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EDITORIAL

No part of the country has been spared the terrible heat wave that has engulfed us. And each year we express concern about the future of the environment. It was over a century ago that there was some recognition that human activity can have adverse impacts on climate. Today, one hundred years later, the terms climate change and global warming have become portents of a disaster in progress. There was a horrific report just recently about bodies being discovered under the melting snows of Mt. Everest.

The concerns about our planet are valid and there is enough empirical evidence to show that we have to act now. But it is not that simple, and there is no one answer to how that can be done. Add to this the need for development and how to balance the two. The next theme issue of the *IIC Quarterly* (2019–2020) will take up these concerns from a variety of perspectives. We hope we can add some small value to the literature.

The articles in this issue cover a diversity of subjects. They include the annual C. D. Deshmukh memorial lecture by Jairam Ramesh, on the reorganisation of states; a possible route to peace and sanity in the state of J&K; the extraordinary brutality on Easter Sunday in Sri Lanka, a country on the path to recovery from long years of violent strife; the genre of science fiction in Indian cinema; and, the wealth of Indian craft and the craftspersons who shape them.

The importance of education in its broadest sense underlies five papers in different ways. ‘Peacemaker from the Past’ is an account of Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan, who was as committed to non-violence as he was to education which he believed was the answer to poverty and gender equality. ‘I want to be an *Alima* who is a Doctor’ explores the everyday lives of girls in an exclusive girls’ madrasa in Delhi to understand their experience of becoming educated Muslim women. With education comes the ability to

question socio-cultural-political divides that fragment society. This is exemplified in 'Pedagogical Tools and Youth Empowerment in Kashmir'. Another answer to fragmented societies lies in the concept of 'Cross-Cultural Conversation', which can correct misinformation via educational channels. Education was also one of several crucial aspects that helped the fight for women's suffrage in the 1800s.

Earlier this year, the academic community lost a brilliant social historian and life-long teacher, Professor Aparna Basu. Ramachandra Guha interviewed her on the occasion of the launch of her book, *As Times Change, The Story of an Ahmedabad Business Family: The Sarabhais 1823–1975*. Included in this issue, the interview is a reflection of her personality and intellect.

Omar Khan's photo essay on the story of the Indian postcard from the colonial era is appropriately titled Paper Jewels. They are indeed jewels that allow us to see through them a microcosm of life in the times.

The elections are finally over and we have a new government in place. Many have reservations about this government's nationalist agenda. One hopes, however, that governance will be the priority.

By the time you read this issue, the summer vacations will be over, and I hope, this time, the prediction of a weak monsoon will be proved wrong.



OMITA GOYAL