

Speak up. You need to speak your mind. Don't be loud. Be mischievous. You need youngsters who are mischievous because they have creative minds. Be mischievous, don't be mean. Be respectful. Don't be subservient. Be persevering. Don't be repetitive. Be firm. Don't be angry. Be social. Don't show off. Be innovative. Don't copy and paste. Be passionate. Don't be crazy. Be focused. Don't be paranoid. Be tolerant. Don't suffer fools. Be bold, don't be foolhardy. Don't be reckless. Be selfless. Don't be self-centred. Be caring, don't go for popularity. Be friendly. Don't be familiar. Smile, but don't squirm. Be humble. Don't be apologetic. And the last one is interesting. Freak out. Don't disrupt. These are some smiles as you can say which describe the type of quality a youth must imbibe through his schooling days, through his earlier education, higher education. And once he joins a profession, let there be any profession that he joins. So from my experience, I'm trying to say a few things which I feel are important for young leaders to succeed in their professions, whichever profession they take. These are some guidelines. Or you can say these are some derivatives from the environment that we have experienced and we feel that we should imbibe.

The first thing which comes to my mind for a good leader or for a good person who's looking to be successful in his career - You must possess the qualities of internal intensity and external calm. This is a virtue. If you have confidence in yourselves, then you will be patient. You will listen. You will analyse, you will think.

So, you have analysed the issues that have confronted you. You have understood the impact of what it can do. All this is intense. Intensely going on in your own mind. Externally you have a demeanour. You are smiling, you are courteous and you are diplomatic. You are not giving away what is going on in your mind. Now, this is important when you face difficult situations. And there will be many difficult situations that you will face when you start getting into any kind of work. There will be people who will get at you, circumstances which will let you down, there will be an environment which is not conducive to your thinking and way of life. This quality of internal intensity and external calm will help you and also build self-confidence in you to deal with these challenges.

After that, I'm talking about some personal qualities which have been talked about in some manner by the headmaster already, but I will give you a different perspective of what I'm trying to say. A good leader has to be - firstly he has to be knowledgeable. Print media, electronic media, social networking sites, and the internet. You must continue to keep yourself abreast with what is

happening around you, what is happening in the globe. This will come handy one day when you're dealing with your own issues. So knowledge and awareness are imperative. With knowledge and awareness of things, you develop a kind of mindset. Now that mindset has to be positive. You have to look for solutions. You have been taught in school about problem-solving - when you go on to work, these problems will be at your door. So you have to be adept in solving problems, thinking about them, preempting them and ensuring that you deal with these challenges when they come across you. It is also necessary that you avoid certain things or be aware of their impact on you. Don't be impetuous. Don't be irritating. Don't be recriminating. Don't be pessimistic. Don't be confused and don't be indecisive. A person who fits into this category ultimately is indecisive, incapable and he is really good for nothing.

I spoke of anger. I want to quote something from the Bhagavad Gita what Lord Krishna told Arjuna- 'From anger comes delusion. From delusion comes loss of memory; from loss of memory comes destruction of discrimination. When you lose your discrimination, you perish.' Therefore, it is important that you have a method of controlling your anger and finding other ways of expressing yourself. Anger leads you nowhere. Think of it, when you're being confronted by a superior or anybody who is constantly angry at you, is abusive, he doesn't want to listen to you, how do you feel? So if you become angry, that's the reaction your subordinates will also feel about you.

The other thing about life is that- it's not all about study, hard work, and only your heads down. It's about passion, it's about attitude. Passion is something that you need to create in yourselves. Passion comes from an intense need to do something. It comes from your will to accomplish something. You need to be persuasive. You need to learn to achieve. You need to have a spirit of 'let's do it!' If I give simple examples of passion, a golfer will always reach on time. He can skip his lunch but he will be teeing on time. If you ask him to come for a lecture, it may not be so. It's the passion which is driving him. It's the passion for sports. Create hobbies, create hobbies of reading, writing, collecting, music, art, craft- there's so much. You are so lucky that all this is being taught to you in school. So passion is something which everyone must carry in their heart. If you're passionate about things, you will make it happen, and I feel that that's an important aspect of a personality.

I talked about reading and writing. Especially for boys and girls- with all the modern gadgetry you have, we have virtually

stopped writing. We have virtually stopped. No one writes any letters to his friends, parents, whatever. And reading, you can take a Kindle, put it off. You can see on the electronic media, you feel that there is no need to read. But what I want to say is reading enriches your soul and writing shows you your level. Write a page and keep it under your pillow. Take it out the next day, stand in front of the mirror and read it. I guarantee you, your first feeling would be how silly you were, you could've done better. Reading and writing is something which leads to something which is very important for leadership- articulation. Your ability to articulate a subject in order or happening in the briefest possible manner will come to you when you have a good vocabulary, when you read, when you write and a good leader must be able to stand and deliver. He must be impactful, he must be able to convey exactly what he wants to convey to his subjects. So developing this habit of reading and writing is very important.

Yet another facet in this world of anger and rush is the aspect of tact and guile. A lot has been said about tact and guile. We face an enemy on these northern borders and they are full of tact and guile. They are deceptive in their nature. I am not referring to that kind of tact and guile. I am referring to your ability to find an alternate method of dealing with a situation. Somebody is forcing you to do something. Here is a class and it's being told that we will do this and this is how it will be done. Now you all know that what is being suggested is not the correct way. If you say that we don't like it, they won't listen to you. If you say, 'Sir, I don't think this is correct, I don't think it will be appreciated. But if you are tactful, you will raise an argument which will lead to an alternate solution. Maybe they will accept it. When you have difficult bosses, how do you deal with them? You can't always confront them and put your resignation in front of them.

You have to be tactful. So tact and guile, guile not in the sense of being sly, guile in the sense of being clever. Those are virtues that you need to imbibe. They'll help you climb the ladder, but don't let others use this on you.

Two more things. Motivation. A lot is being talked about motivation. What is motivation? Motivation is an inherent desire to do what needs to be done. Motivation is a strong feeling within you that you will be able to carry out the task, come what may.

Motivation is something that you will continue to address even when you are under pressure, when things are adverse around you, when things are not going well. Motivation will get you

there. I have, over the period of years of training, when I was in the National Defence Academy. In our cabin hung a small plate. I am sure most of you know what I am saying. It is the poem "If" by Rudyard Kipling. Even at the cost of repeating, may I repeat the first stanza?

*'If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise.'*
It goes on. In the last stanza he says:
*'If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!'*

It's so motivating. It shows you how you need to deal with the world and the environment.

Motivation also comes from poetry, prose, it comes from people who are articulate, who can deliver a talk which gets to your heart and head simultaneously. I would also want to read a small stanza from a Hindi poet Ramdhari Singh Dinkar Ji. His poems are now becoming very common. People are quoting them everywhere and I take the liberty of quoting it here also. The title is "Himadri Tung Shring se".

*'Himadri Tung Shring se prabhu shudh bharti,
Svayanprabhasamujjvalaa,
Svatantratapukaaratee.
Amartya veeraputr ho, dard pratigya soch lo,
Prashast puny panth hai, badhe chalo, badhe chalo.
Asankhya Kirti Rashmian,
Vikeerndivydaahasee,
Sapoot Mathrubhumi,
Rukonashoorsaahasee.
Aratisainysindhumein,
Suvaadavaagnisejalo,
Praveer ho jayibano, badhe chalo, badhe chalo!'*

It has a national spirit in it. It's talking not just to a soldier but to every citizen. You have it in you. Don't get stuck. Go achieve your aim and those who are passionate, those who are determined, this way or that way achieve it.

All this comes down to two more facets which I've been particularly experiencing in half a century of working so far.

Walk the talk. You hear this phrase all the time. Especially to the boys and girls I would like to say, over a period of time you discuss and say too many things. 'We'll do this, we'll do that. I think this is how it should be done. I think we are missing things.' Lot of things come to you. When you make promises, and you want to deliver, that is what is walking the talk. I think this is something you need to be conscious about. You want to make an impact on your team, you should think of saying something which you can deliver. When it is done, the team realises 'well here is a leader who does what he says.' It has a huge impact on their morale; it has a huge impact on the team. So walking the talk is important.

And one last important issue that I've been reading about is body language. Body language is actually a great tool for management and command, both. I think you should read about body language. It is not astrology that you know when your thumb is curved you'll do something, no. Body language is your demeanour. How you walk, how you talk, how you conduct. A very simple example which is given is - a leader is bullying his team and he is talking about 'you, I'll do this to you, I'll do that' and he is loud. Suddenly there is this call and the chap comes and says 'it's your boss' see how his tone changes, 'yes sir, no sir'. His body language. People whom you are addressing, in two seconds can make you out, this is a hollow man. It happens very often when a senior person who is benefited of knowledge and shy of displaying his lack of knowledge, he resorts to all these antics. He resorts to shouting, ticking off people, making them run here and there. But the main thing is left out. So body language is important for you to understand. If you find your classmates coming late every day or despite you are telling and advising them, still they are not on time, the next day you are there at the gate 3 minutes before and all you do is stare at the people coming late. Just give him a stare. One day, two days, he will understand that it is not being liked. It is an example, many more one can give. So, body language is a great method of conveying messages without having to talk. I think you should master it.

Humour denotes happiness. Humour is necessary to bring your

temperature down. Humour is necessary to laugh and get your body mechanism to cool down. I think humour should be an integral part of your personality but it should not come off at the wrong times. There is a time for humour. By all means you can put your team in a relaxed mood if you can create a little humour now and then.

If I sum up what I have said and I've tried to convey a few points which I feel would do you good. I was asked when I was retiring, 'Sir Can you put, in one sentence, what is the sum total of your service that you've had in the 41 years of being in the army?' I asked that person how could I put it in one sentence? Not possible. He said, 'Think. Something must be there which will trigger you.' So I laid with it and it came to me after some time and what was it, I want to share with you. This was the first line of the prayer that I recited for 3 years in the National Defence Academy. The lines were 'Oh God, help me to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.' I think this line is the key to everything. If in mid-career or at the end of the career you can say this to yourself, that you have abided by these three facts, you are a successful person. Thank you so much. It was nice talking to all of you. I hope I could convey some of the feelings which I figure are necessary today for young leaders who will become citizens. Whatever I've seen through the day, I'm sure that AVS is on the right path and it is still a job in the making. You're only 28 years old. In another quarter century, I'm sure this hall will be full of your alumni sitting there cheering you on. For the students, I think you're fortunate to have such staff which looks after you, teaches you, grooms you and puts you on the right path. The real test will be when you leave the school and you have the same feeling as in that picture "To sir with love." Those are the feelings you will never forget. When you come back as an alumnus and the teachers are still here, you will realise how much they have been a part of making you what you are. Your headmaster, your teachers and the administrative staff. Be grateful.

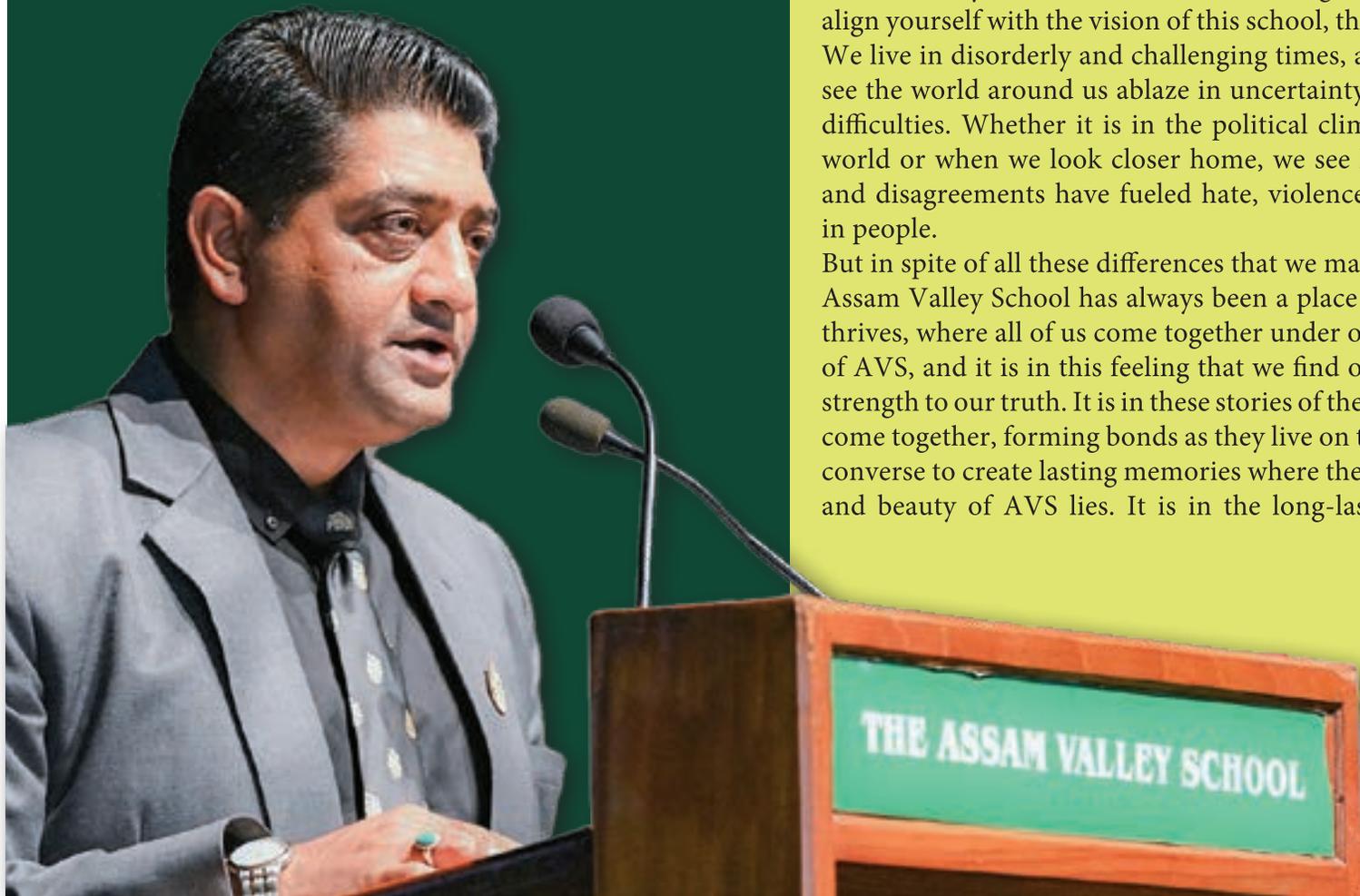
HEADMASTER'S ADDRESS

As I stand here at the cusp of the 28th year of The Assam Valley School, one ought to ask, what is AVS? What does AVS stand for? What does an education at AVS entail? As we celebrate this milestone of the school, still nascent in years, standing tall and bright among all contenders, it is perhaps the most apt time to visit this question. What is AVS? AVS is its students. AVS is its teachers. AVS is the parent who chose to entrust this 235-acre institution with their child. AVS is its workers, its staff working tirelessly to give us the campus we have. Each one of us embodies the spirit of The Assam Valley School. As the school motto humbly states, 'Truth is Strength.' It is in AVS that we find this truth, and it is in this truth that we

find our strength. We find this truth in our daily schedule as each and every aviator, from the crack of dawn, races against time, attempting their best to live up to the schedule. We find this truth in the classroom, where every teacher goes above and beyond, preparing the lesson plans, curriculums, and textbooks to make learning an adventure in a child's life. We find this truth on the sports field, on the football grounds, the cricket pitches. We find it in the camaraderie during a match. We find it in the loud cheers from the pavilion as a team makes the final goal and lifts the trophy.

AVS is a melting pot. It is a vibrant melting pot of ideas, of cultures, of varied mindsets. It is a melting pot of aviators from all over. And yes, when I say an aviator, I mean each one of us, every student, every teacher, member of the staff, each one of you, are invaluable for having come together to align yourself with the vision of this school, the vision of AVS. We live in disorderly and challenging times, a time where we see the world around us ablaze in uncertainty, adversity, and difficulties. Whether it is in the political climate around the world or when we look closer home, we see how differences and disagreements have fueled hate, violence, and prejudice in people.

But in spite of all these differences that we may hail from, The Assam Valley School has always been a place where diversity thrives, where all of us come together under one big umbrella of AVS, and it is in this feeling that we find our strength, the strength to our truth. It is in these stories of these students who come together, forming bonds as they live on this campus and converse to create lasting memories where the truth, strength, and beauty of AVS lies. It is in the long-lasting friendship



that developed. It is in the educators' zeal to educate. It is in this confluence of ideas and cultures that create something beautiful.

The essence lies in the fact that every corner of this campus will mean something special to every aviator. Every corner of the campus will aerate a fresh memory to all the aviators, the ones who have moved on, the ones who are here, and the ones who will join us in years to come. When that does happen, you would have been sure to have been a part of an institution that is creating a remarkable legacy for itself, imprinting in all its students the sense of community and belonging, and preparing them to be a part of the world that awaits them. It is important to remember that as we prepare our children for the world outside, we must instil in them the values that make them fulfilling, successful individuals, but above all, values that make them good human beings.

There have been many instances where we have seen the youth considering monetary success as the primary marker of success. As educators, our vision remains to teach our students that values of humanity that go beyond just monetary acquisition, that ultimately make one live a fulfilling life. As educators, our education must empower them to think critically, to question boldly, and to seek answers tirelessly. Values of empathy, respect, perseverance, tolerance must complement the knowledge they learn, which will equip them with the skills to navigate the complexities of the world, to solve problems, and to make informed decisions. To the students, I want to remind you that your principles, your values, your hopes, and aspirations above all remain paramount. The ones you learn at school, the ones you pick up at home, but most importantly, the ones you draw for yourself on your own. Preserving these principles for life ultimately requires love. Knowledge will provide you with the truth, but love, empathy, and kindness will teach you how to preserve that truth. As we stride towards holistic education, we must also acknowledge the challenges along the way.

Undoubtedly, one of the biggest challenges that we faced in our times was COVID-19 and the pandemic that persisted through the last few years. As students remain confined to the digital world, social media often influences them with values that do not align with the holistic vision we hold for their development. Increased screen time, interactions solely on social media platforms presented obstructions in nurturing the values and principles we consider essential for the group.

As we are now making a slow continuation into the new normal, we as a school strive to instil in our children the qualities that hopefully wave them away from those distractions. Qualities that will create individuals who will go on to leave rooted and lasting social impacts in the various spheres they dive into. Qualities that will help them create bold, well-intentioned differences as citizens of not only this nation but as global citizens of the world. One of the many ways in which we do this is through community service at school. Community service is an integral part of our curriculum in which every student partakes. Our aim is to instil in them the duty of service towards their community, towards those less fortunate than themselves, and to teach them that it is in these services where true joy and success remain. It is in being courageous, kind, and human that we can tackle life's toughest obstacles. That is not to say that aviators are short of grandeur and success. Many of our students have caught a niche for themselves in the field they have chosen for themselves. Every year our students are placed in coveted universities, both in the country and overseas. Be it the corporate sector, the administrative sector, the entertainment industry, the field of sports education, to name a few, have all seen AVS students excel by leaps and bounds.

The Assam Valley School is 28 years old, relatively newer to its contemporaries, AVS is a young school, yet it is continuously striving for excellence and providing its worth in the students that graduate from here. It is all to the credit of our teachers working tirelessly around the clock and new parents who entrust us with the responsibility of their child. At this juncture, I must also take a moment to acknowledge that in this ever-evolving era that we are in, it is not only inevitable that a school like The Assam Valley School will also go through changes, changes that affect all our stakeholders. There will be times when change will be met with some resistance, sometimes by our students, at times by our staff, and perhaps sometimes by the parents. It is a human instinct to be averse to changes.

However, we all must remain committed to the fact that these changes are important. They're important to keep up with the changing times, but most of all to cater to the most precious stakeholder, our students. At AVS, we believe that education is the greatest adventure in a child's life, and we live up to that. We must keep ever-evolving. As I draw closer to the end, I'm reminded of this incident while I was studying at The Doon

School when my headmaster, Mr. Gulab Ramchandani, called the 12th graders to his office. He showed us the blueprint of a boarding school that was being constructed in Assam, called The Assam Valley School, telling us how the school was a step towards education in the Northeast. Of course, life carried on and took its path only a little to my knowledge that years later I would be associated with this very school as the headmaster. It is truly a humbling experience, and I am learning every single day after being entrusted with this position. The team of teachers, our staff, our workers, and our students are the ones that keep the ship of AVS sailing, and to them, I remain very grateful. This anecdote is a crucial reminder that our footprints live on. The headmasters preceding me, the teachers that have been a part of this journey, and the students that have graduated from this school, all of them have been instrumental in shaping The Assam Valley School to what it is today.

I would like to end with the question I began with. What is AVS? Is it the tall iron gates that await the arrival of the aviators at the inception of every semester? Or is it the lush green pavilions that witness the cheers and chanting as the teams win? Is it the rush in the morning when the students hurry to classes as the bell rings? Or is it the pride with which the school welcomes its winning team from a football tournament? AVS is all that and much more. AVS is a school that is a feeling, an emotion, and a phenomenon, a school creating its legacy. This is a school that rings true to its founder, Mr. BM Khaitan's words. 'I want to prove that a good school will produce a good student, a good student will produce a good citizen, and a good citizen will produce a good country.'

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“Knowledge will provide you with the truth, but love, empathy, and kindness will teach you how to preserve that truth.”

Exhibitions & Productions



Art Exhibition

The Art Exhibition's theme was trendy pop art, showcasing innumerable illustrations, caricatures, lino prints, wood art prints, installation prints, and many more. The exhibition highlighted the collaborative efforts of the students and teachers in the art department in the best possible manner.



The Biology Exhibition, "Life as it is," displayed life in general and its various forms, starting from photosynthesis to complex gene therapy. They also tried to show healthy lifestyle habits and the science behind nutrient depletion.

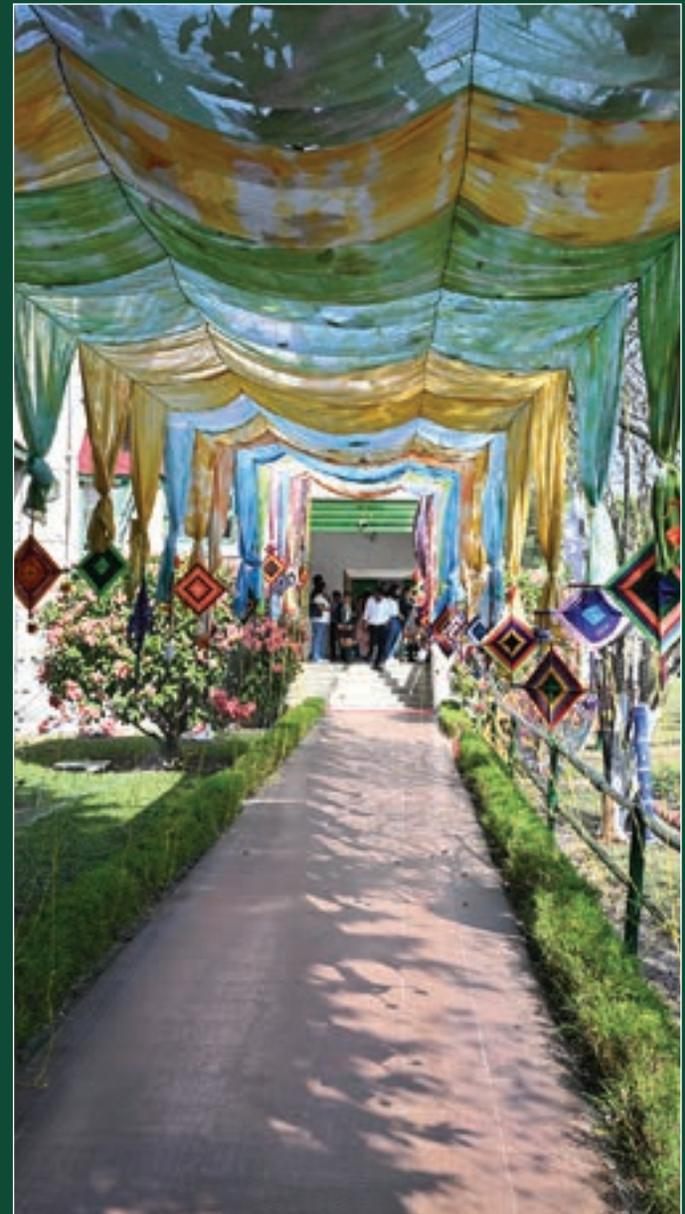


Biology

The *Orchid Silk Route*

The Craft, Design, and Technology Exhibition showcased a bamboo and textile craft installation at the entrance of the Main School Building. The indoor exhibition showcased many kinds of craft work- Swings, hangings, lamps, shelves, tables, and many other interesting creations by our aviators. The CDT department also showcased its output from the Fashion Design workshop held this year.

Craft Design & TECHNOLOGY





Business Idea

Aviators came up with two business ideas with zero investment. They created a photo booth and sold customised hoodies and t-shirts.



'Ace - The Commercial City' discussed the three sectors of the Indian economy. It also covered stock markets, the evolution of money, and discussed in detail the goods and services tax.



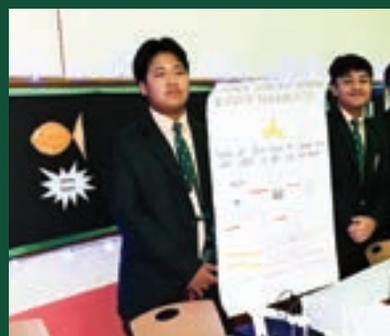
English

The English Exhibition, "Twinkling Tapestry," was an assortment of fairy tales, the adventures of Harry Potter, the influence of the French language on English, and various other facets of the English language.



Everyday Science

The chemistry exhibition featured various projects, namely, the extraction of essential oils from flowers using distillation, the making of papercrete products, body wash and paper soap, organic white phenyl, bioplastic and its products, scented candles, a low-cost water filter using a clay bulb, the effect of micronutrients on plant growth, 'kolkhar' using different varieties of banana, and the study of its alkalinity and cleansing power.



Geography

The Geography Exhibition, "Climate Change, Its Impact, and Solutions," discussed what climate change is, the reasons behind it, its various effects, what we can do to navigate these problems, and the carbon footprints that we are leaving.



The 'Handmade with Love' card exhibition aimed to bring back the tradition of giving cards. Aviators put their hearts and souls into this exhibition and made different types of cards that could be given as gifts to our loved ones, friends, and family.



Handmade Cards

The History Exhibition, “Unsung Heroes of the Northeast,” featured students enacting freedom fighters speaking in the first person. This exhibition vividly showcased the lives of unsung heroes of the northeast.



‘Mathomania’ consisted of fun games such as puzzle solving, sudoku, methodoku, tengram, and tessellation. It also taught many mathematical facts through riddles.



History

Mathematics