama (a young girl), Samb (A young boy) Chakeva, Chugala, Jhailwala (cymbalist), Mirdangiya (drummer), Brindavan (a wild fowl), a bumblebee and a dog. These were the characters of the story of Sama Chakeva, a tale that Maithili had heard as a child, her grandmother's voice imprinting the story into her heart. But to her, it was more than a story, it was a mirror to her own life.

The story goes like this: Long ago, in the Dwapar Yuga, the banks of Yamuna were filled with the laughter of Sama, the beloved daughter of Krishna and Jambavati. She was married to Charuvakra, the noble and just ruler of Mithila. The folks of Mithilanchal were overjoyed when they heard of the King's marriage to Krishna's daughter. Sama and Charuvakra really loved each other and together, they built their residence in the tranquil ashram of Vrindavan, which, as time passed, burgeoned into a shrine rewarded with followers from all over. The same Vrindavan, which once was filled with the melody of Krishna's flute, was now filled with holy chants of vedic hymns and footsteps of wandering sages.

Time there was peaceful, but soon destiny changed, like a turbulent Yamuna during Monsoons.

One day, before dawn, when Sama completed her morning rituals and was coming back from a sage's cottage in the hermitage, a man named Chugula watched from the shadows. His heart was filled with jealousy and mind was corrupted with malice. He went to Dwarka and whispered poisoned words into the ears of Krishna, falsely accusing his daughter of disloyalty with her husband. Enraged and with a heavy heart, Krishna cursed his daughter that she would no longer remain a human, she would assume the form of a solitary bird, forever flightless. Madhav's words came into effect the very moment, and right there, in the forest of Vrindavan, in front of the assembled sages, Sama's body shrank, her arms turned into wings, her voice transformed into a mournful chirp. She turned into a bird. When Charuvakra returned to the ashram, he found his beloved enmeshed in feathers desperately wanting to be

saved. Sorrow washed over him, and in a moment of sorrow so intense that it brought on tears he begged the gods to grant him the same fate as her. Moved by his devotion, the gods granted this wish of his. The kind hearted prince also turned into a bird.

When Sama's brother, Samb, got to know of this tragic fate of his sister, he was furious and determined.

"A bond between a brother and sister is like the roots of a banyan tree, unseen but unbreakable," with those words, Samb vowed to restore Sama and Charuvakra to their human forms. He travelled across rivers and dense forests, seeking the help of sages to find a solution. And finally, in the peaks of Himalayas, his calls were answered. A wise old sage advised, "Only a ritual performed with faith by the women of Mithila, could break the curse." With the solution in hand, he travelled back to Mithila and migratory birds accompanied him, as if blessing his noble cause.





After the conversation with Samb, the women of Mithila came together, setting everything aside for a while. They sculpted Sama and Chakeva out of clay, crafting their sorrow into shapes of devotion, and placed the idols into beautifully handwoven bamboo baskets called chengeris. They carried the baskets to the riverbanks while singing songs in praise of the divine bond of Sama and her brother, which were to be passed down to generations ahead. Fires were lit, and as the flames danced in the cold winter air, they burned the moustache of Chugula's effigy, symbolising victory over malice and falsehood. In perfect harmony, their songs and prayers reached the skies and something miraculous happened.

Sama and Charuvakra turned into humans again and the birds which were once Sama and Charuvakra, flew above their heads.

From that day, every year when November arrives and the migratory birds fly down from the snow covered Himalayas to the plains, the people of Mithila remember Sama and Chakeva. Young girls mould the figures of Sama, Chakeva and others and the same old songs are sung as they were in Sama's time. The festival is not just a ritual; it is an act of defiance against

injustice, it is a celebration of love, it is a belief that, no matter how burdened by falsehood, truth will always find its way to light. And thus, when the birds arrive every year, the people of Mithila greet them not only as visitors from the hills, but also as messengers of a love that laughed at curses, a brother's devotion that outlasted history, and a culture that refuses to die.

This festival celebrates the bond of a Brother and Sister. But this year, Sama Chekva was not the same for Maithili. Her brother, Bhaum, was always her protector, just like Samb had been for Sama. He used to bring mangoes for her from the orchards, and their swing under the banyan tree where Maithili used to sit and Bhaum would push the swing with careful hands. The house was filled with their shared laughter. But time had pulled them apart. Bhaum had moved to the city and while chasing his dreams, it did not feel that he had any space left for the mud-walled homes and festival songs. He no longer sat beside the river with her, he no longer would help her mould the clay into figurines. Maithili still had the Changeri in her arms, her

heart filled with regrets and hopes. The women sang, the fire burned, but somehow, she was alone. Then, as the embers flickered into night, a familiar voice broke. "Maithili," Bhaum's voice faltered but was warm. With eyes wide, she turned and saw her brother standing there, a little taller, a little older, but still her Bhaum. He had come home. Just then, a woman gently placed her Changeri into the flowing waters. Inside the basket, little clay idols of Sama and Samb glimmered in the light of diya, which flickered gently. All around them, the air was filled with the unison of songs and prayers for the sacred devotion of a brother and sister. Under starlight, with shimmering glimmers, the basket drifted on the river, with golden lights illuminating the waters, whispering away its prayers of love and tradition.





BEYOND EFFORT: HOW LUCK SHAPES SUCCESS



- Kanav Bajaj
BMS '27

What makes someone truly successful? Why does one person fail while another thrives? Most people would attribute success to hard work, talent, effort, skill, passion, etc. Yet, even with all these qualities, success isn't guaranteed. So, what else is at play?

As the saying goes, even the greatest talent becomes useless against the fury of misfortune.

Daniel Kahneman, a Nobel Prize-winning psychologist and the author of "Thinking Fast and Slow," formulates success in these 'equations':

Success = Talent + Luck
Great Success = A little more talent
+ A lot of luck.

Luck — that's part of the equation for success is most overlooked and least thought about. Nobody really talks about it. We humans tend to overestimate personal contributions

because we like to be in control of everything. As a result, when things happen at random, our brain skillfully constructs explanations justifying the outcome of these events by linking random events. We struggle to comprehend how much luck influences our lives, even though it plays a significant role.

Another reason why we resist the role of luck in our lives is our idea of a "just world", wherein good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad people. The randomness of luck challenges this comforting illusion.

There lies an idea of the "Ovarian Lottery," popularised by Warren Buffett, which talks about how the random variables of birth — such as taking place in a particular place and at a given time — can affect the trajectory of your life to a great extent. Being born in a prosperous country, into a well-off family, or in an era of economic growth can provide advantages that have little to do with personal effort or merit.

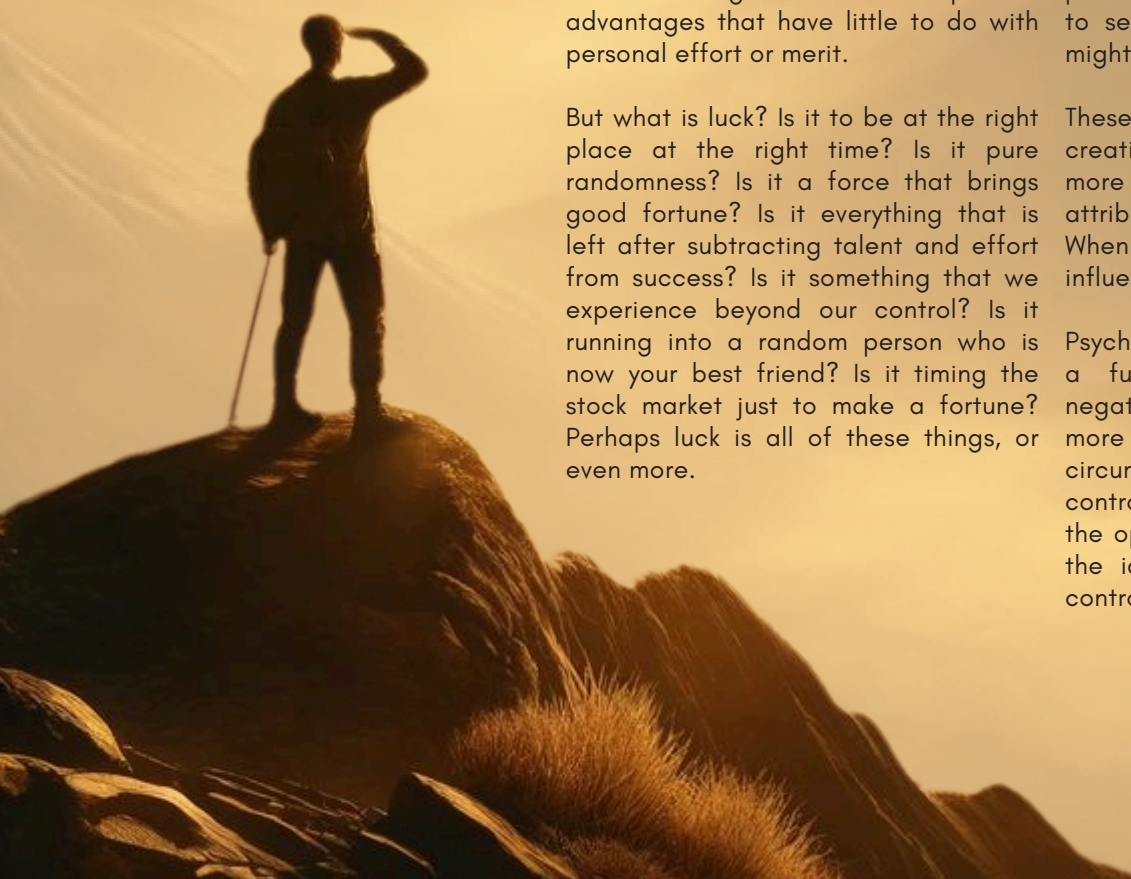
But what is luck? Is it to be at the right place at the right time? Is it pure randomness? Is it a force that brings good fortune? Is it everything that is left after subtracting talent and effort from success? Is it something that we experience beyond our control? Is it running into a random person who is now your best friend? Is it timing the stock market just to make a fortune? Perhaps luck is all of these things, or even more.

Research suggests that even if luck has little to do with an individual's success, those who achieve extraordinary levels of wealth and influence are often recipients of substantial good fortune. Wealthy people overwhelmingly attribute their success to hard work rather than to factors like luck or being in the right place at the right time. This is because people don't like to hear success chalked up to luck, especially successful people. This leads to a common but flawed assumption: those who don't succeed must be inherently less hardworking or skilled.

So, what can one do to create their own luck? To do so, one must start by acknowledging the role it plays. Studies show that high believers in luck tend to have a more optimistic outlook on life, which in turn, makes them more willing to take chances. This positive mindset encourages them to seize opportunities that others might overlook.

These believers, in essence, were creating their own luck by creating more opportunities for them to attribute their lives to good luck. When they believed they could influence luck, they did better.

Psychologists say that 'luck' serves a function: both positive and negative. It can help people feel more optimistic when circumstances are beyond their control. Conversely, it can also do the opposite: it can trap people in the idea that nothing is in their control and can rob them of the





belief that they are the captain of their ship. Bad luck can be used to explain poor decision-making and to avoid taking responsibility for our actions. Thus, believing in luck is a double-edged sword: it can empower or paralyze, depending on how we interpret it.

Luck and opportunity play a much bigger role in our lives than we can imagine. Recognizing this doesn't mean dismissing hard work or effort

but rather understanding that success isn't purely a reflection of individual merit. Seeing ourselves as self-made, leads us to be less generous and lack empathy for those who didn't have as many opportunities as we did. However, acknowledging the role that luck plays in our lives encourages gratitude and humility.

While we cannot control the arbitrary nature of life, we can take steps to

broaden our horizons of success by embracing uncertainty, taking calculated risks, and creating more opportunities for luck to find us. After all, while luck may not always be predictable, people who leave a window open for lady luck may find her landing on their sill.

THE SUBALTERN DIES DIFFERENTLY



– *Anshuman Das*
BFIA '25

In Zoya Akhtar's OTT Magnum Opus *Made in Heaven*, it is seen that when Sobhita Dhulipala's father-in-law Kishore, the illustrious scion of the Khanna industries dies, the gentlefolk's perception of death and the afterlife appears to be a social celebration of the deceased's life; much like a humane affair- "Kishore loved parties, so we must celebrate his life". The show, in a way, presents a very subtle, or what we colloquially call the 'High society' commemoration of death; with flutes overflowing with champagne, strings of jasmine anointing the majestic penthouse, and bittersweet emotions budding all around. In another example from the "millennials' nostalgia", *Sarabhai Vs Sarabhai*, Maya Sarabhai, much like the elite predecessor of Sobhita, dictates that after humans die, they travel through a 'sophisticated tunnel' which leads them to light. On the contrary of this, we see another perspective of death and the afterlife, which is all-pervasive among the subaltern. Ideas of innumerable hells that would summon the soul based on its deed; oceans, and rivers of spit, urine, semen, and sweat, the afterlife bodies of heretics would be submerged in, and many more. The subaltern perception of death, or even the afterlife, appears to be dictated by rudimentary beliefs and practices that instill a traumatic image of the setting of one's life.

This intellectual trough between these classes about the perception of the afterlife also presents food for thought for us on how orthodox dictations of archaic practices and beliefs may not necessarily permeate boundaries of class and even caste for example.

Death, which comes to us, and our society as a traumatic experience marking the end of one's life, has always been distinctly approached and seen through the lenses of various cultures, societies, religions, and other social hierarchies. For example, the Charaideo Maidam in Assam, which was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site last year, has several

mounds that serve as burial sites of the Ahom rulers and aristocrats who shaped the history, ethnicity, and the premature idea of Assamese statehood in the early modern era. Ahoms, much like the early pagan and polytheistic faiths of South Asia, believed in the concept of the afterlife, and the deceased was honored with clothes, potteries, golden pendants, charms, weapons, and royal insignia on their journey to the afterlife after death. Having found this burial practice similar to the much-famed ritual of burying Pharaohs in ancient Egypt, boundaries of class and caste did





perfuse with the societal structure of ancient Egypt and early-modern Assam, where the unaffluent boarded for the voyage to the afterlife in sand holes, mass cemeteries, and crematoriums, without a magnificent celebration and observance of the dead's deeds. Though not in a straight-through way, we do find that Abrahamic faiths in India also subscribed to this notion of an afterlife. For example, the very art of Tomb building in the sultanates of Delhi was meant to provide a luxurious dwelling for the soul till *Akhrat*, the final day of judgment. Hence, we observe this medieval obsession of the affluent to build a tomb for themselves; so much so that, in the words of Historian Rana Safvi, tomb-making was a booming business in the Lodi sultanate just like the Real estate of the present day.

This 'Medieval Obsession', somehow, has been inherited by many of us even in the 21st Century. The noteworthy internet boom in India in

the last decade has opened the doors of unexplored information to the commoners, plebians, and the elite. One facade of it lies with tons of journals, videos, tutorials, articles and reels which enable people to bring an impact to society through the majesty of knowledge in domains of arts, sciences, society and interdisciplinary subjects; the other facade, unfortunately, exposes Indians to a stream of hateful misinformation, superstition, anachronistic belief systems deeply rooted in fundamentalism and polarising content. In the last decade, Indians, thus quite unsurprisingly, have started cherishing this inherited medieval obsession and have begun taking it to newer heights. While the modern-day aristocracy has a free will to choose between believing or disbelieving the doctrine of heaven, hell, afterlife punishment, rebirth, and karmic debts, which our culture and belief systems enforce upon us, the commoners and the marginalized, however, believe this with their heart and soul.

Pseudoscience and Casteism, with this internet boom, have reached their maxima on the social media platform. With reels explaining the science behind wearing bindi, the science behind mopping floors manually, how "Caste System and Sati were a British Propaganda" or how the westerners plagiarized our scriptures to patent them as their invention, the youth of India, whom the world lauds as India's paramount demographic dividend, has been becoming even more regressive and antediluvian. It's the right time for us to give up on our superstitions and archaic practices, which we justify under the label of "culture" and develop a scientific temperament, lest we be keen to devolve by 200 years. Because in the words of Satyendra Nath Bose, "A society that discourages questioning and reasoning will remain shackled by ignorance and backwardness."





SEASONED SHEPHERDS



- *Ramish Khan*
BMS '25

The only journey is the one within - Rainer Maria Rilke.

For the longest time, I believed the changing of seasons was something that happened outside our homes—leaves would fall, the sun would scorch, and the rains would arrive. Life adjusts accordingly. But I think I've experienced seasons within myself as well.

I had the privilege to attend the screening of a documentary called *Bhed Chal* (Herd Walk), a story about two shepherds from Karnataka and Maharashtra. It follows Neelkanth Mama, an older herder, whose steps though slow, appear to be calculated (reminiscent of the sand walk from *Dune* movie series), and Vajir, a younger man trying to keep his sheep walking in a world that no longer accommodates his kind. The documentary follows them as they move through rains, barricaded lands and social boundaries that denies them permanence. "The sheep is our dharma," Vajir says, not as a declaration, but more like something he tells himself every day to keep walking.

Vajir faces a unique situation that is all too familiar, his son says no girl wants to marry a shepherd anymore. Though the jobs in the cities carry less dignity yet they are perceived as "progressive". His words linger long after the documentary ended. I don't think it's really about sheep or marriages. It's about what happens when, what makes sense to your parents no longer makes sense to you. Perhaps it's a universal problem?

And maybe it's not all that different from the seasons I've been experiencing myself.

As the final months of college tick by, the conversations have shifted from casual outing plans to job offers, shifting places, and LinkedIn

announcements. I keep noticing these small, almost invisible lines appear between the life I was handed and the life I aspire to. The business my father ran, the stories my grandfather told, and the language my grandmother spoke - all stand at a distance, while I sit at the terrace staring at the city lights and etch out new plans.

I know this is not unique to me. Perhaps our fathers share that destiny with the shepherd Vajir. Maybe our lives are too mapped too by people who believed in walking a certain way as instructed by their forefathers, marked by seasoned paths of duties. And perhaps, like Vajir's son, I am leaving these paths for brighter, shinier things.

What stays with me was how the shepherds weren't performing a job in a 9-5 routine. It's a way of being for them, a rhythm. And here I am, shifting between coffee sips and metro rides, carrying a vague notion of ambition, if dignity even factors into any of this.

Sometimes, I feel like our generation is told to leave behind the old ways

because they no longer "fit" the world where we live in. The old clothes, old names - traded in for shinier things like fast fashion, modern names, and new cities. Maybe it's okay. Seasons are bound to change and fighting it is a losing game. All we can do is take out our raincoats and soak in the rain when it comes.

I don't know. Maybe we don't have to figure it all out. Watching a documentary on shepherds while cleaning up your room for the last time isn't supposed to give you answers. It's supposed to sit with you, like a moment in time where you recognize that even if you're walking away, you're carrying something. It might be the smell of your grandmother's kitchen, the warmth of a village festival, the quiet of empty village streets at night. Or it might be nothing at all.

So yeah - I don't know where this ends. Maybe it never does.

Maybe it's just a pause before the next season.





THEHRAV (A PAUSE)



- Araw Raj
BMS '27

"You'll top the exam again," commented the friend after the last exam day of 12th standard. "Let's see, all I need right now is a break, **a pause,**" replied Shreyansh. He was a free-spirited person with his favourite hobbies being photography and travelling. He was a nature lover and could often be seen talking to nature (pretty weird I guess). Well, he did top the exam and got into one of the best colleges. In hindsight everything was good, everyone was happy, Shreyansh went on a few trips, clicked a lot of photographs and felt fresh enough to join college. The trips gave him the new perspective he needed for the transition and he got his break.

College started and so did the race of who's the best and who'll be the best. A race where horses ran and so did donkeys, cheetahs ran, so did the elephants, heck they even made fishes and birds run the same race. Shreyansh too was caught up to run the same race with special eyes on him for being the topper that he was. He started running. The tests, assignments, projects, exams, and the best part being he was among the leaders but with an illusion that it was a sprint race. His whole year passed in the blink of an eye and then suddenly one day his eyes fell on the camera of his, and he grabbed the camera and started crying. He cried for hours with the camera in his hand as he had not even taken out his camera once in the past year. He sat to reflect on his past year and all he could recall was tests, assignments, exams, repeat. His gallery was full of photographs of notes and few photos of friends (not intended to be good). Even his trips were college to hostel and hostel to college. His friends with whom he wanted to go on trips were left behind or a better interpretation would be Shreyansh became a loner. Again in hindsight everything was good, his teachers were happy and so were his parents, other students envied him but in the race,

someone died: the free spirited photographer and nature lover.



School to college transition can be tough for most students as you're grabbed from a well and thrown in the ocean without any training. A fast-paced world with infinite possibilities, a place with infinite freedom, a place where either everyone is busy or seems like it, a place where either everyone is ahead of us or seems like it, a place where it feels like even a second's stop will drag us behind and me talking about a pause in such a world sounds so counterintuitive but let me explain. I heard somewhere, "Duniya paane ke chakkar me khud ko mat kho dena" (Don't lose yourself in order to win the world) and the line perfectly resonates with the situation. Sometimes we are so indulged in some specific things that we tend to lose track of other things, and in the context of college it's being on the top even if it costs us our peace, sleep or relations. I'm in no way saying don't try to be the best or be on top but if it costs you everything else then I don't see any point in that. In search of tides we are ignoring the stillness of the ocean. What I mean to say is that in the end all that'll matter is your relations and memories (I went philosophical here). So, the question is what should we do then? The solution in my opinion is pretty simple, stop and reflect. It simply means every once in a while just do things that you wanted to do but felt like never had enough time

to actually do it, like just sitting alone eating an ice cream meeting that one friend you wanted to meet for a long time, even you can contemplating alternate realities and possibilities. This might sound like a huge waste of time but doing these small things will surely give you a new perspective and make you a lot fresher than what you were. You can even start your old hobby again, the thing that gave you peace, the thing that made you happy. Personally, I reflect by writing my head out or by sitting alone enjoying music and thinking, "Hmm... Am I stupid or am I not?"

Reflecting also gives you sense of direction, whenever you feel like something's not working as you wanted it to be, reflecting can help you find best course of action and if not best at least an alternate one to make sure you're not stuck at the same place. There's one last thing in this story: the art of not overthinking. We as humans have a tendency to think the worst that could happen and not the best, and if that route is taken then better not stop and reflect as reflecting is thinking about what's happening and not what can happen. Overthinking is like money, we quickly notice others but never look at ours. Then how to not overthink? In my opinion there's no tailor-made solution for this but surely everyone has a way. What I do is talk to loved ones. For some it might be dancing, singing, sleeping but there's always a way and if you think you don't have any, just try a bunch of things and you might stumble upon your way of not overthinking. If this is not making any sense or sounding complex, to put it in simple terms: "While you walk/run the journey called life, some days just sit on that bench on the side to enjoy the weather, and something magical might happen". Don't be a Shreyansh. Don't be me.



INTERVIEWS



*Introduction by
Sumit Dagar, BFIA '26*

When we went looking to assemble the **10th edition**, '***Beyond Horizon: Endless Possibilities***,' of The CBS Post, we weren't on the lookout for the same old stories. Not how to break into consulting. Not how to grow a startup. Not even how to earn your first crore. We were hunting for something more precious, **stories of life itself**. Of what it is to survive, rebuild, and yet remain soft in a world that has tried to make you hard.

We began with a person who requires no introduction on campus, **Professor Poonam Verma**. **Along with The Literary Society of CBS**, we posed the questions to her that we've all had but never dared ask. **What is it actually like to be the principal of SSCBS? Why does she favor the concept of a prom night? What does she believe makes CBS actually CBS?** Her responses were without pretension, without gloss, simply presence. Her voice, calm and reflective, reminded us that leadership is not about bylaws, but about vision. And maybe, heart.

But our quest for inspiration didn't stop on campus. It led us down the **bylanes of Old Rajender Nagar**, to **a humble old age home**. We had no idea what we were going to find. What we found, rather, was everything. These weren't tales narrated in boardrooms or classrooms. **They were spoken in hushed rooms, by eyes that had witnessed too much and still twinkled.**

The **identities** of the two old ladies we spoke to **have not been disclosed in respect for their privacy**. Here are their voices, their testimonies, that must be heard. One, a mother deserted by her daughter **when she suffered a stroke, reconstructed her life brick by brick based on grace**, not vengeance. The second one, a Sindhi grandmother, lost her sole son in Haridwar and her sister due to COVID. And yet, she continues to sing, to cook, to believe. She talks of honour, of ancient traditions, of when values were handed down like heirlooms. **Her resilience is what inspired us all.**

This section isn't about perfect answers. It's about **perspectives shaped by pain, loss, and a quiet but unshakable will**. In a world obsessed with **speed and success**, their stories slow us down and remind us that inspiration isn't always loud. Sometimes, it just sits beside a window in Rajender Nagar, holding a warm cup of chai, saying, **"start again."**

Being part of these interviews, **I honestly just feel grateful—grateful to have sat across these incredible women and heard their stories straight from them**, raw and real. It's something I'll carry with me for a long time.



"CBS BREATHES BECAUSE OF YOU. YOU ARE THE SPIRIT OF THIS COLLEGE." — PRINCIPAL, SSCBS, ON STUDENTS



*Transcription by
Niharika Lahoty, BMS '27*

If you could impart one piece of advice to freshers walking through the doors of CBS what would it be?

Yes, the very fact that they have come to SSCBS shows that there is a need to learn, to excel, and that is what I really want in my students always, whether it's the 1st year, 2nd year, or 3rd year. That quest for learning should never ever die, not even when you leave this college, because the world is changing so fast. Every three months, there is something new and different, even in the IT world. I mean, the IT world is probably evolving even faster. So that is one thing, that the urge to learn, the quest for learning, should always be there with you. That is the most important thing..



How has CBS changed since you first started teaching and what are the significant developments you saw during this journey?

When I joined, at that point in time, the college was very small in terms of the building, the number of students, everything. I mean, we could stand in one corner of the building and see the entire college. Every corner was visible. But today, as you know very well, that is no longer possible. What has remained constant, and I know I might sound like a cliché, is change. But truly, what has remained constant in the college is the entrepreneurial spirit of the students, the teachers, and everyone associated with it. That has never changed. We are just as enterprising today as we were in 1987, and that is the reason why we are at the top. Very often, I am confronted with the question of why our NIRF ranking has fallen below 100. It seems to drop a bit every year. So, we analysed the data. What we found was that the key factor is graduate outcomes. Now, graduate outcomes reflect how well the graduates of a college perform and we are

competing with the top 10 colleges in that aspect. In fact, we are better than many of them, and on par with the rest. Just to give you an idea, the kind of placements our students get and the quality of institutions they go to for higher studies is often better than those from the top 10 ranked colleges. That is what gives me the most fulfilling and satisfying experience. So yes, the NIRF ranking may have gone down, but as far as I am concerned, we are still number one.

As you have seen the selection criteria for admission in college change, so what difference are you seeing in newer batches and previous batches?

You know, something we are missing out on is the fact that, although we used to have group discussions and interviews as part of the selection criteria, that's no longer the case. So first, let me tell you the advantages of CUET. The regional diversity that we now encounter wasn't present when admissions were based solely on entrance exams conducted in a

few metro cities. CUET's nationwide reach brings diverse peers together, enriching classrooms with unique experiences and aspirations. This environment fosters resilience, growth, and prepares you for leadership—be it in policy, business, or beyond. You might not realize this right now. And if you decide to stay in your own





cocoon, thinking "I come from this region, so I'll stick to my own group," you'll be missing out on a huge learning opportunity. So, I urge all students to take full advantage of the diversity around you. Make the effort to meet others. If you're in a class, talk to everyone. Don't just stick to your own groups. There will be students who are shy, who are introverted, who might not come forward. You need to reach out to them. And who knows they might become your lifelong friends.

True, like any student who even have just entered the college has a desire and craving to find and execute such ideas.

Let me share an experience. I visited a first-year class last year, where students had taken up entrepreneurship as their GEC paper. I casually asked them why they had chosen that subject. One student said, "Ma'am, I chose it because I know I won't be able to compete with the others during placements, so I want to be self-dependent." Now, the very fact that this student recognized and openly admitted their weaknesses and also expressed a clear plan to work around them was remarkable. My answer to them was, "Look, if I were a recruiter and you came to me with this kind of self-awareness and mindset, you would be the first person I'd hire." This is what I want from each one of you. Realize your weaknesses and work on them. Don't be discouraged by them. Everyone has weaknesses, but the key is not to let them define you. Work to overcome them. In business, there's the 'Red Ocean' strategy, where competition is intense, and there's the 'Blue Ocean' strategy, which focuses on creating new, uncontested market space. Corporates are encouraged to explore the blue ocean, to find something different, something innovative, and build a niche. Similarly, each of you must discover your own blue ocean, your peaceful space, where you can create your own unique identity. That's what truly matters.

Mam, what are your views on

the NEP and the NEP curriculum?

Oh, it's wonderful. A lot of opportunities are coming your way. For one, you now have the option of a four-year program with multiple entry and exit points. The best part is that you have access to skill enhancement courses, value addition courses, and generic electives from your main domain. We didn't have these kinds of interdisciplinary or domain-specific courses during our time, and honestly, that was a major miss for me.

What is the proudest moment of yours as the principal of SSCBS?

When I meet people and hear them talk about how amazing and talented the students of our college are, it makes me feel very proud.

What is your daily routine as the principal of CBS?

24/7 SSCBS. Thinking, living and breathing SSCBS. If I have had any superpower, I would have someone around me who can take care of routine tasks, so that I have more free time to think about better things we can do for our students.

How do you take time for yourself, like for any particular activity or interest?

SSCBS is a college with its own uniqueness. It's offbeat because of its students, that's what I always say. Of course, it's also about the teachers. I've seen the amount of hard work that teachers in every college put in, but what makes our college truly different is that our teachers go the extra mile to deliver their best, all for better outcomes. One drives the other, dedicated

teachers and driven students feed off each other's energy. In fact, our ability to become good teachers is a direct result of the students we have. It's their quest for learning that pushes us to be better. We've had students who constantly questioned us, and in finding answers for them, we've evolved as educators ourselves. When I started teaching, I realized that having in-depth knowledge of a topic is essential to be able to teach it effectively. As a student, you have someone to explain things to you and clear your doubts. But when you're on the other side, when you're the one answering the questions and making concepts clear, you need to have a deep and thorough understanding. Because the questions can be unexpected. Even if just 20% of students in a class begin to interact and ask questions, it can inspire the passive learners to become active participants. And that is how a truly engaging learning environment is created.

CBS is one of the few colleges that embrace the idea of prom night, what motivated you to support this activity?

It's all because of the students. Whatever changes have taken place at SSCBS over the past few years have been inspired by them. If I'm working hard, it's only because of the students, they are my motivation.

If CBS was a movie, which movie would you compare it with? And what character would you be playing in it?

3 Idiots and if I had the chance, I would have loved to play the character of Rancho.





“THEY LOOTED EVERYTHING—EXCEPT MY FIRE.” SILENCE, SURVIVAL, STRENGTH



*Transcription by
Amrita, BMS '27*

Where did you grow up?

Old Rajendra Nagar. That place raised me just as much as my family did or maybe more. It's funny how a neighbourhood can etch itself into your bones. The streets were always alive with ambition. The people were tough, but honest. That place gave me thick skin and a sharp mind. I learned early on that if I didn't hold myself up, no one else would.

Would you say you had a typical childhood? You come from a big family. How did that shape you?

Not even close. My father passed away when I was very young. After that, the warmth of bedtime stories and jadoo ki kahaniyaan never really touched my life. My reality wasn't about dreams, it was about surviving. While other kids listened to folk tales, I was learning how to count money and read people. Life taught me differently. Six sisters. One brother. A house full of noise, but also silence and especially when it came to emotions. I never really learned how to sit with women and just talk or laugh over silly things, cry over love stories. That world felt foreign to me. I was too busy planning the next rupee, the next move.

Spirituality seems to play a big role in your life. Can you talk about that?

I'm a Shiv bhagat. Always have been. And Hawan –that's sacred to me. Not just for the soul, but for the body too. I don't trust chemicals in medicine. I use ghee from the Hawan fire on wounds. It heals. That smoke, that flame carries energy. I've always believed that what's pure can cleanse you, inside and out.

You mentioned a difficult time with your daughter...

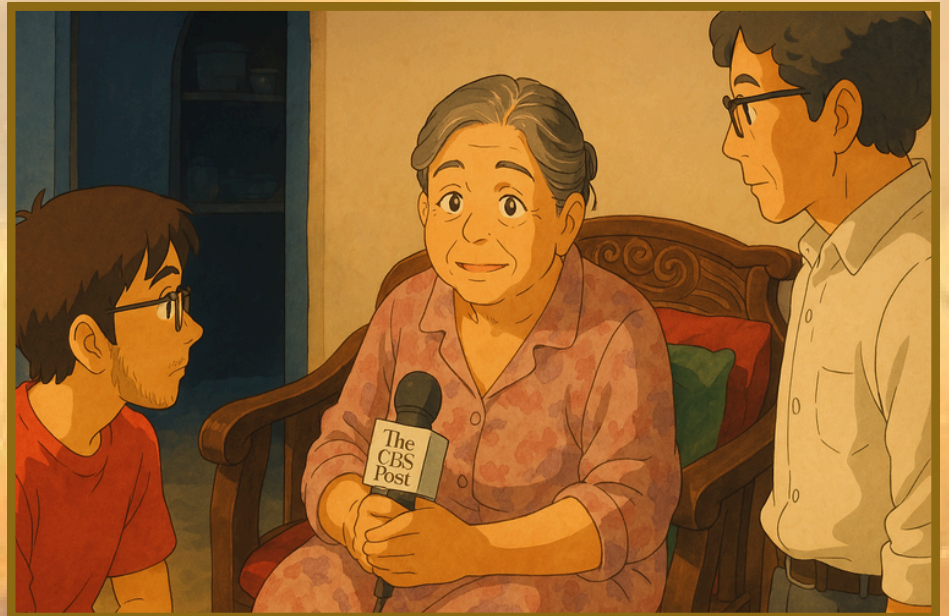
Three years. Not a single word. And it hurts. No mother is built for that kind of silence. But I didn't beg. I prayed. Every single day not for her to return, but for her to be safe, to be happy. I sent her abroad, gave everything I had to her future. Then came the stroke.

Paralysis. Half my body gave up. I called her. She didn't come. She'd married an American. No goodbye. Just silence. I felt betrayed, but not broken. I came here to the Arya Samaj old age home. Familiar soil. There's a Hawan every week. That fire, it brought the feeling back, not just to my limbs, but to my will. To my soul.

earn again. That hunger? That's mine. That's sacred. I never chased luxury—I chase purpose.

You've faced widowhood, betrayal, paralysis—and still carry this fierce light. Where does it come from?

Can't stand dishonesty. I believe God. Only God is the only real giver. And if our heart is clean, He gives you what



But you didn't stop there. You made a comeback.

Yes. I bought a small room here. And from that one room, I restarted my online business. No team, no favors; just me and my hunger. Today, I've built a property worth 5-6 crores again. I even gave my daughter a house worth 4 crores. Not out of guilt. Out of grace. I told her, "I don't want to live with you." And I meant it. That chapter's closed. She has her life. I have mine. No hate. Just truth.

You've been taken advantage of by people, yet you live so gracefully. What keeps you going?

Oh, I've been looted. Cheated. Left empty-handed more times than I can count. But what they couldn't steal was my fire. I live well today. I've got five people working in my home, but I'm still not content. I don't like sitting idle. I want to build again,

you deserve and sometimes even what you never dared to ask for. I was never the perfect housewife. I didn't know how to cook or clean like they wanted me to. But I knew how to earn. I've always been a rebel—not the loud kind, the relentless kind. Willpower runs in my blood. I walk my path whether the world claps or not.

What worries you about today's generation?

Gratitude. Honesty. That's what's missing. Kids today are quick with words and quicker with judgment. But they're slow with reflection. They don't see what sacrifices are being made for them. Or if they do, they don't acknowledge it. I always say that teach kids puja path when they're small. Teach them not everything comes from Google. Some answers, You find only on your knees, in front of God.



"I WAS NOT EDUCATED, BUT I KNEW HOW TO RAISE A SON." LOVE, LABOR, LEGACY



*Transcription by
Riddhima, BMS '27*

Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us today. To begin with, could you share a little about your early life?

I was born in Old Rajender Nagar. My grandfather had migrated from Sindh, Pakistan around the time of partition. Somehow managed to get a house. He had four brothers, and all of them lived together. We ran a small shop, and my father worked in small jobs wherever he could find them. We made do with what we had.

And after marriage, where did life take you?

I got married in Old Rajender Nagar itself. Then I moved to Ashok Vihar and eventually to Vikas Puri. Life brought many changes. I had to start working very early on. I wasn't highly educated—just passed the 10th standard—but struggles made me strong. I began with private jobs. Eventually, the company I was working for shut down, and that's when I shifted to field work with NGOs. By God's grace, it worked out well. I kept learning through experience.

That shows incredible resilience. You also raised a son—tell us more about him.

He was my whole world. Such a kind-hearted, innocent boy. Though when he was a kid, his peers used to bully him. Still he always cared more about others than himself. When he grew older, he told me, "Mumma, you can stop working now." He rented a house for me and tried to make my life easier.

What happened to him?

Seven years ago, he left for Haridwar. That evening, he told me he was getting on a bus with his aunt. That was the last I ever heard from him. He never returned. We filed a police report, searched every

month in Vikaspuri, hoping for any clue. We did that for nearly 8–9 months, but there was no trace. Eventually, with the little money I had, I came to live in an old age home.

That's an unimaginable loss. How did you find the strength to carry on?

My only support back then was my sister. She was there for me during the worst of it. But during the Covid pandemic, I lost her too. After that, I was alone. But I chose to keep going.

In the midst of such grief, you still seem to carry so much wisdom and optimism. What life advice would you like to share?

Never take revenge, even if someone wrongs you. Stay positive. Wish well for everyone, and God will take care of everything. Always share things with your parents. My son never shared this grief or problems with me and that is a regret I still have. Had I knew what was in his mind, I could have done something. So do share things with your mother and father. If

you're in college, study hard—but don't forget to enjoy those years too. Balance is so important in life. It's not just about books.

And when it comes to language, you seem to have strong views about Hindi and English?

Language is important. Things keep changing with time, but I always say—speak Hindi. Speak your own language. That said, I understand that in today's world, English is necessary too. It's a skill—but it's not our identity. Our mother tongue should not be forgotten.

What are your thoughts on the younger generation today and their disconnect with traditional culture?

It's having a big impact. Today's generation often doesn't know our traditional tastes, our clothes, our music, or our art. They're losing touch. Our culture and values should be taught alongside education. We're depending too much on textbooks and forgetting social learning. No matter where you go, never forget where you come from.

