



THE SOUL OF THE STRUCTURE



AVS salutes His Excellency, the Governor of Meghalaya, Mr. Ranjit Shekhar Mooshahary, Chief Guest at the Sixteenth Annual Athletics Championship, Founders' Day Celebrations 2011.

BUILDING WITH CONSCIENCE

UPTO THE SIXTEENTH AND BEYOND

IT'S THE MORNING OF FOUNDERS' AND AVS HAS PUT HER BEST FOOT FORWARD. The trees have never grown so tall and straight and neither has the sky put on a more brilliant hue. Every line is in place and every nuance perfected.

It were as if a magic-wand had been waved and a varnish of perfection glossed over the entire AVS milieu.

This is the grand deception on the part of the School.

It makes it all appear so easy: a wave of a hand, a stroke of a pen, a click of a mouse...

That's how the apparent nature of things misleads...

The prodigious way in which things fall into place an onlooker would never be able to fathom the hidden hours of real and gruelling work, the ideating and the implementing, the planning and the pruning, the running into a thousand invisible walls, the despondency and the challenge.

But with a team that is led well and persistently, the AVS Community is able to, in spite of every temporary setback, get on with doing what is meant to be done and doing it in the most earnest manner possible.

The Sixteenth Founders' Day Celebrations on the 19th and 20th of November was just once instance of it.

GLIMPSES OF THE WEEKEND THAT WAS



His Excellency, the Governor of Meghalaya Mr. Ranjit Shekhar Mooshahary takes the salute during the March Past at the Annual Athletics Championship. In an inspiring speech that followed, the Governor among other thoughts, elucidated the intrinsic worth of the North-East of India.



The Officiating Chairman of the Governing Body, former Headmaster of Westminster School, London and abiding friend of The Assam Valley School, Mr. David Summerscale addresses the AVS Community during Speeches and Prize Giving on the afternoon of the 20th.



The Chief Guest, and award-winning author, Mr. Indrajit Badhwar hands over the R.B. Magor Trophy for the Best House to the victorious Blues—Lohit-Bhoroli.



Leading a Movement of Belief. The Headmaster, Mr. D.N.A. Mountford, sums up the year that was in his Founders' Day Address.

ACCOLADES GALORE

Major Colours:	66	Games Blazers:	7
Minor Colours:	153	School Colours:	14
Sports Awards Major:	40	Founders' Awards:	50
Sports Awards Minor:	155	The R.B. Magor Trophy	
Academic Awards	12	for the Best House:	Bhoroli-Lohit
Scholars' Tie:	49	The Athletics Cup:	Bhoroli Lohit
Sports Tie:	15	The March Past Cup:	Subansiri-Namdang



The Old Order Changeth

The Prefects of the Batch of 2011-12 line up for the ceremonial 'handing over of the badge' on the 18th of November, perpetuating an AVS tradition. The new Prefectorial Body takes over from this day forward.



A scene from Charandas Chor

The Hindi Dramatics Society of The Assam Valley School managed to infuse fresh vigour and meaning into a classical piece: a well-known play by Habib Tanvir.

MYRIAD MOODS MANY MOMENTS



On Your Marks: Athletes at the 4X100 Relays

The Annual Athletics Championship is an Inter-House affair that consists of both track and field events besides equestrian and P.T. displays and the March Past. As in all public schools the competition is stiff and the 'House Spirit' runs unbridled.



The Shillong Chamber Choir thrills

On an evening that can only be described as bewitching the Shillong Chamber Choir took the mesmerized audience through a musical repository of Pop, Rock, Bollywood and Western Classical and semi-Classical numbers. The performances by alumnus William R. Basaiawmoit and Rishila M. Jamir were an added bonus.

All Founders ' photographs by: Moinam Chatterjee, X

VALUE ADDED SERVICES

Like any other organization on the growth The Assam Valley School eludes adjectives. The School has so many tones and overtones, that to attempt to put them into words is not only impossible but also futile. Yet, purely from the Learners point of view here are two *Aviators* discussing the USP of their School and what, in their opinion, fortifies them to face a life outside of the gates..



PHOTOGRAPH BY: RISHABH GOENKA, X

He who sows the ground with care and diligence acquires a greater stock of religious merit than he could gain by the repetition of ten thousand prayers.

Zoroaster

NURTURED WITH CARE

THE PASTORAL CARE PROGRAMME AT AVS

Sneharatna Choudhury, XI

If the term somnambulism could be used to describe an experience then I would like to employ it to describe my first few days at The Assam Valley School.

I was sleep-walking!

When I woke up I met Care and Concern.

To my mind the USP of AVS is its Pastoral Care Programme. Pastoral care at AVS primarily consists of Tutors and Housemasters and Housemistresses but you will find that everyone around

you is instrumental in influencing you to become a better human being and a global citizen — even the Support Staff in the Linen-Rooms. The child at AVS seems to be everyone’s pet project and to see him or her grow into an assured and honest person the desirable end of each adult’s effort.

The main aim of a public school is produce citizens of tomorrow: those who live life armed with a workable set of contemporary values. It involves a whole lot of training in time management, punctuality, discipline and restraint. One needs to be able to speak one’s mind and to be widely and well-read. The persistence of the pastoral care providers in instilling these lessons go a long way in realizing the above.

The way I see it, the most important thing that AVS pastoral providers have taught me is humility. Good work need not to be proclaimed. It speaks for itself and the deserving are always recognized and rewarded. This is what I have learnt to believe in at AVS.

Each term a Tutor’s Report is sent to the parents and this is a marvellous bond which biological and surrogates parents share. Through this bond they can participate in the building up of the child who is of great important to them. There are tutorial meetings held at the tutor’s residence and in a close and friendly environment confidences are shares and sound counsel offered.

Sometimes however, a communication gap does spring up between the mentor and the child but timely and open conversations go a long way in bridging it. As a teenager I also sometimes feel a little reticent about sharing a thought but this is only because I fear a judgment being pronounced on me. Yet, time and again my fears have proved to be unfounded and allayed by a patient, objective hearer. This leads me to remember what the Headmaster has said about the building up of trust.

At AVS, *The School for Adventure*, you learn everything that is required to make you the best that you can ever be. You can discover your passion and then pursue it. And all of this is possible only when you have someone by your side—someone who cares.

At the end of the day when I mull upon the hours gone by I feel satisfied because I know that there is someone who will urge me to go forward and then also hold out the safety-net for me if I go too far out.

There is someone who will be there to tell me: *You have always me to come back to.*

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READING BETWEEN THE LINES

THE ACTIVITY PROGRAMME AT AVS

Ananya Hazarika, XI

IT IS NOT WITHOUT REASON THAT THE ASSAM VALLEY SCHOOL IS CALLED THE *School for Adventure*. Though only sixteen years young, the School’s various achievements places it at a proud 6th in the country. The array of opportunities that is opened up for the learner at The Assam Valley School by far surpasses what is perhaps to be found in several schools of national or even international acclaim.

It is my personal conviction that of the many opportunities that the School spawns the weekly newsletter, the Assam Valley Express, popularly known as AVE, is one of the most defining as far as



PHOTOGRAPH BY: RISHABH GOENKA, X

Labour of Love. Some Founders' Issues of AVE

proving a learning platform is concerned. The weekly fosters a practical learning experience to the pupils who are a part of the editorial team. It is a life-like representation of how a real publishing house functions. Running a weekly can prove to be a daunting task for us, as an idea has to realize itself into a four-pager every weekend. The work ends not even after the copies are delivered as the distribution needs to be taken care of and every one must have their copy of AVE with their Sunday morning cuppa. I have seen, not a few times, the Editor-in-Chief going quite distraught when a report has not arrived on time or when the newsletter has suffered a production hitch. Several things can go wrong within that short span of time and handling something of this sort, whose extended readership comprises parents and Members of the AVS Governing Body, is not a mean feat. As work continues, day in and day out at in the nondescript little room in the CDT Block, we make ourselves more than scribes and journalists-in-the-making—we make ourselves future-ready.

If the art of expression can ever be mastered or the power of the written word

understood it could be perhaps done here at 'The Publications Room'. Through trial and error, through the short bursts of inspiration and through the longer hours of hard work, passions are named, thoughts are expressed and ideas are shared. The enquiring mind takes over ennui and lethargy and the world, to a member of the AVE team, becomes one of wondrous enquiry and thrilling answers. This enterprise of The Assam Valley School also gives one the intellectual freedom to challenge a belief and question an answer.

AVE also helps us improve our communication skills. It helps is to understand both the denotative and connotative meaning of a word and to feel the subtle nuances of a language. Working with the weekly has sharpened my awareness of various issues and has urged me to develop a more sustained and profound interest in things. It has taught me the importance of research and the validity of an informed opinion.

It is my conviction that any pupil who comes forward to become a part of this experience would greatly benefit from it.

GUCCI MY FRIEND



PHOTOGRAPH BY: AVS PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

The creative is the place where no one else has ever been. You have to leave the city of comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. What you'll discover will be wonderful. What you'll discover will be...yourself.

Alan Alda

EXPLORING DESIGN EDUCATION AT SCHOOL LEVEL

*Priyanka Joshi**

FOR DESIGN AND CREATIVENESS TO MEET AN AESTHETIC AGENDA AND FOR ITS OFFSHOOTS TO ADD TO THE SOCIETAL GOOD, IT HAS TO BE UNITED WITH TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL COMPREHENSION AND ACCOMPLISHED WITH REGULATION AND COMMERCIAL ASTUTENESS. WE HAVE TO DESIGN A THING BY CONSIDERING IT IN ITS NEXT LARGER CONTEXT — A CHAIR IN A ROOM, A ROOM IN A HOUSE, A HOUSE IN AN ENVIRONMENT, AN ENVIRONMENT IN A CITY PLAN! FOR THOSE OF US INTIMATELY INVOLVED WITH THE DESIGN INDUSTRY, A PARADIGM SHIFT HAS BEEN TAKING PLACE FOR THE LAST FEW DECADES.



***High on fashion.
An exposure towards couture and dispaly.***

We've recognized that in today's social order of anxiety, we need mental comfort as much as physical comfort, and we have to focus on design inspirations which encompass wit, paradox, reminiscence, metaphors as well as simple plain economics. Since long the belief: *Creative minds have always been known to survive any kind of bad training*, has clouded our beliefs towards a stable launch pad for a string of design students aiming to break the barrier of demand and supply. Nothing can be further from truth with regard to this as is evident from the plethora of designer products from the *chic* design studios biting the dust within a short span after their launch.

And making a head start in this field of Design Education at school level, is the Craft Design and Technology (CDT) Centre at The Assam Valley School which treads upon the professional turf of *cream of the crop* design powerhouses like the National

Institute of Design (NID) and the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT). The key distinction here is that we aim to categorize creative aptitude within our students at a very early stage and integrate it into a well shaped curriculum which encourages pupils to develop their capability as well as value decision making to function with panache in the made world. The CDT Centre imparts high grade training in the design disciplines of Graphics, Textile, Product, Fashion, Interior, User Interface, Universal and Sustainable design forms. A screen printing studio has also been integrated recently at the CDT Centre.

The CDT Centre is a deliberately interdisciplinary subject at The Assam Valley School and knowledge is imparted in the course of all-embracing learning classes and workshops which are mostly project based. It, of course, starts with a thought! The pupils are encouraged to think out of the box since inspiration grows into full-scale creation through persistence

The pupils are encouraged to think out of the box since inspiration grows into full-scale creation through persistence and imagination. This is further expanded with the use of cognitive modelling to preview a finished product and its usability.



Pre-

viewing a Design Form: Cognitive Modelling

and imagination. This is further expanded with the use of cognitive modelling to preview a finished product and its usability. CDT Centre stresses on the fact that what works good is better than what looks good! The concepts are then moved beyond the design board to the respective studios for shaping up. The CDT Centre boasts of a well equipped facility which does justice to Design Education in totality. It is a place where one can find from elementary weaving looms to the sophisticated graphic design interface units; from a cane and bamboo studio to a swashbuckling fashion design studio capable of churning out the best of wearable dresses. Design Education is a myriad field which is a combination of craft, design, technology, home economics, business studies and information technology. We have to create an atmosphere and a space where pupils and teachers can do their most creative work. Good design is probably 98% common sense. Above all, an object must function well and efficiently—and achieving that part right requires a good deal of time and attention. This is reflected in the finished products in the various disciplines at CDT Centre. After the aesthetic evaluation of the finished project, the usability and economics of it all is emphasized through group deliberations and presentations. Limitations live only in our minds, but if we use our imaginations, our possibilities become limitless.

Since late, emphasis on sustainable design forms is being given at the CDT Centre to cater to a niche product

line which is the highline of the *Go Green Programme* all across the world. Sustainable design forms are far trickier to achieve than the contemporary design products given the very limited flexibility and material width available to create them. This discipline is one of the most challenging facets of design education and will be one of the most important ingredients which will shape the aesthetics of tomorrow.

Recurrent and continuous design environment appreciation, evaluation and honing up of teaching skills is another key component of Design Education.

At the end of the day, when our design pupils pass out of school, they will be empowered with a design format which will be capable of propelling them with ease through the field of specialist design education being offered at the graduate and post graduate level. They will be a step ahead of their contemporaries and therein will lie the difference between achieving something or everything. Every creator painfully experiences the chasm between his inner vision and its ultimate expression.

The CDT Centre has spawned out to make this diversity lesser and the vision to teach contemporary design at school level makes CDT Centre a unique educational asset. With function, flow and form as basis, design is evaluated as a process culminating in an entity which intensifies comprehension. That my dear friend, is just another day of *designcraft* at the Craft Design and Technology Centre of the Assam Valley School!

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ETHICALLY ENDURING



PHOTOGRAPH BY: DAKSHA SALAM, X

You must enshrine in your hearts the spiritual urge towards light and love, Wisdom and Bliss!

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

INSTILLING VALUES IN TRANSCENDING GENERATIONS

*Satyamrit Kagti**

This is the seal of the absolute and sublime destiny of man — that he knows what is good and what is evil ; that his destiny is his very ability to will either good or evil.

George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

AN INFORMED WORLD VIEW AND UNDERSTANDING OF AFFAIRS WILL ATTEST THAT MOST OF THE PROBLEMS AND INDEED, CRISES CONFRONTING THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY AND OUR PLANET TODAY BASICALLY STEMS FROM A CERTAIN LACK OF CHARACTER IN THE WAY DECISIONS ARE TAKEN AND ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED.

This cuts across different domains from governance of countries and powerful global corporations to policies that impact nations, geographies, peoples, politics, ecology and environment. The growing deprivation, intolerance, neglect and corruption evident all around us is perpetuated by unprincipled, sterile and heartless thought and callous attitudes.



Broad tolerance in the matter of beliefs is necessarily a part of the new ethics.

Lafcadio Hearn

Anna Hazare has proved to be much more than a symbol of protest, frustration and discontent for the youth. Anna's movement has been a catharsis of their (and our) failings, for not having ideals any more and not following value-based principles. This state of affairs can only change for the better if we take Gandhi's message as a clarion-call to become the change that we wish to see in our world. We must seek inspiration to listen to our conscience and then seek to inspire others, especially the young to live and work on the strength of their convictions and stand by what is right. This can only come about by

committing ourselves to a committed and sustained process of human renewal.

Does each age have to learn its ethics afresh? Our older generations and we have not always succeeded in setting the right examples and serving as proper role models to inculcate an abiding body of values in our children that they would consider as a valuable inheritance and emulate. This will not come to pass until the realization dawns that being righteous is far more important than being respectable in the manner accepted by the prevalent socially acceptable morality. We can't have a better world without better men and women. The challenge is to instill empathy, compassion and character in our children. Instead of fierce competition ('winner takes it all') the importance of co-operation and working for the common good must be taught to our children without which they cannot hope to overcome the daunting challenges of their generation. People will have to develop methods for collaboration rather than that of controlling. This requires trust and methods based on mutual understanding.

The ultimate key is not what we teach our children but what our culture instills within them and how they react with their peers to create the environment in which they choose to live. Children are remarkable in that they usually have unlimited charity in their hearts when very young. However, that urge to be selfish is evidenced as they grow older which is bolstered by the prevailing value system and culture. Concepts of integrity, honour and ethical conscience bring about an understanding of right and wrong. All the religions, scriptures and sages of the past have taught us that the essence of being human is to love —and love truly. Today's children will be tomorrow's adults in a world of increasing uncertainties where one cannot help but agonize over the images of grave emerging threats to the survival of mankind and the web of life. Generations have treated nature and our fragile planet cruelly and devastated its ecology. We need to be reminded of the old American Indian saying that – *We do not bequeath the future to our children. Instead, we have borrowed our present from them.* The power to choose embodies the greatest gift that we, as humans, uniquely possess: next to life itself.

Could there be a greater gift?

**** Satyamrit Kagti is the former Managing Director of Liut Valley Company and Assam Hospitals Limited. He also works with learners having special education needs and is a former parent of The Assam Valley School.***