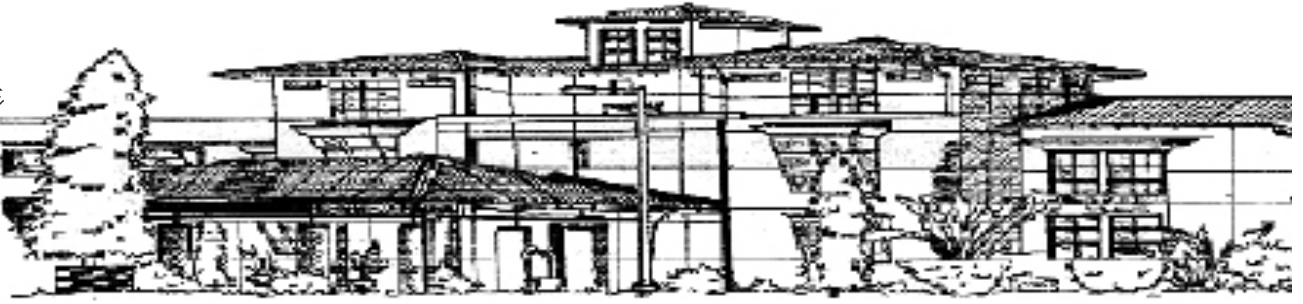




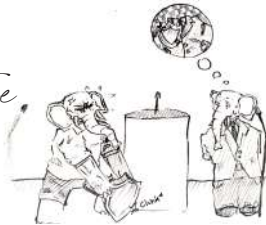
WITCH IN HIDING

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CAMPUS NEWS



the dawn of a new day

-Rianna Lingjel Irom, Editor-in-Chief, XI

Twenty-five.

That is the number of steps which one must climb in order to approach the Room Above the Library. Twenty-five steps, each having bore the weight of the footsteps of those that cross into a realm bound by painted walls and ink-stained paper.

Admittedly, I have paid little attention to these steps that have carried my soles to the Room for nearly three years. This particular staircase has been trampled all over by my anger, and traced by my joy during the countless times. I've run up to the Room. Recently, I find myself pausing every time I climb a step. I cannot help but wonder how heavy my lingering existence must feel on these steps. They carry the burden I leave behind when I shuffle my feet, dragging myself to the Room on whose

floor I will writhe in either sorrow or joy. Such a thought is often chased by the question: how heavy must the footsteps of my predecessors have been? Did they too find reassurance in the weight of the key in their hand?

Were they too haunted by the anxiety of living up to all those who came before them: those whom they watched grow up, and those who they knew only through the tales that seem to loom larger than men?

**"I must rise
when a new
day dawns
before I worry
about the fall
of dusk."**

I realise, that one day, I shall climb the staircase and look back on all twenty-five steps for the last time. These steps have seen me chase the slipping shadows of my seniors. These steps have

paved my path in this school the day I stumbled upon them; they have carved out space on a page for my story long before I knew how to pick up a pen.

There are legacies to live up to. There are tales to be told, and stories to be heard. There is laughter that must spill like ink on paper, and tears that must wash away palms tainted with paint. There are people to make proud, and expectations I must meet. But first, I must worry about climbing these twenty-five steps before I worry about living up to the legacies to the Editors that came before me. First, I must rise when a new day dawns before I worry about the fall of dusk.

So, I shall climb these twenty-five steps. I shall turn the key in the lock and take my seat by the Grandfather. I shall come and go as I always have, like the tide chasing the shore. I shall sit and smile, watching the last tale unfold before I start writing my own. And when the time comes, I shall let go of those that are set to leave, rather than clawing onto them with my talons. And only when it is my turn to pass down the key held in my hand shall I worry about having lived up to their legacy.

PRIVATISATION IN THE ARMED FORCES

- Timzenla Ozukum, XI

In India, the armed forces form the cornerstone of national security, entrusted with safeguarding sovereignty and maintaining peace. Since Independence, they have remained state-controlled institutions. However, in an era where technology, efficiency, and rapid response are crucial, the idea of limited privatisation in certain aspects of defence has sparked debate.

Privatization does not imply transferring national defence to private hands but rather outsourcing select non-core functions such as logistics, infrastructure management, maintenance of equipment, research and development, and cyber defence to specialized firms. This allows the military to concentrate on its primary objective which is combat readiness and strategic operations.

The rationale for partial privatisation rests on three factors: it enhances efficiency and reduces costs through private sector flexibility and innovation; it ensures access to the latest

technology by fostering collaboration with advanced industries; and it enables the armed forces to focus fully on operational preparedness rather than administrative burdens. Critics argue that India's main challenge lies not in the concept itself but in the lack of foundational infrastructure. There is an insufficient pool of qualified professionals incentivised to join defence industries, inadequate research and development funding, limited opportunities for global exposure, and a shortage of skilled industrial workers capable of adapting to defence manufacturing demands.

These gaps raise an important question: Is India ready for such a transformation? In today's complex global environment, a balanced model of defence privatisation is essential for India to remain agile, technologically advanced, and combat-ready. As the world evolves, so too must India's defence system, strengthened by innovation, collaboration, and preparedness for emerging threats.

Today's wars are no longer determined by the size or experience of an army. Modern combat now revolves around missiles, precision technology, and state-of-the-art equipment. Yet, the world is once again shifting gears. Just as cannons gave way to tanks and tanks evolved into missile systems, a new era of warfare is emerging. Artificial Intelligence has already entered the battlefield, transforming the nature of conflict. It is revolutionising intelligence agencies across nations, managing vast surveillance networks, analysing enormous data streams, guiding missile systems, and identifying potential threats with remarkable precision. Beyond defence, AI is being used offensively as well. Several countries are conducting classified research to develop systems capable of infiltrating and extracting information

AI IN MODERN WARFARE

- Udayveer Singh, VIII

from enemy networks and hardware. If these efforts succeed, they could alter the very foundations of modern warfare. As quantum computing and robotics converge with AI, the next generation of autonomous vehicles, combat drones, and predictive defence systems could redefine how wars are fought, making adaptability and innovation as vital as firepower itself.

But amid this rapid transformation, one question remains: is this truly the right path forward?

WITCH IN HIDING

- Adya Rakshit, X

In a quiet town nestled between hills and whispers, lived a girl named Alisha, an outsider marked by the scent of herbs, candle wax, and something ancient. Her classmates called her a witch, mocking the way her long braid reached her thighs. The teasing grew crueler each day, until one afternoon, a girl, out of jealousy, snatched a pair of scissors and cut off her braid. That was the final blow. Alisha walked home in silence, trying to keep her rage beneath her skin.

Beneath one loose floorboard of her house lay a tunnel, which smelled like old books and flowers. She descended into its depths, emerging in a moss-covered clearing where a crooked cottage stood—a place that pulsed with



old magic. As she stepped inside, the sound of laughter filled her ears. Women cloaked in shadows turned towards her, each smiling in recognition, but soon the smiles disappeared. One by one, their mundane forms melted away, revealing their true selves, witches of the wild, ancient and powerful. Alisha felt her own transformation rise from within, her blood singing with forgotten spells. It was her family, the family that the town was scared of, the witches of York town. That night, the town trembled, the streets were silent except for the howling wind.

Children who had mocked her began to vanish. One was found frozen in a fountain, eyes wide with terror, encased in ice despite the summer heat. Another was discovered in the schoolyard, his body twisted into something unrecognizable. A third simply vanished, leaving behind only a trail of scorched footprints and blood. No one could explain it. No one dared to. Alisha never returned to school. Her braid grew back, longer and darker than before. The cottage stayed but with eerie silence, the forest destroyed and the history of the children never to be spoken of.

Illustrated by Sneha Ngangom, Deputy Editor, XI

Campus Caricature

Heavy Duty

Illustrated by Nameirakpam Austin, VII



#1 BOARDING SCHOOL

The Assam Valley School was recently awarded 'India's No. 1' and 'Assam's No. 1' in India School Rankings of Best Co-Educational Boarding Schools.

For the first time, The Assam Valley School has been ranked Number One in the country. The school constantly endeavours to impart quality education thereby upholding the school's values and legacy of respect, resilience, integrity and excellence.



GLOBAL ARTIST AWARD

The Head of Department of the AVS Dance School, Ms. Rubi Borah Bordoloi, has been graciously given the 'Global Artist Award' conferred by the Indian Art and Culture Society. The prestigious event was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 29th to 31st October 2025, with the award ceremony on the 31st.

IIT MADRAS CONNECT CERTIFICATION COURSES

Four students of The Assam Valley School- Vaibhav Kumar, Kelden Rigsang, Garv Agarwal and Mehul Agarwal have successfully completed the 8-week online certification course under the IIT Madras School Connect Programme.



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2026-2027

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Vaibhav Kumar

Ripple #260

- Tanveer Ahmed, XII

At last, the throne was hers.
The unburnt, the breaker of chains,
the Mother of Dragons.
Yet, as she gazed upon the charred,
broken kingdoms below,
The truth struck hard.
She had become her father's daughter
after all.

Tongue Of Slip!!

1. "Your whole year has been a bad year hair year"- SPS (Respectfully, Ma'am, your English has ruined our year.)
2. "I am Hindian" -Timzenla Ozukum, XI (Well at least your Hindi is better.)
3. "Soviet Unicorn" - Nongthombam Chingkheinganbi Devi, XI (So even the univorns are Communist now?)
4. "Why will thought?" - Ma'am Jean (We know it doesn't.)
5. "Can you pass me a water?" - Sneha Ngangom, Deputy Editor, XI (Should we pass you a dictionary instead?)

Keep It Reel!

The Da Vinci of Itanagar
- Rianna Lingjel Irom, XI



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