



A LETTER TO 2017



DEAR 2017,

Glad to finally have you here. Your predecessor wasn't particularly kind to us during its stay, having more lows than ups. You have a lot to clean up after, given so many catastrophic events that took place both in the physical world and social media. Here's a wish list of things we'd like you to carry out.

First and foremost – PLEASE STOP TAKING OUR FAVOURITE PEOPLE AWAY! We understand that death is a divine intervention or a course of nature or whatever, but given we've lost so many precious souls within 2016, starting from our Starman Bowie to Princess Leia, we'd hope you'd give us a buffer zone to deal with the losses. We could really, really use a break. I know what you'll say, that it's not your fault they've managed to synchronise and get old or get heart attacks at adjacent periods of time, but you don't want to be remembered as the year that compounded the pain of its predecessor by increasing the burden of sadness upon us. You want to be "the good year", and now that your time has come, wouldn't you man up and do what it takes? Wouldn't you tell the Grim Reaper to cut it off for 12 months? Would that be too much to ask?

You'll hear this many times in the coming 12 months, but my lovely 2017, you're really hot. You're not only hot, you might just be the hottest ever. You're not hot in the conventional way that makes heads turn on the streets; you're the type that makes polar caps melt and species extinct. There's no point asking you to cool down when we can't cut down on our stupid carbon footprint, but maybe this is the year when people finally wake up and do something about it. A lot is being done – we even gave Leo the Oscar. But it's not enough, and 2017, you are going to be vital like every coming year, because global warming is not slowing down. So, we need you to perform miracles and make every world leader actually believe in it first, and then give them the will to make a difference. We can't have more Rampals.

2016 has been an atrocious year in the global political sphere. The whole world suffered attacks – in France, Germany, Iraq, Turkey and Bangladesh amongst many other places. The year ended with violence in Aleppo, where the government took over rebel-controlled land at the cost of thousands of lives, bringing devastation to an ancient city. We've seen tensions in the South China Sea.



Refugee crisis, the rise of fascism, racism – we've seen it all. It's time for recovery and it's in your hands, '17. We want the end of violent, fanatic groups and greater tolerance towards refugees. Also, how about a better resolution and more effective action from the UN regarding these issues? It's about time.

In an ideal world, we'd all be counting our days waiting for good things to happen, and not imploring you to do away with the bad stuff. The world is not an ideal place, but there is one space where we always expect good things and that is our cricket. The national team travels around the world this year trying to win games and make us feel happier. It'd be great if you could just align your stars in a way that they have enough luck with them to achieve all their goals. Not that they need much of it, but 2017, this is the least you could do to make us love you even more. Make it rain when we're about to lose, and bring in your contacts with the sun when we need it to shine. We have the ICC Champions Trophy this year; wouldn't you want to be known as the year when Bangladesh won a major cricketing event for the first time? Imagine the nostalgia and history that would follow you around. You'd be right up there with 2007 and 2015 – you will have achieved greatness. Isn't that what we're really here for?

Even though 2016 was an epic year for movies, it almost feels like a warm-up when we look at the long list of movies already on the release calendar upon your arrival. It's never too early to get excited about going to the theatres for a new flick. We have tons of new installments in a number of beloved series, a new Star Wars movie, no less! It could become a question of what to watch and what to miss because of the sheer volume of promised movies this year. 2017, you are going to be laden with movies and we thank you for that. Locally, following the success of Aynabaji, we can expect some

new titles but it's still a lull in terms of quality movies. A return of Ananta Jalil to the silver screen is just the thing we need, and maybe this is the year that happens. More joint collaborations with Indian artistes and directors are on the cards. Some of them might even turn out to be great.

Memes have been on a journey to infinity and beyond for years now. With each passing Gregorian calendar year, we look back and find ourselves swimming in a sea of internet treasure that we call "memes" (or mey-meys, depending on your mental health). Every year adds its unique touch, and the onus is on you now. So what are we expecting from you, 2017? Are you going to be the year of 4chan, Tumblr, or God forbid, 9gag? The whole world had a hard time digesting Donald Trump's win in the election and a more confusing period commenced when he started mellowing down his harsh bigoted criticisms against minorities in America post-election. But given Trump's cabinet is formed of the whitest Republicans out there, it's safe to assume a few things would go wrong that we can make fun of. *Not hoping for it, though.* The world is getting crazier, which is by no means bad because as we've seen in the past, crazy brings out the rarest of Pepes and that is what we expect from you.

2017, we've asked things of you that you have little to no control over, but we can't help it. In many cases, you are as helpless as us, but a new year represents hope, and right now the whole world is banking on that hope. Whether or not you deliver on it remains to be seen, but we'll keep hoping nonetheless. Just do your best, and we're sure we'll get along.

Yours truly,

AZMIN AZRAN & NAZIFA RAIDAH

