

THE
CARAVAN
A journal of politics & culture

India's only
NARRATIVE JOURNALISM
magazine

About *The Caravan*

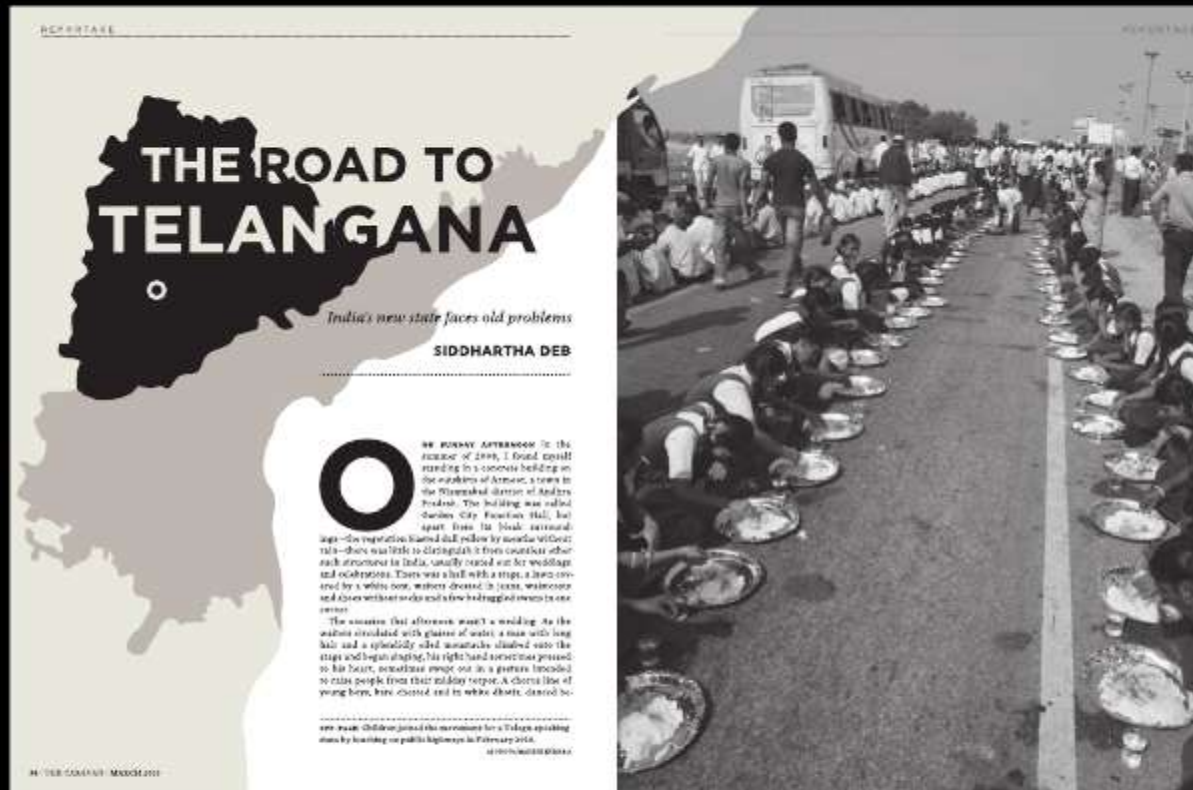


The country's first and only publication devoted to narrative journalism, *The Caravan* occupies a singular position among Indian magazines. Our stories present a unique mix of detailed reporting, lively and vivid writing, and a commitment to the art of storytelling whether the subject is politics, culture, travel or art.

These are not the typical pieces that fill the pages of daily newspapers and weekly magazines rushing to chase yesterday's headlines. *The Caravan* showcases artfully constructed stories whose subjects go far beyond the chatter of daily television news. Based on months of reporting and research, our stories are crafted into dramatic narratives that employ pace, color, character and style to keep the reader hooked from start to finish combining the excitement and immediacy of great fiction with real characters, real plots and real consequences.

Drawing on the tradition established by great international magazines like *The New Yorker* and *Granta*, *The Caravan* presents a rich and nuanced picture of contemporary India in all its complexity. Since its re-launch in January 2010, the magazine has earned a reputation as one of the country's most sophisticated publications: a showcase for the region's finest writers and a distinctive blend of masterful reporting, incisive criticism and commentary, stunning photo essays, and gripping new fiction and poetry.

Reporting and Essays



Narrative journalism is at the heart of every issue of *The Caravan*, and nowhere more than in the three to four major reported pieces and essays published each month. The product of months of reporting, research, writing and editing, our cover stories and long features provide unparalleled insight into the key issues of the present and the forgotten dramas of the past, while eschewing the dry recitation of facts and figures. Written with style and verve and narrated with pace and tension, these stories go beyond the headlines and boldfaced names to bring the reader face-to-face with the characters and conflicts that define India and the world today.

LETTERS FROM

Belfast

AFTER MORE THAN A DECADE OF PEACE, IS SECTARIAN VIOLENCE RESURGING IN NORTHERN IRELAND?

The Troubles Revisited

BY DON DUNCAN

IN MANY WAYS, NORTHERN IRELAND, the small United Kingdom member country at Ireland's northeast coast, contains two separate British Northern Ireland, populated mostly by Protestants who feel strongly connected to Great Britain, and Irish Northern Ireland, populated mostly by Catholics who feel a kinship to the Republic of Ireland, the rest of the island that gained independence from Britain in 1922.

Saint Patrick's Day, the Republic of Ireland's national holiday, celebrating the man who brought Catholicism to the island, makes this boundary clear. Northern Ireland's Catholics lit the streets of Belfast wearing green, Ireland's national colour, in an act of cultural assertion. It has been 16 years since a ceasefire between Catholics and Protestants ended the Troubles. The conflict that had plagued Belfast for the past 30+ years. The 1998 Good Friday Agreement officially ended the violence and effectively dismantled the Catholic paramilitary group, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the militia that defended the Protestants. The public wings of these entities, which include the Catholic party Sinn Féin, once the political voice of the IRA, are now committed to peace and power sharing in the Belfast assembly. Northern Ireland is a miracle of modern diplomacy and held up by its key brokers, the US, the UK and the Republic of Ireland, as an example of a successful peace process.

But this year, when the Saint Patrick's Day parade winds



PHOTO: GUY LAWRENCE

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its way through Belfast, some sectarian violence is likely to resurface. While the IRA has disbanded and its former leaders are key members of peace in Northern Ireland, small, breakaway groups called the Real IRA and the Continuity IRA, thought to number only in the hundreds, began a campaign of violence last year, targeting members of the British army and the Northern Irish coastguard. In March 2009, these groups killed two army personnel and one policeman. The sporadic attacks have continued, with police personnel and property targeted, most recently a case where parliament and a Catholic policeman in December 2009. The humanitarian land divided Northern Ireland, but now allowing for the symbolic repair of the attacks.

The differences that divide Northern Ireland are religious, cultural and historical. They are rooted in the scars of Britain's colonial exploitation and colonial project in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Ages to fully colonize her Irish subjects and 'civilize' them into 'Britishness', Queen Elizabeth I set out on a campaign of cultural and religious suppression of the Irish. The native language, Gaelic, was banned, and strict constraints were placed on the practices of Catholicism.

Ireland, Britain's closest neighbour, was arguably its most intractable colony, a highly resistant population that fought numerous military uprisings. Making little way in conquering the Irish, Queen Elizabeth I, who ruled in the 1580s, decided to try a new tactic: planting her own Protestant subjects among the Irish in what is culturally alien to the island. In the North, she transplanted Scottish Protestants, who quickly multiplied. By 1621, when a native Irish freedom movement organised independence, Britain insisted to keep Northern Ireland because of the new Protestant majority.

Under British power, Catholic Irish were systematically discriminated against, a tendency that continued in Northern Ireland post-independence. Catholics were denied access to many public services, voting districts were gerrymandered to ensure Protestant political dominance and the police were overwhelmingly Protestant. A civil rights backlash by Catholics in the 1960s spiralled into full-scale sectarian war resulting in almost 4,000 deaths from 1969 to 1998.

Today, after only 16 years of peace, the 32 years of bloody violence are the backdrop to the recent murders and particularly activity for people living in Northern Ireland; the significance is huge.

"It took me back to when I was growing up," says David Power, 22, as he stood on the sidewalk watching last year's Saint Patrick's Day parade pass, a small Irish flag hanging from his hand. Power is a Catholic from Londonderry, a city that was particularly struck by violence during the Troubles. "These attacks have served to remind us all of what we don't want to go back to. It shows us all how fragile the peace here really is, something I think we were beginning to take for granted."

These attacks have served to remind us all of what we don't want to go back to," says one Saint Patrick's Day parade goer. "It shows us all how fragile the peace here really is; something I think we were beginning to take for granted."

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While people like Power are in shock from the attacks and the spectre of a return to the more violence that has occurred, these violent developments came as no surprise to the intelligence community here, which has been monitoring breakaway paramilitary activity since the peace process began. According to a security source in Northern Ireland, who speaks on condition of anonymity, the recent attacks are part of a much larger campaign being plotted by Catholic dissident groups like the Real IRA and Continuity IRA, plots that stretch back over a year. In that time, the source says, there has been over 100 hit-and-run attempts of security personnel involving drive-by shootings, car bombs, body traps and even hand-to-hand contact to pop-off grenades.

So far, the Protestant community, including Protestant militant groups like the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), are holding their political leadership and military organisations, but further dissident attacks by Catholic paramilitary groups, which intelligence sources say are imminent, will test this sentiment. Armed Protestant splinter groups are beginning to emerge, one calling itself the Real UFF, which is planning to have operations against Republican targets already underway. The worry is that if a further act of sectarianism happens it could easily spiral into another large-scale war.

"I'm surprised there hasn't been a Protestant backlash yet," says the security source, adding that a regional would most likely be in the form of an announcement of a Republican leader: "Localist retaliation is the biggest concern right now in terms of this violence escalating into a sectarian conflict."

"One real concern for our community," says Darrell McKeown, who represents Sinn Féin in Northern Ireland's Legislative Assembly. "What we need now is more discussion with Protestant leaders to mitigate any possibility of attacks on the Catholic community."

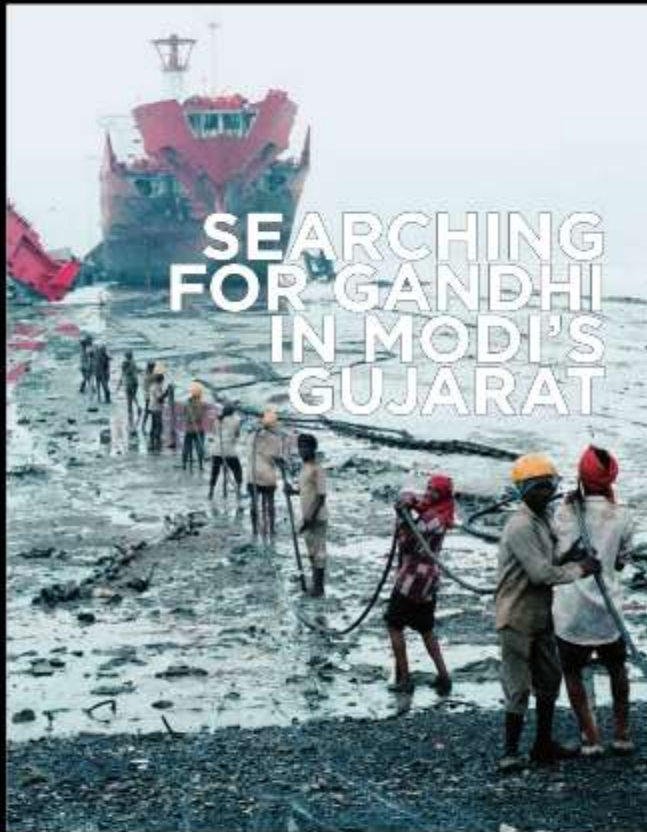
No organised backlash from the Protestant community has yet occurred, however the dissident attacks have rocked dormant sectarian hatreds in certain Belfast neighbourhoods and across Northern Ireland. The new splinter images of hit-and-run cars and masked people throwing rocks at the police are returning with increasing frequency. But, for now, the mainstream Catholic and Protestant leaders remain committed to peaceful democratic politics.

The question now is how far the dissident paramilitary groups are willing to go to weaken the diplomatic bridge of peace that has been so carefully constructed in Northern Ireland - and even, importantly, how easy it is for that bridge to be torn. ■

LETTERS FROM

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The art of letter-writing is far from dead, at least in the pages of *The Caravan*. Each month our correspondents send back vivid dispatches from the four corners of the globe, charting hitherto unknown developments in politics and culture from Tajikistan to Timbuktu.



MY GRANDFATHER, LIKE 40,000/7s, were Rajasthani banias who worked as administrators in the courts of the petty princes of Kathiawar. My grandfather, Prabhakar Kambh, was of the generation of Indians who came of age in the late 19th century, just in time for the publication of Gandhi's manifesto, *Thee Young Man*. As a youth, Bapu, as we all called him, gobbled up each issue of Gandhi's political tract. Young India, as it came off the press. Naturally, he joined Gandhi's nonviolent movement. In 1926 or '27, he left home to live in Gandhi's ashram in Ahmedabad on the banks of the Sabarmati river. Though he didn't stay more than a year, those brief peaceful days as a renegade marked his life.

In my family, devotion to Gandhian principles died with my grandfather, a man who wore khadi dhoti to the last and unflinchingly protested against such evils as Bollywood movies and Western technology. If this was the case in my family, I wondered what, if anything, remained of Gandhi and his life message in the land of his birth. Last December, I went to Gujarat to find out.

Gujarat owns Gandhi as no other part of India does. Not under the leadership of Chief Minister Narendra Modi, Gujarat has moved further away from Gandhi's vision of residential than any other part of the country. Narendra Modi has created a state where religious communities are not only segregated, lower castes and other marginalised poor know their place, and big business dictates the terms of government.

In Gujarat, there is no happy 'multiculturalism' of the sort wanted by India's image-makers to the world. Since the 2002 pogrom, Muslims of any class are restricted to well-defined ghettos. Even Hindu buildings are segregated according to vegetarians and non-vegetarians, upper castes and lower castes. The head of a well-known institution in Ahmedabad complained to me that one of his star employees, a Hindu woman married to a Muslim man, had to quit her job and leave the city because they could not, as a mixed couple, find someone who would rent them a flat.

As for Gandhi's vision of a nation of villages where small-scale farming satisfied local needs with the lightest possible effect on the environment, and empowered peasants and

landless national governments from the village level up, Gujarat has become quite the contrary. In Modi's Gujarat, natural and human resources have been plundered voraciously at the disposal of private capital, which has reaped what it sows. Manufacturing of US dollar-denominated assets like oil in 2008 shot to 240 billion in 2009.

In vibrant Gujarat, farmers lose genetically modified seeds; the urban middle class adores the new shopping malls. Customised mobile devices are sold, and there are no requirements to hire local workers beyond the shop in Gujarat, and you not only get land, electricity and water, you can have it all virtually tax-free. No wonder business leaders have hailed Gujarat as the model of all that India should aspire to be, a beacon of industrial strength lighting the way to a fat future. As Ratan Tata observed at the Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors Summit 2007, if you're in business, and "you're not in Gujarat, you're stupid."

Unfortunately, the people of Gujarat are not doing as well as the corporate of modernisation is set up. *Economic Times* in Modi's Gujarat year 2012. The International Food Policy Research Institute's 2008 Global Hunger Index ranked Gujarat lower than Haiti.

THE MICROSCALE REALITY of Vibrant Gujarat is mostly Ahiya. Drive far enough south from Bhavnagar, and you come to a stretch of polluted coast where the world's ocean-going vessels come to die. Much is proud of Ahiya, citing it with no trace of remorse as Gujarat's growing range of coastal tourism in Bhavnagar.

I had longed to dip my toe at Ahiya in empty halls. That is how they look in photographs, their rotting hulls lined

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Like many on the shore at Ahiya, salvaging materials from a sunken ship.

COURTESY

Whose state is it?

MIRA KAMDAR

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Among the varied forms of narrative journalism, the art of travel writing may have the longest tradition, stretching from the medieval chronicles of Ibn Battuta to the modern classics of writers like Mark Twain and Paul Theroux. It is a tradition kept alive in *The Caravan's* Journeys section, which provides considerable space each month for travel writing of unusual depth and nuance, informed by the same exacting standards of reporting and writing that define our coverage of politics and culture.

FEATURE

ARTS AND REVIEWS //

NATHA WILL DIE. OR MAYBE NOT.

SNIGDHA POONAM //

HOW PEEPLY LIVE, A SATIRE ON FARMER SUICIDES
IN INDIA, CAME ABOUT



IN JUNE 2004, the farmers took their issue to Anandiben Prasad. It shocked the nation. The first UPA government had just sworn to power, riding on a strong pro-poor, pro-farmer electoral wave, and on 1 July Prime Minister Manmohan Singh flew to Anandiben Prasad to visit the suicide-hit villages. A few days later, coupled with the collapse of government bonds and the mounting indebtedness to private moneylenders had revealed havoc. Nearly 2,000 farmers in the state had committed suicide since 1998. Seventy percent of the state's 74 million people were dependent on agriculture. In 2004, 80 percent of them small farmers.

On his tour, the prime minister visited, among other districts, the severely drought-stricken Maharashtra. In Dharmapur village 13 farmers had committed suicide in the previous six weeks. In neighbouring Pansolgaon, Singhmet Shirsone, whose husband, Anjanerakh, had killed himself in 1998. After the state government acquired their 2.2-hectare plot for the digging of the Talaga Ganga Canal, the family had refused their compensation and moved to the village. They got the money for farming, but before the

harvest, a hailstorm ravaged the crop, and Anjanerakh was forced to take loans from the village moneylenders. After the debt had swollen to 100,000 rupees, and distressed by pressure from the lenders, one November day he committed a ritual dose of pesticides.

The villagers were frantically with each other, each more tragic than the last, in a quest where the police inspector appeared meek. "It also comes from a farmer's family and I have some idea of the suffering and difficulties of the farmers," he told the villagers. He announced a federal compensation of 50,000 rupees to every family affected by suicide.

On the same day, in New Delhi, Anandiben Singh, a 22-year-old television editor between jobs, was watching the news and felt she had hit upon a great story. She decided to make a film—a satire on the farmers' suicides, a story of how an ordinary person's life gets mired into the abject miseries of government, bureaucracy and media. "I neither trained nor ever wished to make films before this story came to me in a flash. Some stories have a tendency to appear in the most unlikely places," says Bhat, in the director's note on the film's website.

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Our arts section goes beyond Bollywood and bhangra to explore the diverse cultural landscape across India and the region, delving into topics, trends and issues that other mainstream magazines have routinely ignored: the ethnic music of Meghalaya, the alternative Tamil cinema, the nascent cinema movement in the Gulf. In carefully structured narratives and insightful works of criticism, we work to widen the scope of appreciation and challenge the conventional understanding about what art means in India.

How to Live Your Life Without Self-help Books

VIJAY NAMBISAN

THE RAT RACE CONTINUES—IS THERE REALLY NO GOD BUT THE GREAT BAND/COOT?

THE ABOVE TITLE should really have a question mark after it. It is a serious question, and needs a serious answer. To call the current professional situation a rat race is already ironic. My mother, at this advanced age, does not bend, still wonders why I'm not making as much money as some of my peers. "Why did you bring me up on stories of Rama and Krishna?" I'll ask her one of these days. "You should have read about Tara and Bala." Ten years from now, there'll be an Amar Chitra Katha comic on Shivabai Ambedkar's life.

Until that happy day dawned, we have the self-help books. There's come a long way since the granddaddy of the genre, Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, was published in 1936. James Thurber did a hilarious job on the first generation of self-helpers in *The New Yorker*. His essays were collected in 1957 in a volume called *Let Your Mind Alone!*. Thurber wrote:

I have devoted myself to a careful study of as many of these books as a man of my temporary wealth and wandering attention could be expected to undertake. And I decided to write a series of articles, offering some ideas of my own, the basic one of which is, I think, that man will be better off if he quits messing up with his mind and lets it alone.

The time for Thurber's irreverence is long past. There are serious books, with readers in hundreds of millions. That means big money for publishers. These books matter to professionals in every field. Best contributors to *The New Yorker* read and, what is more, write them.

These self-help books rarely come without my perusal, which is a small one. They are *The Professional* by Sukanto Bhagat (2009), *Downsizer* by Marathe by V Raghunathrao (2010),

and *The Executive Manifesto* by Aral damanda (2010).

The term 'self-help book' is not used any more. There is a wide variety of categories among the books that seek to help you in your career. But there are, in essence, self-help books, in that they are not (yet) part of the curriculum at business schools. The first book above defines a professional in any field and outlines their traits, implying you can become better at your job. The second is aimed at parents who have grand dreams for their children; it also has valuable advice for rising professionals. The third, first published in the USA, tells how a nation with talent looked for, and found, help in other crafts to make its own more efficient.

None of these books is to be taken lightly. I have read them all with interest—they all hold one's attention—and learned from them. This is not a review but a view, a warning, in my view, of the nature of these books, their importance, their relevance to the real world, and what, perhaps, they suggest, rather than tell.

All these are books written by professionals who have done well. They teach, at an guideline level, for a reason. (That word is interesting: it has a derogatory sense, though I used it in place of 'professional'. I just looked it up. The Britannica dictionary defines 'caricature' as "the policy or practice of advancing one's career, often at the cost of one's integrity." And it cites the word in 2013, just when the first self-help books were coming out.)

The problem with these books, as I see it, is one of values. Integrity is lacking in the corporate world, but anyone who works there does so with lawyers and accountants in check behind him. It is a requisite—not only capability, that makes for success in the office, no professional can afford to function so that. What we deplore more occasionally, however, is the lack of professionalism



// This harping on degrees and credentials is what I call the Taire Zameen Far syndrome. Most of that film is about how children should be allowed to develop at their own pace. Yet at the end the dyslexic boy must win a glittering prize and be fitted. //

relying to agitate to in our lives outside office. The plumber says, "Tomorrow," and tomorrow is always another day. The auto driver shouts as he goes, first by firing his motor and second by demanding more. The word 'hero' in the hospital emergency beds and asks for the respect he can't little task he is mandated to do.

So Bhagat's book, in an introductory section entitled 'How to Read This Book' (from the how-to books have how-to chapters—"for this is a book, I believe, which should remain relevant for all time and for all readers"—gets nowhere with me. It is counting on the plumbers and electricians! The nurses, the auto drivers of all these people read, only they don't read what white-collars do. Certainly they don't read Bhagat, and why should they? It gives them no percentage. Bhagat's book is aimed at workers

who call themselves professionals. The vast majority of workers in the real world do not. They think of themselves as workers. The wall at the door is not an idle threat.

Bhagunathrao's message is for parents. Do not push your child too much. Let it be a marathon, not a sprint. It doesn't matter if your child doesn't score 99 percent, so get through JEE or CAT. So many students in the corporate world come from small towns, small colleges, and very small languages. They get there in the long term. Make it the long, long winter.

Quite right. And yet Raghunathrao bio, as soon as you turn the cover, is full of his career credentials. He says in the book that he studied in a small school and then in a small college in Punjab. But he bio begins, "Producer of Finance at IIM, Ahmedabad." This can be put down to

The Caravan's books pages take a radically different approach to every other Indian news magazine: no other publication of this kind devotes as much space to books. While review coverage in other magazines now crams smaller reviews into ever-fewer pages, *The Caravan* publishes two substantial review essays each month, giving deep and serious attention to works of particular merit and distinction to bring readers new insight into today's most important books.



FICTION AND POETRY

Day After Day

MUKUL KESAVAN

LOOK UP. LOOK UP. YOUR OWN NAME'S ADDRESS.
Nikhil did a double take before he realised he was an inch length away from the boy in front of him.

The boy behind him, either didn't hear Kamesh's command or he heard him, and didn't care because Nikhil could sense him shuffling. Shah was from Jaipur. He was new. NIKHIL wanted to warn him about shuffling but Kame and Kamesh, the two 77ers, were walking the lines and it wasn't a good time to turn around.

At home
The school was lined up for the Lepela Day speech. Three canteens at the bottom, waiting for quiet. A white padlock stood a little apart from them, he seemed to be watching Kame and Kamesh make order. When Kame did flash on the run to stop him from moving, the foreign father flashed. He closed in on the other padlock, looking angry. Nikhil could see Shah's head now. It was at the same level as his right knee because Shah had fallen sideways, out of line. NIKHIL could feel Shah's dumb pain, hear the ringing in his stopped ear. At Kame and Kame. At Kame already. Nikhil stopped breathing the better to be still. Keep his shoulders squared, his hands linked behind his back, and his thumbs crossed. HE felt moved, put him towards the head of the line. Shah began crying in shallow, unsteady sobs. He'd seen the new boy for a term, he was older now.

School always had a white padlock for Lepela Day who always made an speech in All India Radio-style Hindi. It wasn't the same one every year either; the school authorities trained a batch of foreign fathers in twenty-five minute intervals. The Father Mohan began speaking—Respected teachers and dear students, which came out in Hindi as *Maheshwari adbhutgagan, sur priya vidyarthiyen*—Tandon, standing in Nikhil's left, started slapping in high Hindi without seeing his lips.

Aravah hata, saravah seta shuchalepa ravie Hage varaha. Kira vachan addi, sur mein puri ke mal ke taran. Gauri kirishak yare saravah ke vishah the Hindu. Aravah choda umr Edgar Allan Poe ke ravan.

Tandon could keep this up. It wasn't particularly heavy, but he always got someone to laugh. If someone didn't work, he'd be necessary in strict Hindi. Describing Hippo and Homo-Made having sex in the Staff Room generally did.

The padre speech followed a plan. First Ignatius Lepela, then Francis Xavier, then a long bit about the Society of Jesus and a short passage about the founding of the school. This fellow had reached the Francis Xavier bit and seriousness. NIKHIL had read somewhere that the last time Kame's memory had been shown to the public in Goa, someone had blown off his nose—but with the padre telling you that in one language. A march of holy joy. Nikhil could feel his shoulder pad peeling down on his tongue. That he looked his lips to rub out the feeling.

He became caught up in the speech, hypnotised by the hyper-erect Hindi and the horribly faded pronunciation. The bread. As the brutally rolled tin, he rounded like an ear's round speaking what learned into service. He didn't know why the padre bothered. Tandon had a theory. Padre convert people in their own languages, he said. And he'd know it what they think we speak.

At the bottom the foreign padre was struggling with the story of the school's foundation. This school, he said, isn't just the fruit of great labour. This school is the perfect ground for the sacrifice and single-mindedness of St. Ignatius Lepela and St. Francis Xavier. *Yeh vidyalaya keval sharan kaphal rakhe hai. Yeh hamee Ignatius Lepela seum Fari Francis Xavier ke tyag aur tapasya ke karmakhandi hai. He brought his palms together for emphasis.*

In the middle row, Shah collapsed again, this time into Nikhil's back— who staggered and grabbed a handful of someone's shirt to stay on his feet. Shah, hunched over, NIKHIL. The de-lid line broke and applied into a school of imperious boys, looking down at Shah's victim. Nikhil equated seat to Shah who had fallen face first and was lying scarily still, like someone trying to look through grass and earth. He tried to tell him sets his back but it was hard. Shah's shoulders turned but his wrist and cough stopped face down, out of.

Shah walked up, right and disappeared in his strap seat and

POETRY

The Magic of the Foot

Tahani Deabi

"Think of the magic of that first, so gracefully small, upon which year whole weight rests. It's a miracle, and the dance is a celebration of that miracle." —Martha Graham



After
when your body
no longer belongs to you
when it's still, and there
in last night's darkness
asking to be
was the address
those second feet
flaking against the spine
of the stage,
After the lights
and the thrum of applause
have lit the air the streets
and slipped
into someone's apartments
to live between wall hangings
and pillow-top beds.
The room is
After all this
don't be surprised
to find yourself
in the same position, again
sprawled out on the bedroom floor
legs pinned open
like a jaw of bone
the tongue
staggered out to joy
and the feet
down they strike
punching up and around
and they are joined
like hands
meeting widely
in joyous embrace.

The Caravan provides the only serious venue among Indian periodicals for new works of fiction and poetry. Whether by debut authors or major names, the literature published in *The Caravan* has already found a global readership, and earned the magazine a reputation as a place to spot new talent and to see some of the best literary writing produced in South Asia.

PERSPECTIVES

Perspectives



GLASS HOUSES

Get the world's Ambassador smoothly doing things in Burma!

MIRA KAMBER

IN MY HOME TOWN, the Glass Palace, which chronicles the history of colonialism and its aftermath in the state of Burma, Myanmar and India's former territories today, Andrus Ghosh talks the political connection between India and the country that now calls itself Myanmar to 1948, when the last British emperor, Maharaja Bahadur, was called to Bangalore. My own Indian family's link with Burma began about four decades later, at the end of the 19th century. Its flight from drought and famine in Gujarat, an exodus inspired by the first slave of Burma attended by the British Army, on the Arakan coast. The British needed Indian capital and labour to exploit the riches of Ayeyar-ya, teak and precious stones—and this encouraged enterprising Indians to pursue business opportunities in Burma that were still much more readily accepted in India proper. My paternal forebears found Burma.

Eighty years ago, on 4 December 1916, my father was born in Bangalore. He attended the Anglo-Vernacular Government School, and remembered as a highlight of his childhood participating in the 1917 visit of Mahatma Gandhi, who visited Bangalore in 1917 with his young daughter Indira. It was the same year that Britain separated Burma from India and made it a crown colony, but this made little difference to my family's life there. It was not until the Japanese invaded Bangalore on 23 December 1941 that they had to face, joining hundreds of thousands of prisoners of war released across the region to India by boat at an end. They were among the 500,000 Indian men, women and children who tried to leave Burma during the war: between 50,000 and 100,000 people died attempting to do so. The spirit of world war II had doubt my family's fortunes in Burma, a country blue, but it was the camp carried out in 1942 by General Ne Win—whose successors still rule the country—and his order to expel all Indian and nationalist forces meant that I had to flee.

My family's business office was located on Mogal Street, which runs parallel to Chin Street in the heart of old Bangalore. Indian and Chinese merchants lived cheek-by-jowl in bachelors' quarters for generations, largely indifferent to the policies of their governments. When I visited Burma in

1994, Japan had become the most visible foreign presence: Japanese brands were everywhere, and the high-ranking members of the military junta had made the Toyota Land Cruiser their vehicle of choice. The obvious and common products of the United States, India and China were comparatively absent.

My concern at the Indian Embassy was very direct, even personal, about one meeting. He refused to talk on the phone, and when I finally managed to visit his office, he closed and locked the door as soon as I arrived. "I don't want anyone trying to come in here or anything," he said. "They're all spies!"

Until 1948, the United States did not have an embassy in Bangalore, but until the mid-1990s the two countries pursued much the same line in their dealings with the military regime, which even then had Aung Mye San Suu Kyi under house arrest.

While the world's major Western democracies—including the United States, Australia and the countries of the European Union—have consistently condemned the behaviour of the Burmese military junta, and backed up this policy with economic sanctions, India abstained until 2006 more than a decade ago for a policy of calm, pragmatic engagement.

Fearful of China's burgeoning relationship with the Burmese junta and its expanding influence across Southeast Asia, at times as China and Thailand to gain access to Burma's considerable oil and natural gas reserves and (fear) about the activities of insurgents on its long and mountainous border with Burma, India has embraced a realpolitik approach to its eastern neighbour, which has given considerable support to the junta. In addition to opening commercial relations with Burma and encouraging Indian investment and trade with the country, the Government of India has given the Burmese junta direct military assistance, selling it submarines and providing it with intelligence capabilities in air and border areas against Burmese citizens.

As India's economic power has increased, its inclination to exercise any corresponding moral authority has proportionately decreased. Atarjay Sen recently slammed India on this point at a meeting on Burma held in Washington, DC. "When our power to influence the world was zero, we spent a lot of time helping the world as morality. And when we get a bit of power, although not as much as China, they've completely abandoned that responsibility," Sen fumed.

The winner of India's race with China, seen at the end of high moral principles, is the Burmese junta—the same



Young Sun Sun, first deputy prime minister of Burma, greets

regime that spotted my family and confiscated by property and that of thousands of other Indians, in 1962. Like the child of divorced parents who threatens to spend his father and then his mother if either dare condemn his bad behaviour, Burma plays India and China (and Thailand) off one another to ensure that it always gets what it wants: the result is a constant tug-of-war, everywhere on the global playground.

The light slip on the writ that Barack Obama delivered to India over its policy toward Burma during his speech before Parliament on 8 November was intended to cast India back to the higher moral principles that democracies possess—the extra principle that the United States provides to itself with upholding its regard for Burma. The problem is that the real state thrown at the ruler of Indian democratic hypocrisy was cast by the leader of a country that prohibits a very large glass house. For even if the United States can offer a moral argument for maintaining economic sanctions against Burma, and given the real economic suffering of the Burmese people and the same often-mantra line had on the junta's behaviour it must work hard to do so at this point—it can hardly provide similar justification for its own total anti-foreign-policy cashout.

No nation on Earth is more ruthless in the defence of its national interests than the United States, which has rarely hesitated in intervention, militarily or otherwise, in countries whose leaders have pursued policies diametrically the contrary to American interests, invariably defined as access to the natural resources necessary to fuel economic capitalism. The repression of India's interests, in fact, has almost always been a byproduct of the United States for all the very reasons India needs to receive from Myanmar through the typically generous tactics of bribery and selective offers.

The history of American policy toward a very long list of minority leaders who nevertheless provided valuable services to the United States was sharply encapsulated in an apocryphal comment attributed to Franklin Roosevelt about the Neirungun, Anuram Bannet, Gauri, a British doctor who, like the ruler of Burma, amassed great personal wealth and ran the country like his own monopoly corporation at the expense of the people and their liberties.

PERSPECTIVES

"This is one of a bitch." Roosevelt is supposed to have said, "but he's one son of a bitch."

At this point India who even son of the Burmese junta "This is one of a bitch." It might say, "but at least they're not like China's son of a bitch."

While the ministers of the world's democracies condemned Myanmar's recent election as a sham, India, like China, maintained a steadfast silence. Unlike China, India delicately praised the subsequent release from house arrest of Aung Mye San Suu Kyi. External Affairs Minister FM Krishna issued a statement that the Government of India hoped the release of the Nobel Prize-winning leader to the junta's side "will be the beginning of the process of reconciliation in Myanmar." Sun Kyi hit the ground running, going straight to her banned party's office in Bangalore and directly addressing her supporters and the Burmese people. While she has expressed her desire to work with the country's military rulers, she also did not hesitate to repeat her commitment to bringing real democracy to Burma, a process she acknowledged would necessitate nothing less than a revolution, would be quickly defined as meaning "total change."

It appears that son of the most powerful card in Sun Kyi's hand is the one given to her by Western democracies, particularly the United States: the possibility of lifting economic sanctions. While the Myanmar regime will continue to allow her any kind of official political role, it may be ready to give her a powerful position as a minister. It is a dilemma it cannot have directly with the Western powers. To what extent Sun Kyi can leverage this into a real political opening for her party and for the struggle for truly fair and free elections that would allow an era of democracy and civil liberties in Burma will depend on how she plays the West's moral allegiance to the moral high ground against the lure of the vast resources and profits that would be unleashed with the lifting of sanctions against Burma—especially worth, but lies in creation. The temptation for the West after Sun Kyi's release is to follow the path of India's support toward Burma: to send a lot of Chinese diamonds and gas access to an artificially inflated, trade-free, but, agriculturally underproductive, undeveloped market of self-reliance people at staved for economic opportunities as they are for political freedom.

If anyone is up to the high-flying act required to establish such powerful interests on behalf of Burma's long-suffering people, it is Aung Mye San Suu Kyi—the physically diminutive yet hard-nosed 50-year-old who is still known affectionately by those who pin their life's hopes on her as "the lady." The events of the coming weeks and months—if she remains free that long—will tell whether Sun Kyi will be allowed to play this role, whether she will find a way to create a space on Burma's tightly controlled political landscape for her party and the Burmese who yearn for a different regime than the one they have had to put up with for nearly 50 years, and whether the Burmese people who have done without so much for so long will prefer more profits, either those of the present or those of foreign energy companies and investors eager to get back into what was once one of the world's biggest producers of rice and oil. ■

11 THE CARAVAN | MARCH/APRIL 2010

DECEMBER 2009 | THE CARAVAN 29

Each month, the Perspectives section takes a close look at the issues and ideas in the news. From politics to business to culture, these are sharply written short essays that go well beyond the pontification of your average opinion piece to offer sophisticated analyses of the big subjects in Indian life today.

Reviews for *The Caravan*

The New York Review of Magazines

2010

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The Caravan

By Sruthi Gottipati

Circulation: 20,000
Date of Birth: 2010
Frequency: Monthly
Price: 40 Indian rupees (Less than a dollar)

The Caravan flaunts what magazines do best — exquisitely worded narrative features that draw readers in and can keep them engaged over a cup of tea. While magazines around the world shutter, or grapple with the recession and the internet, this brave crusader was launched this year in Delhi, India, challenging the notion that print is dead. It's no mean feat. For readers accustomed to spoon-fed bite-sized morsels of information, long-form journals such as *The Caravan* could appear indigestible. But therein lies the craft of the magazine — it's punctuated with humor and fashions a style of writing as elegant as its 9.5-point Mercury font.

Focused on politics and culture, this monthly publication also offers nips of fiction, poetry and travelogues. The magazine's richness and texture come, too, from its ability to contextualize current affairs. The reportage is as sharp and insightful as the



THE CARAVAN
THE PHIPPTY-PHIPPTY PARTY
RAMACHANDRA GUHA on 125 Years of the Congress and What Rahul Gandhi Could Learn from History
SIDDHARTH MISHRA THE ROAD TO TELANGANA
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- > A Passion for Poetry

The New York Review of Magazines is one of the most respected voices on the state of current magazine publishing. In only its first five months of publication, *The Caravan* scored a great review, establishing the Indian magazine firmly on the international publishing stage.

The Caravan in Australian Broadcasting Corporation

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Indian kitsch in The Caravan magazine

21 October 2010

LISTEN NOW DOWNLOAD AUDIO

The online age has spawned a new acronym -- TL;DR -- which means 'Too Long, Didn't Read', so in this era of short attention spans it's refreshing to come across a new magazine specialising in long-form narrative journalism.

The Caravan magazine has been around in one form or another since 1940 in India but this year it's been given a face-lift and focuses on analysis of contemporary politics, culture, art and literature.

In the last few issues, the books pages have featured articles on Tamil Pulp fiction and on the growing popularity of self-help books in India.

Anjum Hasan guides us through these literary trends and also comments on the recent banning by a Mumbai university of Rohinton Mistry's book *Such a Long Journey*.



Tamil Pulp Fiction
full image

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Guests

Anjum Hasan
Bangalore based books editor of *The Caravan* magazine and author of two novels *Big Girl Now* and *Lunatic in My Head*, by Hunter publishing.

Weekdays 10am
repeated 8pm
Weekdays
Presented by
Ramona Keval

IN THIS PROGRAM

LISTEN NOW (full program)

- ▶ **1005:** Indian kitsch in The Caravan magazine
- ▶ **1022:** Cyclone Nargis and Burma's military regime
- ▶ **1036:** Zero History by William Gibson (review)

ABC Radio features *The Caravan* and carries a regular 15-minute monthly commentary with Books Editor Anjum Hasan.

In October 2010, cnngo.com, the travel website of CNN international, rated *The Caravan* spaces. *The Caravan* was the only entity to be included in this list.



Narrative, long-form journalism is the holy grail for reporters. But do New Delhi readers really care to pore through pages of print? *The Caravan*—a Journal of politics and culture, hopes to counter the stigma of fine print with finer reportage in the political capital....

Revived from its cerebral graveyard early in 2009, *The Caravan* is now a local monthly with very global aspirations. Its panel of contributing editors include brainy beauty Fatima Bhutto, serious scholars Amitava Kumar and Siddharth Dube and au courant authors like Chandras Choudhury and Basharat Peer. Despite its meandering path thus far, *The Caravan* is set to be a trailblazer.

Our Contributing Editors



DEBORAH BAKER is the author of *In Extremis: The Life of Laura Riding*, which was a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize. In 2007, Penguin published her book *A Blue Hand: The Beats in India*, a narrative account of the impact of India on the American imagination. While a Fellow at the Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library, she researched and wrote *The Convert: A Fable of Islam and America*.



FATIMA BHUTTO is a journalist and writer, born in Kabul in 1982. Her father, Murtaza Bhutto, was killed by Karachi police in 1996 during the premiership of his sister, Benazir Bhutto. Fatima's third book, *Songs of Blood and Sword*, a history of the Bhutto family and Pakistani politics, was published by Penguin India in spring 2010.



CHANDRAHAS CHOUDHURY is the author of the novel *Arzee the Dwarf* (HarperCollins, 2009) and editor of the anthology of Indian short stories *India: A Traveler's Literary Companion* (Whereabouts Press, 2010). He studied English at Delhi University and Cambridge University. His book reviews appear every Saturday in the newspaper *Mint Lounge*. He is based in Mumbai.



SIDDHARTHA DEB is the author of the novels *The Point of Return*, a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year, and *Surface*, which was shortlisted for the Crossword Award, longlisted for the Impac Dublin prize and a book of the year in *The Daily Telegraph*. He is currently working on a nonfiction book on India to be published by Viking. He is currently a Radcliffe fellow at Harvard University.

Our Contributing Editors



SADANAND DHUME, based in Washington, DC and New Delhi, is the author of *My Friend the Fanatic: Travels with a Radical Islamist*. He is a former correspondent of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* and *The Wall Street Journal Asia* in India and Indonesia. He holds master's degrees in international relations (Princeton) and journalism (Columbia), and a bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Delhi.



SIDDHARTH DUBE writes on poverty, public health and other social justice issues. A senior fellow at the World Policy Institute, his books include *In the Land of Poverty: Memoirs of an Impoverished Indian Family, 1947-1997* and *Sex, Lies and AIDS*. He is currently working on a historical account of AIDS in India, focusing on sex workers and gay men, as well as a second edition of *In the Land of Poverty*, both to be published in 2011.



CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT is a Paris-based French scholar who teaches in American universities every fall semester. He is known for his work on Hindu nationalism, caste politics and Dalits in India. His books include *The Hindu Nationalist Movement* (Penguin), *Dr Ambedkar and Untouchability* (Columbia), *India's Silent Revolution* (Columbia) and *Religion, Caste and Politics in India* (Primus). Among his co-edited volumes are *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?* (Zed) and *Armed Militias of South Asia* (Hurst).



MIRA KAMDAR is an award-winning author, essayist and opinion journalist who writes in both French and English. Her books have been translated and published in over a dozen editions around the world. She provides analysis on breaking international news for leading broadcast and print outlets. She divides her time between New York, Paris and New Delhi.

Our Contributing Editors



MIRANDA KENNEDY's book about women and globalisation in India will be published worldwide in 2011. From 2002-2007, she was based in New Delhi, where she was a South Asia correspondent for American Public Media's 'Marketplace' Radio and National Public Radio programs. She now lives in Washington, DC.



AMITAVA KUMAR is Professor of English at Vassar College in upstate New York. He is the author of *Husband of a Fanatic*, an 'Editors' Choice' book at *The New York Times*. He is also the author of *Bombay-London-New York*, and *Passport Photos*. His novel *Home Products* was a finalist for the Vodafone Crossword Prize. Kumar's new book *Evidence of Suspicion* is a writer's report on the global war on terrorism.

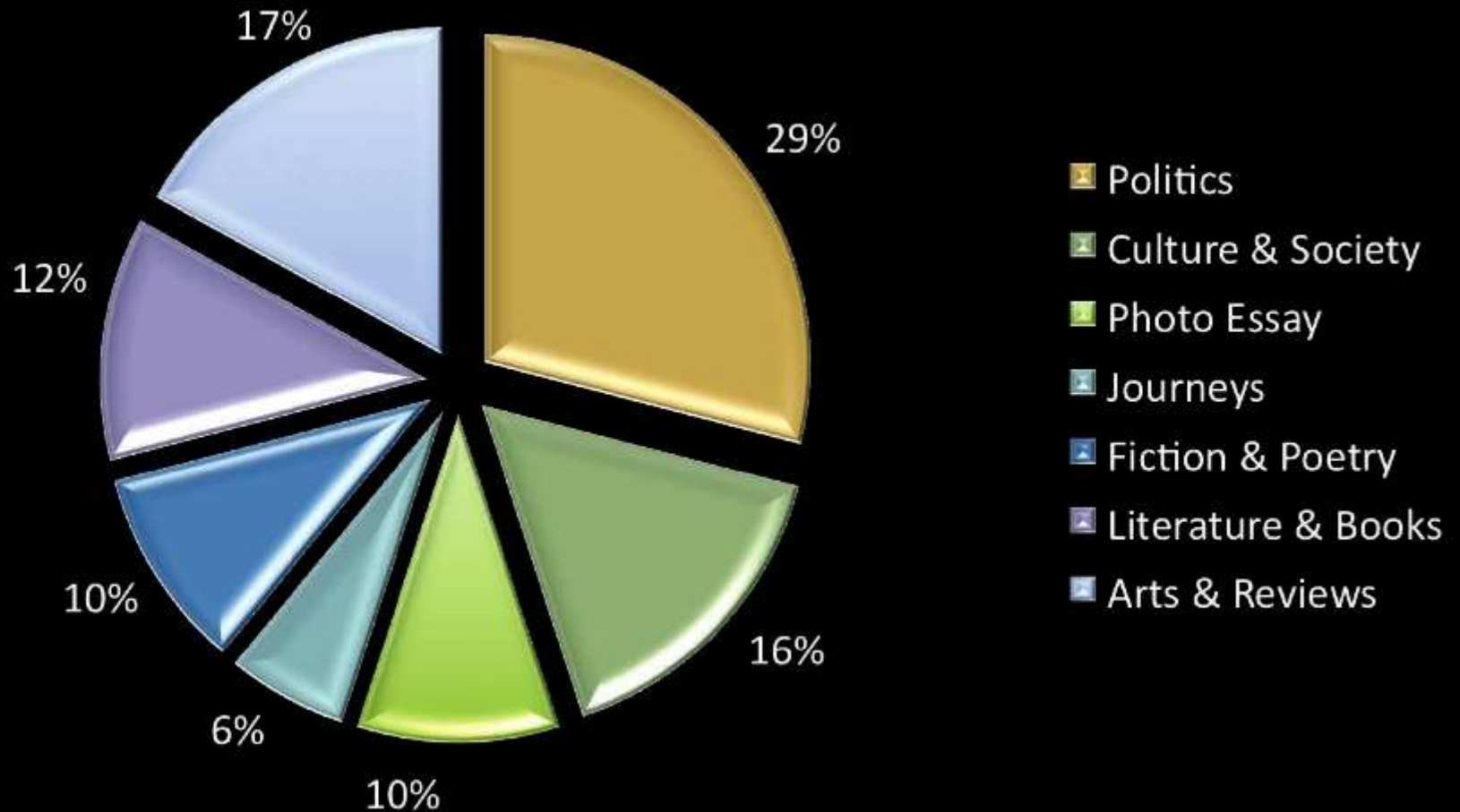


BASHARAT PEER is the author of *Curfewed Night*, a personal account of the Kashmir conflict, which won the 2009 Crossword Book Award for Non Fiction. He is a fellow at the Open Society Institute New York and has worked as an editor at *Foreign Affairs*. He has contributed to the *Nation*, *N+1*, *The Guardian*, *New Statesman*, *LeMonde Diplomatique*, *Financial Times Magazine* etc. He holds a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University.

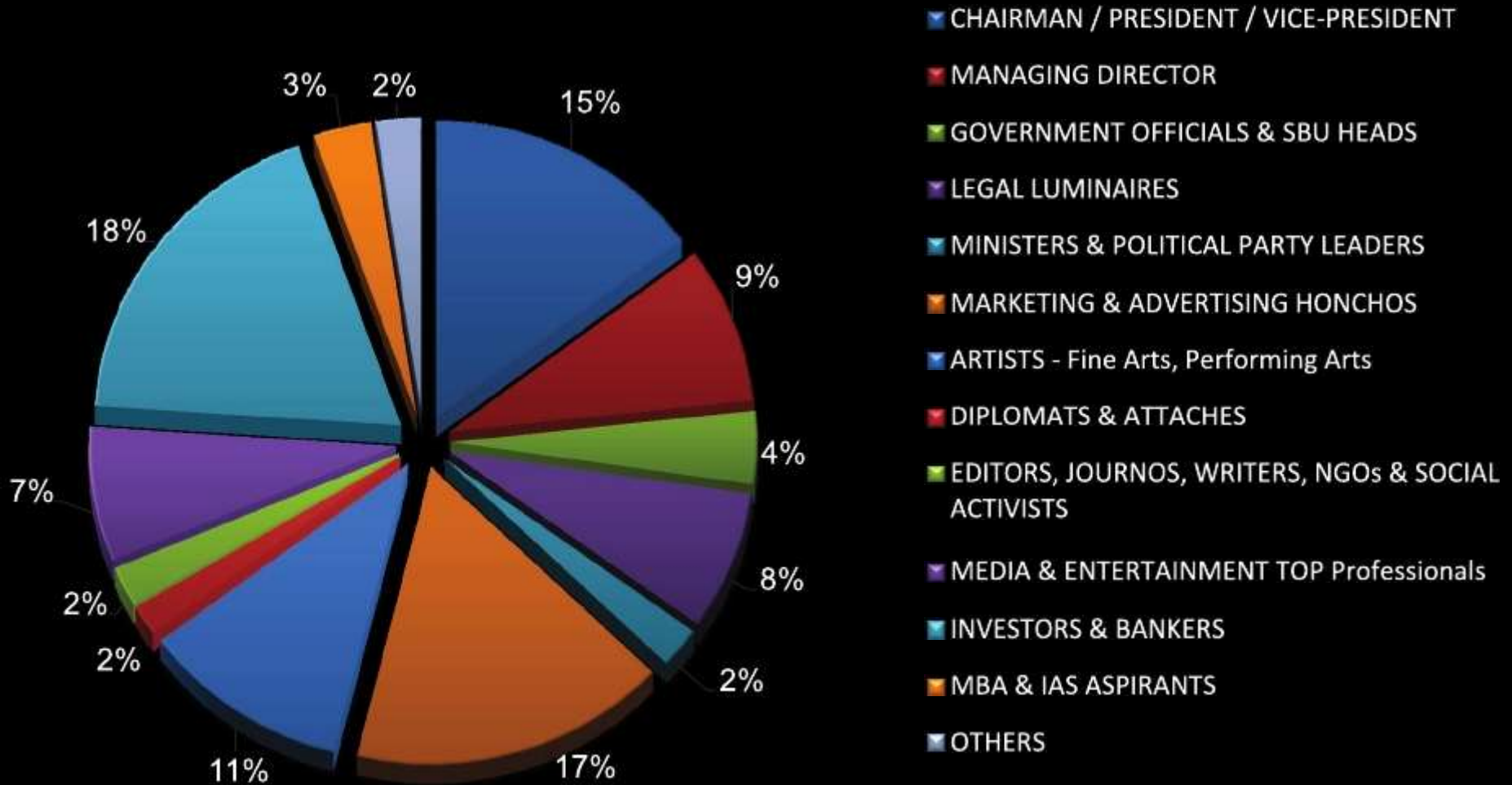


SALIL TRIPATHI lives in London and is a columnist at *Mint*. He has written extensively on politics, economics, the arts and business for over 25 years for the *Wall Street Journal*, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, *The New Statesman*, *India Today*, and others. As a correspondent in Singapore and Hong Kong, Salil covered the Asian economic crisis, and is the author of *Offence: The Hindu Case*. He is currently writing a travelogue, a book on a corporate scandal, and a novel.

Editorial Mix



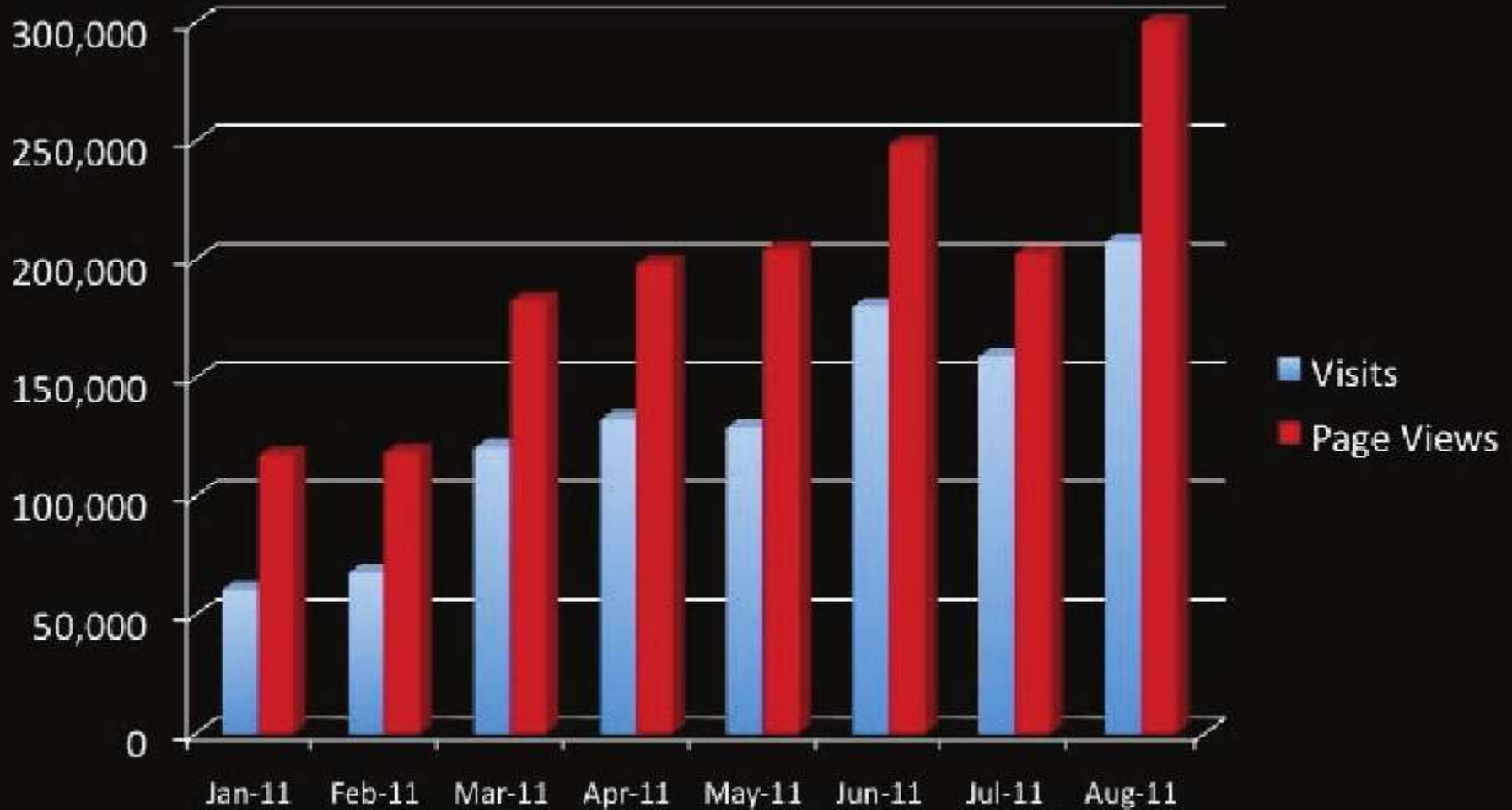
Who Reads *The Caravan*



The Distribution

Delhi NCR	• 6500
Mumbai	• 5700
Bengaluru	• 1800
Chennai	• 1500
Kolkata	• 1700
Hyderabad	• 900
Pune	• 700
Rest of India	• 10,500
Subscription	• 4200
Other Direct Mailing	• 4500
International	• 2500
Total	• 40,500

Rapidly Increasing Online Viewership



Quick Facts

Monthly Page Views	• 3,00,000
Monthly Hits	• 41,00,000
Monthly Unique Visitors	• 75,000
Mailing List	• 32,000+
Tweets per week	• 1000+
Mailer Responses	• 300 per month
Monthly Visits	• 2,10,000



THE
CARAVAN
Conversations

Caravan Conversations

- Literary forums, discussions and conversations that are organized across the country bringing together the intellectually curious and aesthetically inclined, in an appreciation of *arts, culture, literature and politics*.
- A platform that brings together the most respected writers, thinkers, academicians and literature and art connoisseurs from India and around South Asia

Flashback

Aug 4, 2011 | Mumbai

The question of languages in the new Hindi Cinema

Prasoon Joshi | Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra

Niranjan Iyengar | Navdeep Singh | Saurabh Shukla



Flashback

May 8, 2011 | Religare Art | New Delhi

The transformations of Delhi: India's capital at 100

William Dalrymple | Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra
Mahmood Farooqui | Mukul Kesavan | Mushirul Hasan



Flashback

April 29, 2011 | Ista Hotel | Bengaluru

State of Indian Democracy 2011: Elections, Scams, and Parties Ramachandra Guha | UR Ananthamurthy



Flashback

April 4, 2010 | Religare Art | New Delhi

Altered Histories: The Legacy of Political Assassinations in South Asia

Fatima Bhutto | Vir Sanghvi | Mani Shanker Aiyer | Ashis Nandy



Flashback

January 2010 | Landmark | Chennai

A panel discussion on the emerging genre of
Narrative Non-Fiction Writing in India
and the launch of the new edition of *The Caravan*
Pankaj Mishra | Sadanand Menon | Mukund Padmanabhan

January 2010 | Crossword | Bengaluru

A panel discussion on the emerging genre of
Narrative Non-Fiction Writing in India
and the launch of the new edition of *The Caravan*
Ram Guha | Vivek Shanbag | Ajum Hasan

The Caravan Rate Card

Property	• Rate in INR
Full page color	• 1,50,000
Half page color	• 1,12,000
Strip Ad 4 color	• 1,01,000
D/S color full page	• 2,85,000
D/S color half page	• 2,14,000
II/III cover color	• 2,25,000
IV cover color	• 2,62,000

About Delhi Press

Delhi Press is one of the oldest publishing houses in India. With 30 magazines in nine languages, Delhi Press is currently also the leading magazine publisher in the country.

Established in 1939 by late Mr Vishwa Nath, a visionary and freedom-fighter, Delhi Press entered publishing with *The Caravan* in 1940, followed by *Sarita*, a Hindi monthly in 1945. Thereafter, Delhi Press launched *Mukta*, *Champak*, *Grihshobha*, *Woman's Era*, *Suman Saurabh* and *Saras Salil*, among others.

Quick Facts:

Saras Salil (Hindi) is the largest read magazine in India with a readership of 7.4 million

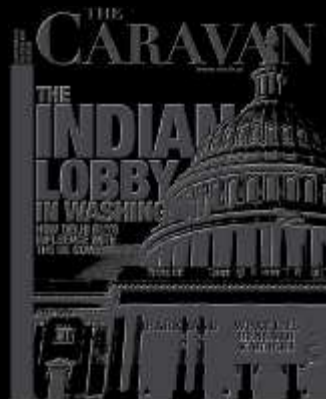
Grihshobha (Hindi) is the largest read women's magazine with a readership of 5.4 million

Champak is the most popular children's magazine with a readership of 4.1 million

Sarita, is amongst the most trusted family magazines with a readership of 3 million

The Caravan:

For 48 years, *The Caravan* was in publication. In 1988, Delhi Press decided to discontinue the magazine to start a current affairs magazine, while the group was still demonstrating consistent growth in all its other titles. Then in 2010, *The Caravan* was re-launched as India's first narrative journalism magazine, aimed for the intellectually curious, well-exposed readers of modern India. Delivering high-quality editorial content with social commitment is the motto. The narratives, that the modern India should read.



For advertising in *The Caravan* and sponsorship of Caravan Conversations please contact Munazzah Rehman at 41398888 Ext. 302 or e-mail her at munazzah.rehman@delhipress.in

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