

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

As you read this, thousands of business and government leaders will be making their way to Switzerland - by plane, road, rail, or even helicopter - for an annual meeting to discuss the world's most pressing concerns.

They will brave snow and frigid cold - forecasts are for temperatures to dip to minus 17 deg C the next day - and a three-hour car ride from Zurich up to the small Alpine ski resort of Davos, for the conference organised by the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Hundreds of aides, academics and journalists, myself included, will be there to join in and follow their discussions.

When these leaders met last January, there was much talk about what the future might hold in the face of rapid and relentless technological change. Minds were focused on developments in robotics, artificial intelligence, virtual reality and 3D printing, and many questions were raised about what these entail for businesses and their workers, indeed for the very nature of work and leisure.

Few, however, saw or spoke about the prospects of Brexit or the rise of Donald Trump. Sure, there were a few tentative questions raised about these issues, which were more often than not laughed aside as long shots not to be taken too seriously.

So Davos man - as this elite group is sometimes derisively called - will have much pondering to do. For a while it was right that they focussed their sights on the trends that will shape the future, how did they not see the icebergs lying more



PHOTO COURTESY: ANN

BURNING ISSUES AMID FREEZING COLD

WAREEN FERNANDEZ

immediately ahead, which now impede the once-seemingly inexorable path forward to further economic integration and progress?

While past discussions had focussed on the economic and social disruptions to come, Davos delegates will now have to recognise that the future economy they had envisioned is unfolding in a range of sectors, much sooner than most imagined, and worse, a wider Disruption 2.0 is under way, amid major shocks to the

underlying global operating system that the WEF has long championed.

The consensus based on the virtues of globalisation, the benefits of immigration and gains from free trade is now under grave threat. Politicians have tapped into latent anxieties, alienation and anger felt by electorates in countries, from the United Kingdom to the United States and elsewhere. Their cries will reverberate around the Swiss Alps this week.

Source: ANN

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INTERNATIONAL

SKETCH: YAFIZ SIDDIQUI

GEORGES PROSPER REMI
(22 May 1907 – 3 March 1983),

Georges Prosper Remi known by the pen name Hergé (□□□e), was a Belgian cartoonist. He is best known for creating The Adventures of Tintin, the series of comic albums which are considered one of the most popular European comics of the 20th century. He was also responsible for two other well-known series, Quick & Flupke (1930–40) and The Adventures of Jo, Zette and Jocko (1936–57). His works were executed in his distinct ligne claire drawing style.

Hergé's works have been widely acclaimed for their clarity of draughtsmanship and meticulous, well-researched plots. They have been the source of a wide range of adaptations, in theatre, radio, television, cinema, and computer gaming. He remains a strong influence on the comic book medium, particularly in Europe. Widely celebrated in Belgium, a Hergé Museum was established in Louvain-la-Neuve in 2009.

“By believing in his dreams, man turns them into reality.

If! If! You can get 'round anything with 'if'.

What if I told you that I put my whole life into Tintin?

Hooray! Hooray! The end of the world has been postponed!”

SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA AND BRAINY QUOTES

“IN THE END, OUR SOCIETY WILL BE DEFINED NOT ONLY BY WHAT WE CREATE, BUT BY WHAT WE REFUSE TO DESTROY.”
JOHN SAWHILL
president and CEO of The Nature Conservancy and the 12th President of New York University

PEARLS OF WISDOM

“WHAT A COUNTRY CHOOSES TO SAVE IS WHAT A COUNTRY CHOOSES TO SAY ABOUT ITSELF.”
MOLLIE BEATTIE
American conservationist, and director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service

“SO MUCH OF OUR FUTURE LIES IN PRESERVING OUR PAST.”
PETER WESTBROOK
American active businessman and founder of the Peter Westbrook Foundation

I have stayed 2 long weeks in Dhaka, a week in Rajshahi, and 2 nights in Sylhet - at The Palace Resort, and am returning to Sydney tonight, Saturday 14th January. I have enjoyed the hospitality of Bangladeshi people - our friends and their relatives, your country's lovely climate at this time of the year, and the natural vegetation God has bestowed upon your nation.

However, I have been taken aback by a few things. For example, there are no rules for the drivers, and where there are some marked lanes, arrows and traffic lights, the drivers tend to ignore them. Here is everlasting blasting of horns by the drivers trying to overtake others, not only from the right side but also from the left, tooting away; much to our dismay it seems like a nightmare. The multitude of bike riders without safety helmets pose so much danger to themselves, should be made aware of the risks they are taking! It is really sad to see some able bodied young children and mothers with kids on the streets begging for food when your country, with its tropical lush vegetation, is able to produce food to feed them. I am sure given the opportunity, these families will be able to become self sufficient and engaged and participative members of your country. We were astounded by the maze of naked wires hanging around the city. We were amazed to see how the men who were fixing these were up on the bamboo scaffolding held by a few men at the bottom. Surely you can have proper ladders and scaffolding and also proper wiring systems for the electricity supply! Last but not least, you can get your nation skilled by not having too many Universities and churning out highly qualified graduates with no jobs for them, but by providing essential skills through technical institutions in trades, like plumbing, electrical, engineering, IT etc. These will enable the graduates to establish their own employment capabilities by offering their services to the community, locally and abroad. I am sure the above have been part of Bangladesh's agenda and, as an outsider; my observation will further assist in your national discourse.

Zubeda Rahman
MHED (Macq.Univ), CPA

A FEW OBSERVATIONS AND MY SUGGESTIONS

