

# THE MIDDLE MEN

-Calvin Irom, XII

Finland and Sweden are poised to end decades of neutrality by joining NATO, a dramatic evolution in European security and geopolitics, sparked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The two Nordic nations have long kept the military alliance at an arm's length, even as they eyed Russia to their east with caution. However, Moscow's assault on Ukraine has sparked renewed security concerns across the region, and the leaders of each country have signalled their desire to join the bloc after more than 75 years of military non-alignment.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an intergovernmental military alliance between 30 member states. It was established in the aftermath of World War II on the insistence of the Truman administration in the United States. It is a system of collective security where its independent member states agree to defend each other against attacks by third parties. It was established during the Cold War in response to the threat posed by the Soviet Union. The alliance remained in place after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and has been involved in military operations in the Balkans, the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa. Finnish leaders announced recently of their intentions to join NATO, and formally presented that desire at a press conference held on the 15th of May. Sweden's Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson followed the same move on

Monday, confirming that her government had decided to begin the process of seeking NATO membership. Finland's move to seek to join the alliance requires a vote in parliament, but given the support of the ruling government, that hurdle is expected to be passed comfortably.

In Sweden, the move was debated in the Swedish parliament on Monday and there is a broad support for joining NATO, even though the government does not need parliamentary consent to move ahead. On the other hand, Turkey's President on 16th of May complicated Sweden and Finland's historic bid to join NATO, saying that he cannot allow them to become members of the alliance because of their perceived inaction against exiled Kurdish militants. This was an almost expected move from President Erdogan who looks to be earning some substantial benefit ranging from the lifting of sanctions against Turkey to a possible EU membership. Given that Turkey goes to elections soon, this move bolsters Erdogan's image in his country. This turning climax in the European crisis might bring the whole world into a state of conflict, where a war might be imminent at any point of time in the future. The best option rests yet again on a tripartite dialogue between the warring countries in order to ensure the security of Europe and protect the world from a nuclear war.

# TAMING · THE · DRAGON

-Tenzin Dekie, X

India and the US are the world's two largest democracies. The collaboration between the two extends from intelligence to maritime ties, and even to cyber cooperation. In the last couple of years, the two countries have grown closer, to combat a common enemy - China. The US and several other world powers have been talking about the need to ensure a free, open and thriving Indo-Pacific in the backdrop of China's military in the region. So, in November 2017, the US, Australia, India and Japan gave shape to the long-pending proposal of setting up the QUAD to develop a new strategy to keep the critical sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence, amid China's growing military presence in the strategic region.

In a press briefing, White House Principal Deputy Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said that the US will continue to build a strategic partnership in which the US and India work together to promote stability in South Asia, collaborate in new domains such as health, space, cyberspace; deepen the economic and technology cooperation, and contribute to a free and open Indo-Pacific region. The problem for India, however, is that India is uncomfortable with any conception of the Quad as an anti-China "alliance of democracies" (as U.S.

President Joe Biden has put it.)

India supposedly jettisoned non-alignment after the end of the Cold War, but it is still not willing to enter into an alliance with any country or group. India is certainly worried about a rising China but also faces the reality that, as of this year, China overtook the United States to become its number-one trading partner. Finally, while the U.S.-India partnership has progressed rapidly over the past few years, in some quarters, India remains a little wary of the United States as a long-term reliable and trustworthy partner.

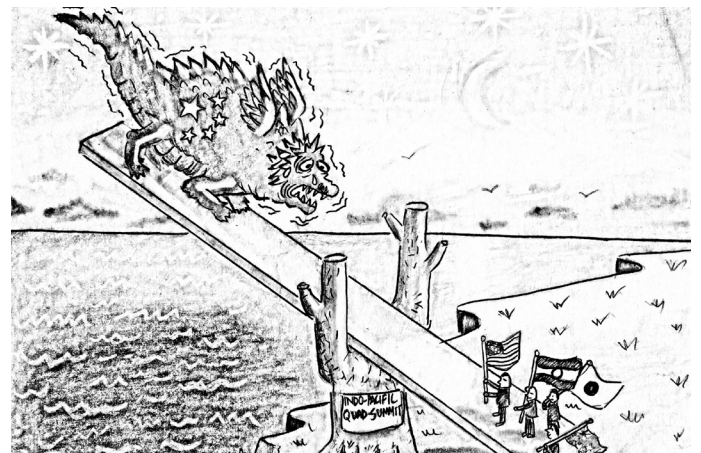


Illustration- Limeka Ayemi, XII

# IN · THE · DRAGON'S · SHADOW

-Anukriti Kashyap, X

Taiwan, officially still part of the Republic of China, is a country in East Asia. Taiwan is a developed country, ranking 15th in GDP per capita, its economy being the 8th largest in Asia and 18th largest in the world.

Although it does possess the qualities of a "normal country" and is "sovereign", it lives in China's shadows for the latter claims Taiwan as part of its territory under the "one China principle". Beijing views Taiwan as an inseparable part of its territory. Despite its booming economic status and its bilateral trades with the western world, it is not formally acknowledged as an independent country in the

global forum. Money is supposed to be affirmation of one's status and security but here it proves to be completely the opposite. The Republic of China

cannot take Taiwan unless the United States allows it. Although Taiwan's independence depends primarily on this promise, Taiwan has over the years bought itself a substantial military arsenal. Taiwan has no military

allies- meaning at some point they may be forced to confront threats and attacks alone. This is where the strengthening of the QUAD will play a significant role. While Taiwan's self-defense remains dependent on America, the latter's role and dependability as an ally will be tested should China decide to make a bid for the island country.

While Biden in his press meet at the Second QUAD meet

in Tokyo has stated clearly that America will "defend Taiwan", given its stance in Ukraine, Taiwan's future remains a tight walk for the Indo-Pacific countries.



Illustration- Migam Angu, XII

# The Blue Bird

-Baishali Saha, X

Illustration- Dhrity Khersa, XII



Elon Musk is set to take control of Twitter in a \$44 billion deal that could reshape social-media as we know it.

Twitter may seem rather ordinary on paper. The company's user base and market value are less than a tenth the size of Meta, the new Facebook's parent company. Its total revenue last year was roughly the same as Western Union. And prior to this month, the stock of Twitter was below the closing price more than eight years ago from its first day of trading.

An obvious point is that China is tremendously important for Tesla, as it is the key source of Musk's wealth. The billionaire will certainly face pressures — implicit or explicit — to fine-tune Twitter's policies to please Beijing. As the world's biggest electric-vehicle market as well as a supplier of Tesla batteries, China is essential to the healthy growth of the centerpiece of Musk's business empire. Musk's ownership of Twitter could make

it an extension of the media hand of the CCP allowing it to use Twitter's as part of its propaganda machinery.

Musk's main critique about Twitter today is that it is too restrictive. Under his ownership, Musk has suggested Twitter would treat content more permissively, pivoting away from content removals and account bans. He has also proposed opening up Twitter's algorithm to public review so that, in theory, users could understand how it made decisions.

It means that Twitter's everyday content enforcement isn't entirely clear. Although Musk has avoided going into details, and his objection to Twitter's approach seems rooted more in how much content moderation Twitter needs, rather than whether it ought to have any at all. But the way he framed the deal, and judging by the reaction of Twitter users, it stands to change the framework of the future of online freedom of speech.

## Campus Caricature

### Singing it!

-Siddhi Gupta, X



# JUST FOR THE RING

-Inaya Bora, VI

This is a favourite story often told in my family. My name is Mayna and this is an interesting story from my life.

When I was a little girl, my parents had gone hiking. When they got back home, my mother realized that she had lost her wedding ring. Now, I'm 11 years old, and for the past 8 years, she has regretted going for that hike. To free her from this constant chain or regret I made up my mind to go in search of her ring. I knew it would be something of an adventure I was undertaking but I was not afraid.

On the 20th of June, I packed everything I needed; a first aid box, extra clothes, extra shoes, a raincoat and a jacket. At 6.30 am sharp, I left home with my things. I took a cycle ride to the nearest bus stand before taking the bus to the outskirts of our town which bordered the famous Aravalli mountains. I began the long walk to the forest thereon. I stopped midway to take a sip of water from my warm water bottle and realised I had made quite a headway and was now somewhere deep in the forest. Suddenly I heard a loud squawking noise and looked up startled. I noticed something unusual sitting on top of the tallest tree. I moved nearer to get a closer look and realised that it was a

hawk! It saw me and started to swoosh down towards me. It was a large bird and afraid I began to run for my life. I felt something stick to my toe and pinch my foot even as I tripped over. The hawk landed in front of me and stared into my eyes. I heard its voice in my head say, "The ring on your toe, give it to me!" said the hawk. "NO!" I cried aloud. "This ring is not mine neither is it yours. It's my mother's." I shrieked and held the ring in my fist, pinched my eyes and RAN! With all my might, I ran and wished I could land back home when suddenly, I FLEW! Afraid, I opened my eyes and saw a huge ray of light engulf me. I thought I was going to die but right then I heard my mother's voice. "Mayna, are you alright? We were so worried!"

I found myself on the soft rug in front of the fireplace in our living room. The room was warm and in my mother's arms I felt safe and sound. In my palm I held the ring. I gave it to my mother and told her that I had found it while playing in the garden. My mother was happy and the ring sat snugly on her finger and I am so proud of myself that I made her happy.

# THE OUTPOST

Abortion rights remain in limbo in the US while guests at Cannes pop their opinion at it. Biden plays Captain America to Taiwan even as the rest of QUAD steps cautiously in the backdrop of Beijing taking offense to the summit. Ukrainian soldiers describe life as POWs while, Kyiv says the world has done absolutely nothing. From praising China to propounding his theory of India not being a nation to his embarrassing silence during his Cambridge session Rahul Gandhi goes viral. Cricketers comment on Yasin Malik's life sentence and the rest of the world tries to decode what happens next.

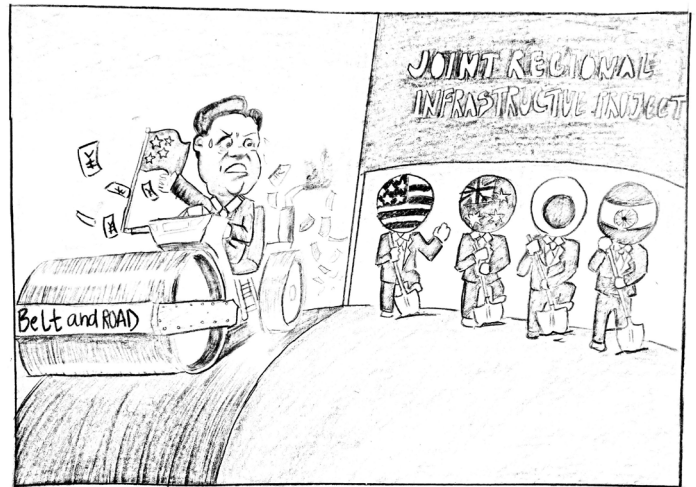


Illustration: Limeka Ayemi, XII

## CAMPUS NEWS

### Upper School Inter-House English Debates:

-Ruhi Kalita, X

One of the most anticipated events in the school calendar of The Assam Valley School is the Inter-House Upper School English Debate. After a weeklong debating session over preliminary rounds, the finals were held on the evening of the 19th of May, 2022. The motions ranged from discussing the importance of cottage industries to deliberating over the voting rights of former offenders. Debates were decided over agonising margins of points and feelings ran high the entire week as the teams battled day and night. The final face-off between Jinari-Manas and Bhorolii-Lohit was the proverbial clash of the titans. The judges for the evening were Dr. Hemashree Deka, Mr. Watts and Mr. Thajeb A. Hazarika. The motion for the debate was "This house believes that in today's world experiences are far more valuable than material possessions". Bhoroli-Lohit was opposing the motion while Jinari-Manas was proposing it. The constructs were based on logic, fine arguments and stellar performances. Speakers ranged from taking on a humorous to even a vulnerable address. Hiyaneijemmy Das and Kekhriesino Meyase were adjudged the Best Speakers and Jikke Kikum was adjudged the Most Promising Speaker. Bhoroli-Lohit was adjudged the winners of the event.



Photo Credits: Shrey Modi, XII

### Inter-House Chess Competition

-Mr. Devesh Prajapati

The Inter-House Chess Competition for Upper and Lower Schools was held on the 22nd of May. This year, the AVS Chess Society conducted both categories simultaneously. 16 matches were played in parallel. Lower School teams got 10 mins to play the match while the Upper School teams had 15 mins for their games. This competition was organized by the Chess Society Team: Mr. Rajen Bharali, Ms. Debjani Nath, and Mrs. Rupali Borah headed by the Mi/C Mr. Devesh Prajapati.

Results:

- Kopili-Dhansiri: 1st (19 points)
- Bhoroli-Lohit & Jinari-Manas: 2nd (10 points)
- Subansiri-Namdang: 4th (9 points)

## CSIR -nistads

CSIR-NISTADS is one of the premier institutions of the country and a constituent laboratory of CSIR, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India. Knowledge and Awareness Mapping Platform (KAMP) is also inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a new India and Scientific Social Responsibility (SSR) of the Scientific Community and Institutions.

The following is a report on KAMP-NASTA (National Assessment for Scientific Temperament and Aptitude) held in Jan 2021. There were 56,000 students from 2,500 schools across India. 311 students from AVS appeared for this online test.

Achievements at a glance:

1. Vasuman Lohia, - State topper
2. Ronit Dutta Roy, - District topper.
3. Sivdatta Thanjam, - District topper
4. Krishna Agarwal, - District topper
5. Aditya Panigrahi, - District topper
6. Utkarsh Agarwal, - District topper
7. Ethanael Kharkongor - District topper

Class toppers:

Kalyan Bharali (class 6)  
Kashyap Tiwari and Ahsash Agarwal (class 7)  
Nihal Agarwal (class 8)  
Naman Tibrewal (class 9)  
Utkarsh Jajodia and Chesta Nowal (class 10)  
Ananya Singh (class 12)

## Inter House Music Competition

### 2022

Music is a universal language, is what they say. The past month saw the entire school pick up the language and by the end of it, the student body was to their credit, fluent in it, displaying their proficiency in the long-awaited Inter-House Music Competition. Nerves, emotions, and camaraderie ran high and spilled onto the students' performances. It is safe to say that, regardless of the results, the day left everyone deeply moved and inspired, just a tiny bit more fluent in the language with every tap of their foot and nod of their head.

KOPILI-DHANSIRI

-Anukriti Kashyap, X

The event began with the Indian percussion solo which had the audience tapping to the beat. The next category saw House Captain Fareeha Ambreen in Indian Vocal Solo. In the Indian vocal group category, Kopili- Dhansiri came resplendent in Assamese attire and sang popular folk music of the region. In the Indian instrumental group category, the Kopili-Dhansiri contingent entertained the audience with catchy numbers.

The Western Instrumental category saw newcomer Drengo Mihu represent Kopili-Dhansiri on the piano and mesmerize the audience with a classical piano piece. The Western Duet sung by Angelica Saikia and Yajum Tadar had the audience swaying to their powerful voices. The Western Instrumental

group gave an outstanding performance as well. The final event saw the Kopili-Dhansiri choir belt out the popular Queen's numbers 'We Will Rock You' which was received with great energy from the audience.

Indian group: 3rd

Western solo instrumental: 1st

Western vocal duet: 3rd

Western choir: 2nd

SUBANSIRI-NAMDANG

-Donensangla Chang, X

The event started with the performance of the Indian percussion solo. Shivraj put out a mesmerizing performance. The next performance was the Indian vocal solo, a tribute to the late Lata Mangeshkar. Yashodhara Mahanta sang the legendary song 'Piya Tose Naina Laage Re' and the audience was awestruck by her melodious voice. The next category was Indian Vocal group and their theme was Gujarati. They sang the songs Chogada, Dholida and Shubharambh, putting on an energetic performance. The next and the last performance for Indian music was Indian Instrumental group. The piece was produced by Karleen and Pratyush with the help of some teachers.

The evening programme started with the Western Instrumental solo. It was an electrifying performance. The next category was Western vocal duet which was sung by Jiya and Shivraj. The evening couldn't get any better with the western instrumental group running a chill down our spines. The best was saved for the last, as the western choir took over the stage with an outstanding performance.

Indian percussion solo: 2nd

Indian vocal solo: 1st

Indian vocal group: 1st

Indian instrumental group: 2nd

Western instrumental group: 3rd position

JINARI-MANAS

-Anushka Somani, X

The Inter-House Music event began in the afternoon starting with Indian music. The first category for the afternoon was Indian percussion solo, Jinari-Manas played Tabla-which was played smoothly with rhythm and harmonic. This was followed by Indian vocal solo, performed beautifully, they sang Mera Saaya- originally sung by Lata Mangeshkar. Next up, we had the vocal group, Jinari-Manas' theme being Bengali. All of their beautiful voices together sounded mellifluous and rich. The last category for the afternoon we had was the instrumental group. Using the tabla, violin and xylophone, their presentation for this category was tuneful, mellow and rich.

In the evening, we had our second and final event of Inter-House Music 2022. For the first category, which was Instrument solo, their performance was deep and rich with tunes performed with a guitar. Next up, we had Western Vocal duet, where they sang beautifully the song "Say Something" which was soft and gentle yet strong, evoking

a strong emotional response from the audience. The third performance was Western instrument which they definitely rocked! It was breathtaking, raspy, and definitely rock-n-roll. Their last performance for the evening was the western choir which sounded breath-taking and harmonic. Their control of the rhythm and keen sense made the performance even better.

- Indian Percussion solo: 1st
- Indian vocal solo: 2nd
- Indian Instrument group: 3rd
- Indian Instrument group: 1st
- Western instrument solo: 3rd
- Western Duet: 2nd
- Western Choir: 3rd
- Western Band: 1st

**BHOROLI-LOHIT**  
-Yashvi Modi, X

The first category was the Indian percussion solo in which Parak played the tabla, reflecting Hindustani traditions. The melodious and powerful tune of the tabla captivated everyone’s heart with just a beat. This was followed by the Indian vocal solo, Harshita, who sang the mesmerizing song “O Sajana Barkha Bahar Aayi” with her charming voice. After this category was the Indian vocal group in which the house’s theme was Rajasthani. They synchronized their outfits, which created excitement among the audience and fascinated the crowd with their soulful performance. The next category was the Indian instrumental group in which they played a delightful tune composed by Mr. Pranjal Baruah and Mr. Manzil K. Gogoi, which ended the Indian music event. Next up was the western music event which started with the western instrumental solo, Adiella played the alluring melody of the piano with a soul-touching performance. After this, was the western vocal duet where Bhoroli-Lohit stole the spotlight by singing “Rolling in the Deep” by Adele. Their dramatic performance blew everyone away. That was followed by the Western instrumental band and their passionate performance bewitched the crowd. The last performance of the event was completed with the western choir performance of Bhoroli-Lohit which enchanted everyone. Their playful and magnificent performance delighted the public.

- Indian percussion solo: 3rd position
- Indian vocal solo: 3rd position
- Indian vocal group: 2nd position
- Indian instrumental group: 1st position
- Western instrumental solo: 2nd position
- Western vocal duet: 1st position
- Western instrumental group: 2nd position
- Western choir: 1st position

**OVERALL RESULTS:**  
1st position: Bhoroli-Lohit  
2nd position: Jinari-Manas  
3rd position: Subansiri-Namdang



Photo Credits: Shrey Modi, XII

## Ripple #186

-Sampada Malpani, XII

With eyes that were one blue  
and the other green  
He stared at Darius of Persia  
at his feet  
Commander, Collaborator,  
Conqueror,  
His men knew him to be a  
god  
The world, Alexander the  
Great.

## Tongue Of Slip!!

1. "I couldn't grab the concept." - Utkarsh Jajodia, XII (Guess you couldn't grab English too.)
2. "It's in Pam Mamela's office." - Tasmin Yushra, X (Your brains, I'm assuming.)
3. "I teach at the light of speed." - Mr. Taufique Ansari (You left your grammar behind.)
4. "I got my smelly-suit." - Temjenrenla Jamir, XII (Stay very, very far away.)
5. "The Headmaster is our water." - Aakanksha Kumar, X (A shower of blessings upon you.)

## Keep It Reel!

*Twilight*

-Mahita Jindal, XII



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