



THE INDUS DISPATCH

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DUSSEHRA EDITION

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THIS MONTH'S

Correspondents

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An • Academic • Existential • Update

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THE STORY OF DUSSEHRA

What is it that we're really celebrating?

The story begins when Ravana kidnaps Sita, during her (and Ram and Lakshman's) exile from Ayodhya, and takes her to his kingdom in Lanka, also known as present day Sri Lanka. Rama asks Ravana to release her, but Ravana refuses, and one thing leading to another, the situation escalates and leads to a war between Rama and Ravan.

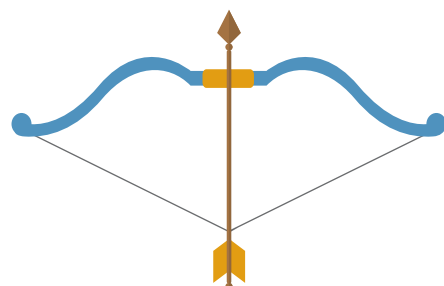
Before the time of the Ramayana, Ravan received a boon from Brahma - the god of creation - for a great bout of penance. As afforded by the boon, he was not to be able to be killed by gods, demons, or even spirits.

There are many reasons on record for the incarnation of Lord Vishnu as Ram, with

some involving and angered Narad, and others mentioning this incarnation as a cleanser of the earth when righteousness is low. Whichever reason one chooses as the most plausible, the result, as concerns the Ramayana, remains the same. After an epic battle of the two armies, and the final duel between Ram and Ravan, the demon king is slain by the avatar of God.

Like so many other Hindu scriptures, the Ramayana is symbolic, in its parts and in its entirety. The most common theme, rightly so, is the victory of good over evil. Good deeds pay, evil doesn't.

The Ramayana is far from being an outdated history, however. As with much ancient Indian literature,



its symbolic basis is what makes it, in a sense, evergreen. The battle between good and evil is an unending one, given how integral a part of our human nature it is, in the end.

As one-sided as the popular opinion regarding the two opposing forces may be, it cannot be denied that they complement each other - one cannot exist without the other. Eastern philosophy recognizes this, and sees the fight between the two as more of a cycle, than a linear sequence.

Oftentimes, however, it becomes difficult, or well nigh impossible to make a distinction between the two, neither being objective realities. This is where societal and individual

value systems come into play, and this leads to a rather diverse moral classification of just about anything.

True evil needn't be a monumental misdeed, nor does it need to be some crime of colossal proportions. The way to look at it, is simply to recognize the right choice, and the wrong choice. And if one is to be frank, regardless of what we as a society have come up with, the distinction is up to you. It seems a rather precarious premise for a lot of situations, but as American psychologist Paul Bloom once remarked, "Humans are born with a hard-wired morality: a sense of good and evil is bred in the bone. I know this claim might sound outlandish, but it's supported now by research in several laboratories."

There is nothing about the human moral sense that can be quantified, it being in every sense of the word, an instinct. Morality often finds its failing in its approach to dealing with acts of good and evil. There can be no true construction put on morality without the separation of acts of good and evil from their final outcome. The blurred line between the two makes it that much harder to fight. The potential for good and evil is in every human, and there will be no eradication of evil without the eradication of a half of mankind's soul.

Given how little we know about a True Good, or a True Evil, it does not do to apply reason to morality, just as it does not do to apply morality to reason. When everything's said and done, all that remains to be done is to apply that natural intuition of yours, and remember that you always have a choice.

The battleline between good and evil runs through the heart of every man.

Aleksandr
Solzhenitsyn

Goodness is something chosen. When a man cannot choose he ceases to be a man.

Anthony Burgess

EDITORIAL COLUMN

A Month of Festivities

Greetings.



It's been something of the student's ideal month this October, with about half the month a holiday. Despite strong arguments in favour of the action, however, holidays are not doled out without a strong reason, and the rationale behind this holiday is most likely that there would be a unanimous uprising for the worse if Indus were to make light of the annual Dussehra vacations. Yes indeed, it's that time of year – goes to show how time passes one by and all that. Of course, this newsletter will probably reach you after you're well and done deriving the utmost balm from your two weeks off, so we do hope you had a good time. Unfortunately for us, however, fifteen days of school doesn't put much across us, in the way of content. So, having done our very best to deliver, we present to you our Dussehra edition. We like to think we take feedback seriously, so feel free to fling anything you've got at us here: <https://forms.gle/SPdmajWPq2j3QAu18>.

– Our Dussehra Wishes, from the Editorial Board



AN ODE TO THE SCHOOL CORRIDORS



I never thought I'd miss those corridors, the brief two-minute walk from door to door.

I never thought I'd miss the voices, the giggles and screams and other weird noises.

I never thought there would be an end to the days we'd pretend we didn't see each other passing by, or the days we greeted each other with bright smiles - the days I overheard things unintended for me,

or the days we ate snacks and silently sipped on tea, our petite interactions, now I miss so dearly.

What I wouldn't give to be back in those corridors, even if we're six feet apart, with covered mouth and nose.

- Ms. Diana Patel



LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS ABOUT RAVANA

2. Ravana was not named so since birth. He was Dashagriva or Dashanana (demon with ten heads). While trying to dislodge Mount Kailash on which Lord Shiva was meditating, Shiva pressed the mountain with his toe crushing Ravana's forearms. As Ravana screamed in agony, he came to be known as Ravana (the one who screams). It was then that Ravana became one of the greatest devotees of Lord Shiva, and composed the Shiva Tandava Stotram.

4. Ravana was a great practitioner of statecraft. When Lord Rama killed Ravana, who was on his last breath, Rama instructed his brother Lakshmana to go to Ravana and learn the art of statecraft and diplomacy from the dying demon king.

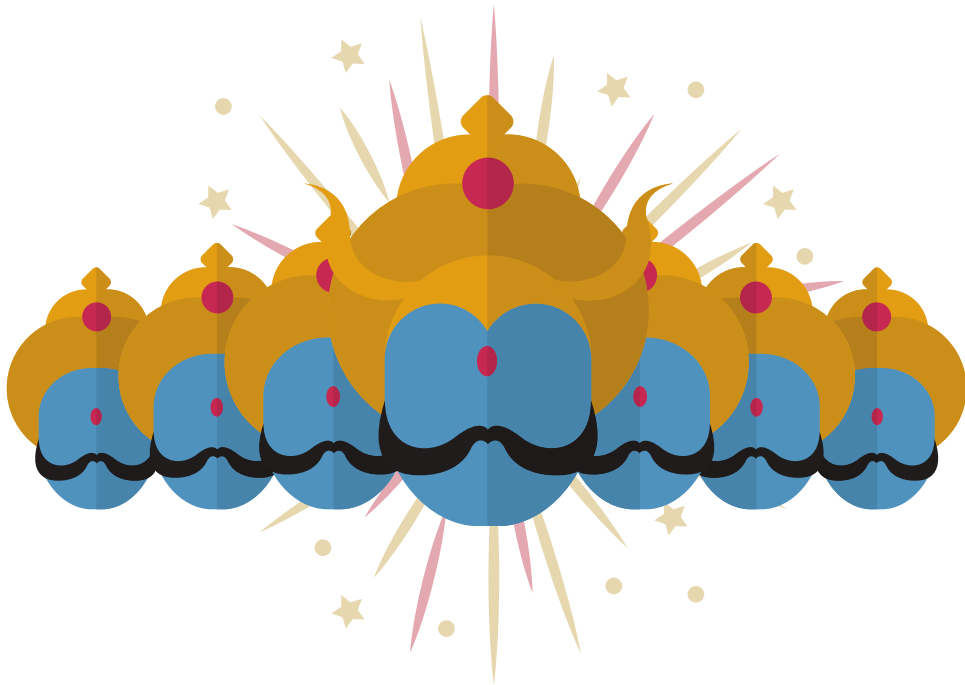


1. Ravana was half-Brahmin and half-demon. His father was Vishwashrava, a rishi belonging to the Pulastya clan, and mother Kaikasi belonged to a demon clan. Vishwashrava had two wives - Varavarnini and Kaikasi. Kuber, the god of wealth was born to the first wife, and Ravana, Kumbhakarna, Shurpanakha and Vibhishana were born to Kaikasi. It was Ravana and his brother Kumbhakarana, who performed penance, got powers from Lord Brahma and drove out Kuber to occupy the golden kingdom of Lanka.

3. Ravana was not only a stupendous fighter, but also an expert of the Vedas and an expert in astrology. It is said that when his son Meghanada was to be born, Ravana instructed all the planets, and the Sun to be in their proper position for the auspicious "lagna" so that his son would become immortal. But Saturn suddenly changed its position. Noticing this, a furious Ravana attacked Saturn with his mace and broke off one of its legs, maiming him for life.

5. Ravana was a great practitioner of statecraft. When Lord Rama killed Ravana, who was on his last breath, Rama instructed his brother Lakshmana to go to Ravana and learn the art of statecraft and diplomacy from the dying demon king.

The
Indus Dispatch



wishes you a
Happy Dussehra




BILLBOARD




The Editorial Board Announces:

Know anything about anything? Of course you do. Think it's interesting enough for people to know about? Even better. For our new "information section", to be put into practice from the October edition, we invite you to send us any snippets of useful information you may have gathered over the course of your careers. from a handy way to make pasta sauce, to surviving an eel attack - we welcome everything. As always, reach out to us at: aarush.kumbhakern@indusschoolhyd.com



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