THE ALLANCE EDITION 31.0 MAY 1, 2020

HOW 2020 MAY

THE INFINITE TO- DO LIST

PARENTS & PRIVACY

WHAT IS MORE Boring Than Boredom

DEFUSING INDIA'S Covid-19 time bomb

IN HINDSIGHT

HOW 2020 MAY

BY : DHRUV ATREJA

"Don't roll it! Do not roll it in front of me! You know how I am about these things"

"Dhruv, is this going to be like that time you were afraid to toss a coin because you thought it would create two alternate universes?"

"Yes, and that dice is a six-faced coin"

"Firstly, you really need to stop rewatching Community and secondly, the way this year is going, I can hardly imagine any realities that could be worse than this."

For a long time now, we have been awaiting the end of the world. Indeed, the promise of the end of the world has been for quite a while the archetype of all our promises. Every promise made waits for a day, for the last and final day, for the dead-line, which is in fact the day of the end of the promise, the day of the end of the end.

Rejoice in your grave, existential nihilists, maybe this life of no intrinsic meaning will end and soon you'll be getting a lecture from Nietszche.

COVID-19++ (Alexa, play 'back in black')

They had a sloppy gait as they approached slowly. Their jaws dislocated showing their torn tongues and blood stained teeth. They moaned as they smelt the blood in the air and ate those who fought pinned on the ground. Skin peeled away from their bones and organs, showing their black hearts. The extremely high mutation rates of viruses are not matched by any other organism in the kingdom of life. The high mutation rates of viruses, coupled with their short generation time and large population size, allows them to rapidly evolve and adapt to the host environment.

Who knows what it may evolve into? Viruses have a lot of scope, especially this one, if its high transmitting tendency gets coupled with a higher mortality rate. The death rate for the Marburg virus is as high as 90%, rabies holds the distinction of being nearly 100% fatal if untreated, and why hold we have to a zombie virus, maybe it just needs a few tweaks here and there, and we might all just experience Resident Evil for real.



PUMP THE HATE BREAKS, WILL YA?

Mutual Assured Destruction is a doctrine of military strategy and national security policy in which a full-scale use of nuclear weapons by two or more opposing sides would cause the complete annihilation of both the attacker and the defender.

The Alliance

2

It's possible you have an idea of what a post-nuclear hellscape looks like. After all, post apocalyptic movies are obsessed with that kind of world. But scientists and other nuclear experts care deeply about this issue too and their research shows that these movies may have been too optimistic.

A nuclear fight between New Delhi and Islamabad could cause a "nuclear autumn". Even a 'small' nuclear war between India and Pakistan, could produce so much smoke that temperatures would fall below those of the Little Ice Age of the fourteenth to nineteenth centuries, shortening the growing season around the world and threatening the global food supply.

The effects could get worse. The lack of food would drive up prices

2020

for what sustenance remains. Surely there would be worldwide skirmishes — and perhaps even more wars over remaining resources. The situation could get so bad that we might see another nuclear war as states try to seize control of remaining food and water

The absolute doomsday scenario is a "nuclear winter." For that to happen, the US and Russia would have to use about 2,000 nukes each, not outside the realms of possibility since combined, they have 93% of the world's nuclear weaponry, about 6 thousand nuclear warheads each and a potential for much more, considering they have had a historic peak of hundreds of thousands, and that too in the 1960s. Each country would effectively take out the other — and likely bring down most of humanity as well.

"IT'S NANOTECH. YOU LIKE IT?"

We won't win, Mr. Stark.

Imagine, an unprecedented vast oil spill occurs, and our greatest minds rise up to the occasion and develop a cheap and reliable way to clean ocean and contaminated land matter. The miracle fix is a nano machine, which feasts on the carbon based oil slicks. But through billions of self replicating nanites, much like mutation when RNA replicates, an error occurs and suddenly all carbon based life forms are on the menu.

The 'grey goo scenario' coined by

Eric Drexler in 1986, is a journalistic shorthand for the hazards of nanotechnology or 'self-powering' machines: engineering at the scale of a billionth of a metre.



stoked to meet u? humans are super cool 23/03/2016, 20:32

PAUSE.

Yes, this is the AI section you predicted. Don't groan, just hear me out.

Programmer and CMU PhD Tom Murphy created a function to "beat" games by watching the score. When the computer did things that raised the score it would learn how to reproduce them again and again, ultimately resulting in what amounts to a Super Mario Brothers-playing robot. The program can take on nearly every digital game, and it doesn't mind tweaking the rules to do so, like when playing Tetris, the program would eventually just pause the game rather than continue playing and lose, a tactic shared alike by annoying cousins over the world.

Efficient A.I. programs, with access to the internet and the ability to learn extremely quickly, will conclude that as humans, we tend to act against things that pose a danger to us. If the world was to be evaluated by 'scores', any worthy program would rightly come to the conclusion that the only way to protect its existence, or to 'not lose', would be to 'pause the game'.

If that doesn't scare you, consider this: It took less than 24 hours for Twitter to corrupt an innocent 'highly filtered' chatbot created by Microsoft, from a happy-go-lucky boi to a genocidal freak. It was shut down immediately, something the smarter Al programs of the future might note.



the jews. 24/03/2016, 11:45

"It is now 100 seconds to midnight," proclaims the latest annual bulletin from the Doomsday Clock. The clock, which maps how close we are to mass destruction, is at the closest it has ever come to midnight. We are—so they say—closer to the end of the world than ever, but here's the thing: that little word "ever" is working awfully hard. The Doomsday clock has been running for seventy-one years, seventy-one years is a long time, for a human. For humanity, it is as miniscule as the chance of me retaining my sanity when the lockdown is inevitably extended further.

We have always talked about the end of the world: as long as there have been people, there have been stories of where we came from, and how that world ended, and prophecies of how this world will end. Maybe there is something comforting about the idea of going all at once, not as prolonged humming of a piano but as a conclusive, befitting chord struck with resolve. Besides, even if there was no tomorrow, are there any tommorows worth more than the yesterdays?

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THE Infinite TO-DOLIST BY: KANAV DWEVEDI

Ever since there has been a working-class, worker productivity has been a prized quality among employers (for obvious reasons). This preference for the ideal worker became an increasingly powerful social force after the industrial revolution. which was further enhanced by the (relatively) recent but radical developments in information technology worldwide. This might be an oversimplification, but it's a useful one because it allows us to get to the heart of an almost ubiquitous problem i.e thinking about productivity as an inherent virtue.

It's easy to see what I'm talking about. Ask yourself this question, what do you think of when you think about self-improvement? It's not integrity or generosity, creativity or wisdom. Everything that would constitute an improvement in *those* spheres is a secondary or tertiary deviation from the central path in life, which is getting better at completing work. Solving problems, availing online courses, following productivity guides and gurus, filling up your devices with some of the tens of thousands of applications in the productivity sections of the App Store or the Play Store - that's the scoreboard on which we all rate our worth, and it's the only pertinent bottom line.

Why is all of this a problem? It's a problem because this attitude is systemically self-destructive. We are brought up with this attitude premised on delayed gratification. Sacrificing what you want now gets you a better education, then a better job (which you'll be passionate about) which gives you enough money. Only after all of this has been done and dusted, is when it's fine to do what you want. This tale is fantastical on many fronts. Least of all, as David Graeber points out in his book *Bullshit Jobs,* most jobs (even good ones) are filled with pointless drudgery and are a very unlikely source of fulfilment. More importantly, this normalization of hyperproductive and competitive behaviour perpetuates widespread exhaustion and burnout.

Internalizing this notion of being productive manifests more as perpetual underlying anxiety in students and workers across the board, and perhaps nowhere more prominently than in STEM. We can't let ourselves be idle without feeling guilty about 'not using our time well'. We can't feel tired or take a break without justifying it as serving future productivity. We're living our present as a sacrifice to our future and we don't know if it'll ever be here; an endless to-do list that continues to build up without



completion or catharsis in sight. Thinking in these terms, #HustleCulture and #WorkHardPlayHard aren't surprising. After all, social media posts are a way of giving our lives a narrative. They're evidence that you've reached the perfect work-life balance, that you love what you're doing. You've worked hard enough to enjoy life and you're reaping the fruits of your labour. When you don't feel the fulfilment that you were promised in life, the best way to convince yourself is to convince others.

Now, what does all this mean for us? I believe we need to reevaluate our relationship with productivity and ambition. We're not machines built to finish tasks, we aim to work and succeed to reach the life we want to live. Ambition is not a lifestyle, it's a means to an end and more importantly, it's your means to your end, which means you can use it however you want, whenever you want. The present is finite and fleeting and all the time spent looking over the horizon is time left inexperienced and forgotten. In consequence, days blur together in increasingly dismaying an dissociation from the present moment. Slaving away at the methodical altar of productivity brings the danger of passing through time instead of inhabiting it, when it's the quality of being memorable that makes days worth living. We must acknowledge that a lot of the anxiety we live through is



unjustified and vacuous and that it is worthwhile to deconstruct our stress-fueled instinct against novel, experimental, or whimsical memory, that are the source of creativity, that build character and integrity.The present moment can be intrinsically meaningful without meeting any evaluation criteria.

We are the ones who'll live our lives and the only ones who will really remember how we lived and gave breath to each passing day. Since this is the inescapable reality, we might as well live our lives *deliberately*. How we spend our days is after all, how we spend our lives.



If you are devoted to your parents and you are the "Shravan Kumar" of your family, please feel free to skip this article. If you are a goody two-shoes then, "Nikal, abhi nikal".

If you feel frustrated with your parents' incessant prying and relentless questions, then we are going to be lifelong friends!

You may have a habit of deleting social media conversations (especially those with the opposite gender) so as to be in the safezone when your parents sneak up on you. You might be frantically trying to conceal the fact that your friends are very avid users of foul language. You might take refuge on the rooftop for smoking your cigarette when you are at home, or to do drugs. You might lie about who you keep talking to on the phone when your parents ask about it.

I am saying that we have to put in so much effort to avoid handling uncomfortable the looks and awkward silences, just to have our privacy. Did we define privacy in that manner? Did we get a pro

bono on this Pandora's Jar, that we have to accept it? Hence the real question is, should I have to lie to keep my privacy?

ARENTS AND KEED OUT

<u> 《[티티미]</u>

"Phone dekh ke itna muskura kyu raha hai? Kisse baat kar raha tha? Kahaan ja raha hai? Kiske saath ja raha hai? Kyun ja raha hai? Kaise ja raha hai? Aise kyun baitha hai? Wahaan kyun khada hai?" -Indian Parents

Children start to wonder, "Main zinda kyun hu?". I understand parents worry that a bad habit can become a chronic problem, but speaking from a child's perspective. it is overwhelming when our privacy persistent is banjaxed with questioning. This puts us in a tight spot. The situation gets real thick pretty quickly and your only way out is getting your mouth dirty.

You try to debate with them and ask them to stop puppeteering your life (which to Indian parents means only one thing- "humara bachcha bigad gaya"). This act of invoking a fundamental right, is admonished as an act of defiance (If you are truly happy with your parents and

BY: DAKSH GUPTA

Alliance

6

prefer to maintain an agreement of full disclosure, then you should have left 2 baras ago). understand that parents have a responsibility to guide their child in the right direction and they feel privacy shouldn't be a barrier to hold them off; however dereliction of their child's right to privacy is a dereliction of their own responsibilities as parents.

KEEP OUTIN KEEP OUTI

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Parents believe that through repeated reprimands and constant suspicion they can nip it in the bud- however, the problem only festers. The child starts to exhibit the behaviour of compulsive lying and drifts away from parents as they become symbols of distress. fatal This is а blow to the communication bridge between them and is one of the main triggers for an early age depression with severe effects on mental health.

All this said, I think it would be safe to say that no easy solution exists for this problem, as every family is different. However, every parent has concerns about their child's day to day activities and routines.

routines. They are worried that you may end up ruining your life if they don't get involved. So you see, they are also trying to escape the burden of a guilty conscience as your actions reflect upon their parenting and guidance . Hence, the common breeding ground of all the problems is the 'fear of a guilty conscience', which can only be eradicated through 'trust'. Тο develop trust, you need to be ready to concede things.

Initially you may feel, it's like giving in to your parents' pesky prying. However, the act of admittance, milestone simply sets а in developing faith and credibility. They may not fully understand our problems about privacy and mendacity, but through trust, you

can work out the relative boundaries of personal space and achieve a kind of understanding in which there is no longer a need for falsehood and deceit.

All this comes down to your moral compass and your will to accept the facts, face the reality, and hit the gas to move forward. If you are confused about the kind of dialogue you must initiate with your parents, then you can take the help of the Parent-Progeny Privacy Scale (it's a self-made scale, don't search the net!) to get started.

I urge all the readers to refer to this scale, figure out the region in which they lie and accordingly try to strike a balance between parental intervention and imprudent indulgence. It can resolve these contentions and can help you with this "privacy crisis" in your life.

(P.S.: I told my parents I was writing on world peace. Peace out posse!)





WHAT'S YOUR Score?



EPOUTI KEEP

8

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WHAT'S MORE BORING THAN BOREDOM? BY : SOUROBRATA DHAR



Who would have thought you would be in the 'Endgame' watching Mahabharata, Ramayana on the couch with your family?

Kaha Moksha ke sapne dekhe thee, yha toh Moksh prapti ho gyi...

"It's been a hectic day." "I need a day off."

"I want to sleep all day." "I'm sleep-deprived."

"Yeh '*bahar-ka-khana*' is harmful." " I want some '*ghar-ka-khana*'."

"Lock me in a room with unlimited internet and food, I'll stay there for a lifetime."

"I can't take some time out for myself." "I want some me-time."

Ah, I want to die...

Well, how the tables turn...

As a matter of fact, it is not frustrating to live in lockdown with your parents. I know you are not craving for Puchka. I know you are not dying to meet your friends. I know you are not missing those hugs, weekends. I know you are not fighting with your siblings. I know you are not bored, depressed. Because now you have all the time in the world to self-introspect, spend some quality time with your family, play indoor games with your siblings, practice social distancing, watch movies for the hundredth time. Gloomy enough? I know, right.

For starters, consider it as your onus towards society. How cool is it that you stay in your bed wrapped in sheets with Nachos by your side, binge-watching, spending endless hours on social media, sleeping for 14-16 hours and still saving the world. By staying at home you are saving the lives of infants and the elderly with weaker immune systems, leukemia patients, helping all the doctors who are staying away from their family members just so we can stay safe.

Wildlife is flourishing. All the other animals are having the time of their lives, basking in the sun, getting drunk, peacocks wandering the streets, pigeons probably wonder that humans have gone extinct. They are thriving. Mother Earth is finally healing.

Don't waste time contemplating why I chose engineering, instead help your parents with the household chores, make them feel proud that they raised their children right. Bond with your siblings, improve your culinary skills.

Build a habit of reading. Start from the basics.Make your curated playlist for your every mood.Scour the internet for some positive news, and share them with your peers. This lockdown will take a toll on your mental health, so positive vibes only.

Talk to everyone from your contacts, take the initiative and ring them up, it may make their day. Work on yourself, explore your interests, what you want from life, set your goals, give more purpose to your life, find your 'ikigai' and get to know yourself better.Start loving yourself for who you are. Solitude works wonders, trust me. Use this time to heal and connect with yourself.

Don't be a crapehanger in these dire times. We are in this lockdown for a few fortnights (hopefully), WW2 lasted for 5 years. Be patient as the longer you have to wait for something, the more you will appreciate it when it finally arrives.

When this is all over, we will come out stronger.

So breathe in this fresh air, be thankful:

For all the shoulder-nudges, not-sofirm handshakes, warm hugs, classmates (*saanp* excluded), friends' whinging, marking proxies, football, little fights, lovely seniors/juniors, Chill point's Cheese Maggi , DDUC's chai, Nescii-2, Dwarka Sec-14, teachers' scoldings, McCain vale uncle, 'chilling' with your squad.

Enjoy the little things: the chirping of the birds, the smell of the wet soil, the barking of the stray dogs, parents whining about you being hooked on your phone, the slow mellow breeze and stars shining in the night sky.

This too shall pass. And remember, we are in this together!



DEFUSING INDIA'S COUD-19 TIME BOMB BY : VAIBHAV SHARMA

The world is now quite unhappily familiar with the decades in waiting "pandemic of our times", *coronavirus*. It has made even the cities that never slept to come to a halt and has forced everyone among us to stay locked inside our homes. It has spread to over 199 countries all over the world and has profoundly changed the world's view of healthcare. And it has turned into a serious crisis which requires immediate attention and has crippled the world economy.

But before looking at India, let us look at America. On the Global Health Security Index, a report card that grades every country on its pandemic preparedness, America, the shining pearl in the ocean of countries, has a score of 83.5the world's highest. Rich, strong, developed, America is supposed to be the readiest of nations and the best of us. Unfortunately, that illusion has been shattered. Despite months of advance warning, when America was finally tested by COVID-19, it failed and has now become one of the biggest epicentres of this disease.

Taking a glance at other countries which already have had a major part of their population been infected by the virus, Italy and Spain offer grim warnings about the future. Hospitals are out of room, supplies, and staff. Unable to treat or save everyone, doctors have been forced into the unthinkable: rationing care to patients who are most likely to survive, while depriving those of healthcare whose chances are not so bright.

Talking about India, it has 23502 cases and 722 deaths as of 24th April. However, these numbers seem exiguous when India's huder to "flatten the curve". The government has taken rapid actions to limit travel by suspending visas and quarantining all incoming travellers, with all international passengers undergoing Universal Health Screening, helping limit the entry of COVID-19.

The Alliance

10

Another appreciable effort is the "Novel coronavirus" landing page on the Ministry of Health's website,



mongous population is taken into account. The government has taken a slew of measures to curb transmission of the virus, many of which have been effective to a certain measure. The nation has been placed under lockdown in orwhich gives the numbers of phone helplines along with detailed advice and guidelines for all the citizens. Equally noteworthy are the various public awareness campaigns. One such example that has been lauded by the Director-General of the

The Alliance 11

WHO is the annoying yet essential case of Indian mobile networks playing a 30-second coronavirus information alert before the start of every phone call. The Prime Minister has shown leadership in mobilizing the heads of government of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and that of the G20 to share reliable information, best practices and support each other in fighting this pandemic. Another appreciable and firm step taken by the government to combat the outbreak is the setting up of the PM Cares fund for combating, containment and relief efforts against the coronavirus outbreak and similar pandemic like situations in the future.

The question that arises though is – will this be enough?

'Imagine that you're standing on the shore and you're watching the tsunami come in. If you are going to just stand there and watch the tsunami, you are finished. If you can run as fast as you can, you have a better chance.'

India is running, but not fast enough.

India is still not testing enough people, having conducted the fewest number of tests among the countries with confirmed cases of the coronavirus, at just 10.5 per million residents (South Korea, by contrast, has conducted more than 6,000 tests per million residents). In order to tackle this, the limited testing capability in India, led primarily by the apex laboratory at the National Institute of Virology at Pune, has now been extended to 52 viral research and diagnostic laboratories spread across the country. However, significant barriers to confirmation and treatment still remain in place. Contact tracing hasn't been conducted meticulously, people are fleeing isolation centres, and while the WHO recommends a ratio of one doctor for every 1,000 patients, India has one for every 10,000.

Data shows that more than 99 percent of Italy's coronavirus fatalities were people who suffered from previous medical conditions: over 75% had high blood pressure, about 35% had diabetes and a third suffered from heart disease. This highlights the need for the government to take steps to protect those most vulnerable to COVID-19, such as ing the recommended health practices. And another important point to be noted is the fact that we must properly applaud the efforts put in by the medical fraternity as they are the ones putting their lives on the line to save ours. We need to scale up our efforts in order to not become the next epicentre of this dreaded disease.

https://bit.ly/2XZb8Ty

This talk by Bill Gates is a must-see for everyone who is concerned about Coronavirus because here we are, and he was right"





those with prior health conditions.

India as a whole needs to work harder, faster and more efficiently in order to come out of this global crisis on its feet and for that, it needs to learn from the mistakes of others. This requires everyone's contribution, which includes followFinally, stay safe, stay at home, and together let us beat the Coronavirus pandemic.





By: Mansi

IN HINDSIGHT BY YASH SETHIA

With so much time to kill in this period of languor and boredom, everyone is perhaps thinking about the time when they were not in college. As a fresher, it does hurt that one-fourth of our college life is over. From JEE, to this sabbatical, it has been a roller coaster ride with each up and down teaching us something new about ourselves, and about life.

cept of Schwarzschild radius was. You know, in moments like these you realise how big an impact movies have on you, because all I could hear was Dr. Viru Sahastrabuddhe telling me "Life is a race, agar tez nhi bhagoge to koi tumhe kuchal ke aage badh jayega. " It didn't matter whom I was talking to, every- who are passionate to learn, to help one was similar and to not be like a "broken anda", I had to study for



There is no need for us to stress on how important JEE was. We would quite literally eat, breathe and sleep for that one exam and when that got over, the sense of relief was magical. JEE was all about hard work, dedication and concentration. From remembering that Phosphorus mixed with Oxygen gives us Phosphorus Pentoxide to calculating the angular acceleration of a cylinder rolling down an inclined plane with an angle of inclination 37 degrees, you couldn't have managed it without working for 7-8 hours a day at least. I still remember vividly my first day at the institute for JEE. After the first class got over, I looked at the boy sitting on my left solving trigonometry problems, that made me dizzy, with consummate ease. I looked to my right and the guy was discussing how interesting the con7-8 hours a day. Presumably, each one of us has a similar story. And so, when it got over, it felt like we were coming back from exile. It was euphoric. But when you've worked you identify the 'snake' in your so hard for so long, you can't just batch. Before college, you would sit idle for a long time. You need trust everyone around you but it is something to keep you going and only when you give your first exams that is when the 'college excite- in college you realise that there are ment' kicks in. You fantasise how 3 types of people: First- those who perfect your first day at college will study throughout the semester reg-



and to grow.

Then comes the D-Day. The first day of your college life at NSUT. You find yourself in a room full of people who seem to be just as smart and hardworking as you are. Soon you understand that the curriculum is not as hard as maintaining your attendance. The attendance paranoia is a real deal. By the time you come to terms with this, the results for mid-semester exams are out and that is a real eye opener because that's when be, how you will meet new people ularly and know almost everything,



Alliance 14

Second-those who don't study throughout the semester and then complete the entire syllabus on the last day, Third- who say they belong to the second category but in reality are in the first one. People in the third category are called 'snakes' because they are the ones who would mock and distract you from studying a week before the exam while they have already revised the entire syllabus thrice.

Everyone in college would be doing something that makes them unique in their own way. Someone would be learning to code, some-



one would be learning graphic designing, someone would be planning to launch his own startup. It's correct that you get exposed to a million new ideas but if you haven't figured out what you really want to do like me, all this can bring out the insecurities and the fear of failure in you. Managing those insecurities is perhaps the biggest lesson learned in the first year of their college life.

When you leave school and enter college, you are given a clean slate to be the person you want to be. Just one year of college can change us significantly as a person. From meticulously creating a timetable for your studies, trusting anyone and everyone to identifying the hidden 'snakes', from being protected by your parents to managing your insecurities, the last one year has transformed each one of us and hopefully, we'll keep growing with the passage of time.

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