

Note from the Editor

Amiya P. Sen

The current issue of *Summerhill* was born amidst a crisis, the likes of which humanity has not witnessed in over a hundred years. In India, while the educated and affluent may grudge the self-imposed isolation or the enforced captivity induced by the Covid-19 pandemic, many more are still waging a courageous battle fighting hunger, humiliation and harassment, often for reasons that could have been mitigated or better controlled with greater planning and preparedness. It would take us a considerable time and a radical re-orientation, I imagine, to get used to the new notions of what constitutes the 'normal'. Even as the country was reeling under the effects of the pandemic, there arrived the Amphan with all its fury and which virtually wiped out several human settlements in West Bengal and Bangladesh. This brings to mind the old Indian saying that disasters never arrive alone! Also, it is somewhat ironical that human greed apart, nature too should wantonly take its greatest toll on the poor and the vulnerable.

Thanks to our enthusiastic contributors and the concerned department of the IAS, the publication of the bi-annual *Summerhill* has now assumed some predictable regularity. It has always been our endeavour to bring out the issues on time and hopefully, we will further improve upon this notwithstanding any constraints.

The Editorial team has been overwhelmed with the response from our contributors, most of whom are young scholars attached to various educational institutions spread across the country. For this issue alone, I have

had to turn down nearly as many scholars as those whose contributions could be included. This is mostly on account of constraints of size and space and the fact that many contributions reach us rather belatedly, too close to the deadline and even beyond. Though we will continue to operate on a first-come-first-served basis, it will also be our intention to extend the length of each issue so as to accommodate more contributions than we have been hitherto been able to. The Book Review section suffers from relative neglect and as editor I would certainly encourage and invite more reviews.

This is occasion for me to also recall with gratitude, the collegial help and guidance that I received in the past year from my co-editor, Prof. Ramesh Chandra Pradhan. Prof. Pradhan no longer serves the editorial Board of *Summerhill*, having completed his tenure of Fellowship at the IAS.

This issue includes 10 research articles in all and two Book Reviews. Predictably, the sheer variety of subjects covered in the articles is staggering: ranging from anthropology to environmental management, literary history, human rights issues, migration, Buddhist knowledge systems, Gandhian thought, vexed questions in ethics and philosophy and the much debated issue of tolerance and religious pluralism. I have enjoyed reading through these articles and so, I trust, will our readers. In the editorial team, we would welcome any comments or suggestions that will help us to qualitatively improve our enterprise.

* Amiya P. Sen is retired professor of modern Indian history, Jamia Millia Islamia.