# THE GLOBAL TIMES



Luxe Or Excess: The Billion-Dollar Banter

Aditi Gupta, AIS Vas 1, XI B

lady walks down the road, with a Hermès Birkin slung casually on her arm. With every step she takes, a head turns towards her, or rather, towards the bag that's no longer just an accessory but a symbol of prestige, good way off the common populace's reach. In this quest for premiumness and exclusivity, how far along are we and further intend to be? You ask. Estimates suggest a jump from 284 billion USD in 2023 to 392 billion USD by 2030 for the luxury goods trade. A tail end, you seek? The launch of a gold butter knife embellished with gemstones might do the trick. Or perhaps not. Who knows!

### From the lap of luxury

From Rolex's timepieces to Prada's exorbitantly priced lunch cases, high-end goods have permeated almost every aspect of our life, forming as loaded an inventory as it can be. This extravagance, howbeit, bears a cost worth a king's ransom for the general lot. Case in point -Radhika Merchant's silver Hermès Kellymorphose bag from NMACC launch event. The bag that barely fits the palm of a hand is a misfit for our pockets too, being pegged at two crore INR. Despite defeating its very purpose, that of being a carry bag, the desire to acquire it reigns supreme, courtesy - luxury manufacturers who lure us by maintaining a sense of exclusivity through their limited editions gimmick. If that sounds insufficient, we see products like the Balenciaga trash bag (2,570 USD) or towel skirt (925 USD) hit the market, and through their absurdity, drawing desire. All the additional PR requirements are taken care of by unexpected partnerships. And the rest, well, the rest is in your transaction history!

### To the cot of connoisseurs

Studies indicate that the affluent class buys luxury goods to signal their affluence, and to associate with the brand's quality, design, identity, and investment value for the other. In return, having access to upscale goods, too, requires upholding a particular status that aligns with the exclusivity of products, along with a continuous financial commitment to the brand, making it more than just

a one-time expense. In fact, there are products only the rich have access to such as the Chanel Classic Flap Bag, Christian Louboutin Red-Soled Shoes et al. As for the section that cannot afford to luxuriate much, they do so every once in a while, at times sacrificing needs to desires. The Journal of Consumer Research goes as far as to suggest that this category of consumers prioritises purchasing luxury goods over basic utility goods to such an extent that they are willing to compromise on their daily expenses too. This, when a Timex watch that costs around 28 USD serves its purpose as an instrument of time tracking just as well as a Rolex one, priced at 10,000 USD.

Continued on page 4...

Illustration: Arisha Agarwal, AIS Vasundhara 1, IX D

Page editor: Harshal Sinha, AIS Vasundhara 1, X D

Do you think the rules of Citizenship Amendment Act being notified before the polling dates for 2024 Lok Sabha election will affect its ultimate results?

b) No c) Can't say

To vote check out our Instagram page @the\_global\_times

Coming next

CE AIS Guruqram 46



This special edition has been brought to you by Amity International School, Vasundhara 1, as a part of the 'GT Making A Newspaper Contest'. Each page of this unique edition carries a special story handcrafted by the school's editorial team as a part of the competition. The inter-Amity newspaper making competition witnesses different branches of Amity

schools across India churn out their own 'Contest Edition' which are pitted against one another at the end of the year, culminating with GT Awards. So, here's presenting the sixth edition of 'GT Making A Newspaper Contest 2023-24'.

### What's inside

Reaching for the stars, P3

A loafy affair, P4

SSSSelebrity memoirs, P5

Unfiltered chronicles, P6

Sleep well, P7

A leaf's life, P8

### **(10)** POLL RESULT for GT Edition December 18, 2023

Do you think the UK govt. is right to consider ousting foreign students from the country, studying on two-year graduate visas, who fail to achieve high enough grades?



**2** An ACERT Initiative



# I AM A CYBERBUDDY

An ACERT Initiative















### IT'S GROUNDBREAKING

On December 9, 2023, Amity Centre for Educational Research (ACERT) initiated the 'I am a Cyberbuddy' project under the passionate leadership of Ms Sapna Chauhan Batra, Chairperson, Amity Centre for Educational Research and Training (ACERT). The project aims to empower young learners in the age group 8-14 years across all branches of Amity Group of Schools pan India through dynamic and engaging two-hour online workshops on online safety. It recognises the importance of mastering digital skills for a successful future and hence, digital learning, digital collaboration, and digital ethics form the core of this project. 'I am a Cyberbuddy' has now become a powerful mantra, teaching children the values of care and compassion.

### **IT'S INCLUSIVE**

'I am a Cyberbuddy' initiative, under the leadership of Ms Sapna Chauhan Batra, helps in creating a comprehensive approach to digital well-being, thereby building positive online communities around the issue of cyber safety. By fostering a community of awareness and support, ACERT ensures that children not only maximise the benefits of technology but also navigate the digital world with resilience and wisdom. The activities as such focus on identifying a trusted circle, emphasising the avoidance of interactions with strangers, and refraining from clicking on unknown links. Students delve into the intricacies of cyber threats, exploring concepts such as phishing, outing, flaming, impersonation, and other forms of cyberbullying, fostering a

comprehensive understanding of responsible online behaviour. And all these are taught by aligning the timeless traditional values with contemporary online behaviour. The values of friendship, kindness, and compassion are seamlessly woven into the narrative through the stories of national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi during Gandhi Jayanti or Lord Krishna during Janmashtami. These stories then serve as a bridge, connecting past values with their practical application in online interactions. Thereby, children learn to extend the spirit of festivals to create a compassionate digital world devoid of bullying. By aligning these timeless traditional values with contemporary online behaviour, these sessions aim to cultivate a generation that actively contributes to a harmonious and respectful online community.

### IT'S EMPOWERING

### FOR STUDENTS

Amitians take a collective pledge which symbolises a dedicated commitment to fostering a culture of digital compassion and



safety. ACERT pledge posters, displayed prominently in classrooms, serve as con-

stant and positive reminders of our shared promise and commitment. The pledge also acts as a guiding principle, empowering a community that prioritises the well-being and respectful engagement of its members in the digital sphere.

### FOR TEACHERS

The cyber safety sessions aim to empower the teaching community as educators gain novel insights through positive interactions with students, understanding the delicate balance required in upskilling technological proficiency while ensuring safe online practices and behaviours.

#### FOR PARENTS

The workshop is also an integral part of Positive Parenting Partnership Program, wherein ACERT prioritises informing par-



ents regularly about the techniques discussed during cyber safety sessions and encouraging them to support their children's online safety.

By fostering an environment where open communication thrives, ACERT ensures the well-being and safety of children. This proactive approach not only educates parents, but also strengthens the collaborative efforts between parents and educators in creating a secure digital space for their children's overall development.

### IT'S IMPACTFUL

This ACERT initiative has garnered passionate participation from over 10,000 Amity students, creating a powerful wave of positive change. At ACERT, there is a steadfast belief that, in order to create a safe and sustainable future for all, children must act as active participants in the decision-making process.

### THE CYBERBUDDY FACEBOOK COMMUNITY

ACERT provides a secure haven for cyberbuddies, offering a safe space for the exchange of ideas and the celebration of shared journeys. This nurturing environment fosters positive interactions, encouraging the exploration of digital landscapes while promoting camaraderie. It also reflects ACERT's commitment to creating a supportive community in the ever-evolving digital realm.



Visit the link mentioned below to join the Cyberbuddy Facebook Community: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id =100090864926496

When the chips are down

# Reaching for the stars

Unveiling The Dreams Of ISRO Scientist Dr V Girish

Venya Verma, XI C & Kanishka Sharma, IX D, AIS Vas 1

leading figure in Indian space science, Dr V Girish, deputy director of the Science Program Office at ISRO, has made significant contributions to various ISRO missions since 2006. He has been instrumental in developing the astronomy programmes of ISRO and managing AstroSat, India's first multi-THE GLOBAL TIMES wavelength observatory

mission. Author of the book Taaregala Jeevanchakra (written in Kannada), Dr V Girish shares his insights about the world of science with GT.

### Passion for science

I never thought I could be a scientist, but my teachers saw potential in me. While doing research, I grew to love astronomy, which is one of the oldest branches of science. Anyone who marvels at a sky full of stars would want to become an astronomer; the same happened

for me. I am thrilled that AstroSat is an Indian innovation. Earlier we used to be dependent on other space agencies, but with AstroSat, we are now serving over 2000 users, with over 1000+ researchers from outside India.

### **Moon mission**

The journey started during Chandrayaan 1, where I worked on an experiment called the Radiation Dosage Monitor (RADOM). Even though I'm not directly involved with the Chandrayaan missions, my office takes care of some of its vital elements. But like any other Indian, the experience was exciting. The mere idea of Chandrayaan touching the moon's surface made our hearts throb with excitement.

### ISRO's teaching mission

ISRO runs a special programme for school children called YUVIKA (YUva VIgyani KAryakram) where we impart basic knowledge on space technology and science, like why July 21 is the longest day or December 21 the longest night etc. We are also using games as a medium to explain basic physics.

### **Decoding the disconnect**

Many think that research is a financially unstable field or that there is no work-life balance. Some feel that research is difficult, and since not everyone can win the Nobel prize, the field appears unappealing. However, the fact is that there are many options in the field and it's as rewarding as any other industry.



GT reporters with Dr V Girish

### **Overcoming stereotypes**

It's a myth that scientists are serious and boring people. Like everyone else, we are also interested in movies and music. My hobby is computer coding. In fact, I assist with translation on Linux products. Focusing on just one subject can obviously become monotonous.

#### **Scientist to writer**

My early education was in Kannada so when I noticed that there weren't many good children's books available in the language, a few of us decided to write books in Kannada for students. We also give these books to schools where children are taught in the Kannada medium. The aim is to take science even to non-English speaking children.

### **Message for Amitians**

Learn to prioritise what you want to do. Then, differentiate between seeing and observing. Work hard as there are no shortcuts to success. And lastly, keep asking questions until you find an answer!

## Visiting Knowdom Ancienta

### A Place For All The Subjects To Equally Flourish

Vanshika Sharma, AIS Saket, VIII A

INTERVIEW

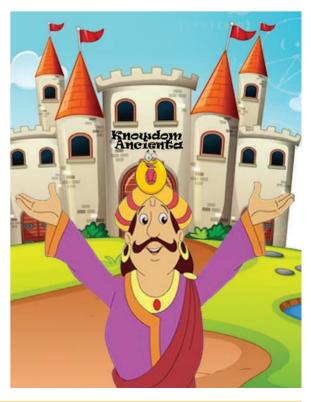
long time ago, there was a kingdom named Knowdom Ancienta. This land, where equations sprouted and grammar buzzed, was ruled by the king Science Gupt Maurya, and his Queen, Arithmati. Together they reigned their subjects who were all eagerly drawn to the fountain of wisdom.

Everyone in town revered Mrs English Vistas, a woman in her 60s, as she was a favourite amongst all subjects. Her daughter Literaturati, who spun sonnets, and her son Grammando, who took care of her at every point, lived happily together. At the behest of the king, Mrs

English Vistas opened an academy where she was given the responsibility of teaching the kingdom. As a teacher, she loved all her children but she had never encountered a child as mischievous as Mathilesh Kumar, a bright sixteen year old boy who had brains as sharp as that of Euclid. Despite his intelligence, he added complexity to situations by thoroughly calculating each step. His speech left everyone perplexed; when questioned about his age, he would respond with  $14 \div 2 + 10 - 1$ , leaving everyone confused. He even had a pet named Alzebra, whom he loved dearly. The only other friend he had was Chemistryanti who was intelligent but prone to overreacting. The

class also had the young Physicsvati, Mathilesh's cousin, who didn't want to be outshone by anyone. She lived life on the edge and enjoyed pushing things off buildings to measure their velocity. This whole bunch of craziness was rounded of by the extremely smart and knowledgeable classmate named Compudev Sciencewala. When people would bring him their issues, he would offer them a coded response which could only be decoded with help of his older brothers Python and Scratch.

Indeed, outsiders who visited Knowdom Ancienta were bewildered by the school, but those who cracked the code knew that Knowdom Ancienta was a symphony of knowledge. GII





### Jia Rajput, AIS Vas 1, X A

n the fresh city of Breadville, disputes were hard to come by because all the resident ingredients were tightly knit, a close group of friends who mingled well with each other – Miss Sugar – the ever so sweet, Master Milk - the high and mighty one, and Madame Flour, the one always bringing everyone together. And so, life in Breadville was bright and healthy, but not for long.

One day, as Miss Sugar and Master Milk sat in the neighbourhood café, discussing the recent complaints that had been flooding the city in the absence of their mayor, Her Excellency Oxygen, their eyes fell upon a new face, Mr Yeast. Being the newest resident of the city, Mr Yeast put on a charming smile and nodded. "Fancy seeing you two here! Hope I'll see you around again, especially you, Miss Sugar!" Mr Yeast, ever so cunning and mean,

bid them adieu, as a smirk over-

took his face, leaving the two be-

fuddled. "I've found my target,"

he announced to himself as he was

leaving the place.

café and

I over-

Everything seemed to fall into place for his plan as he bumped into Madame Flour on his way back home. "Oh, goodness! Is that you? I didn't think I'd see you out and about," he faked his concern. "What do you mean, Mr Yeast?" Madame Flour enquired. "Oh, nothing. I shouldn't get involved in your personal matters. We are, after all, anything but strangers.' "Hush that talk and tell me the real meaning of your words this instant, sir," Madame Flour fumed. "Well, I only suppose you ought to know what Miss Sugar has been saying behind your back," he began, settling into the lie. "I was just at the

self on a mission well accom-

heard her saying that you were too dry to be around. She also said vou were so flaky she'd rather talk to Sir Dough instead. What a shame! Well, anyway, I'll see you around." As the week continued, with Mr Yeast badmouthing Miss Sugar to everyone he met, he congratulated him-

Khanak Lal,

plished. The lies spread around the city, breaking the bonds Miss Sugar had with the residents. Mr Yeast rejoiced, while Miss Sugar, when given the malicious stares and comments, cried to herself, not knowing what she had done. Even Master Milk, her closest confidante, had turned sour, exclaiming that she was only with him to

> steal his nutrients. Her life was in disarray as she had been abandoned by the society. When she

tried to explain herself, she was ridiculed, and the bullying got

Decoding The Fermentation Cycle At Breadville



### The science of it

Fermentation is an anaerobic that converts sugar and starch into simpler substances. In bread, yeast converts sugar into carbon dioxide and alcohol in the absence of oxygen, causing the dough to rise.

so worse that she couldn't take it any long. Soon, the whispers turned deafening, and Miss Sugar, knowing that nobody would come to her defence, fled the town.

Mr Yeast rejoiced at the news and quickly called over his best friends, Mr Carbon Dioxide and Miss Alcohol. Together the three allies, in the absence of Oxygen, took over Breadville. Bonds were being broken, tension spread, and the whole town of Breadville changed forever, never to be the same ever again.

# A mind-blowing journey

## **Exploring The Limitless Horizons Of Virtual Reality**

Twisha Prasad, AIS Noida, XI I

oncealed beyond our ordinary sight lies the world of Virtual Reality (VR), a technology that unites the human mind and machine. Introduced in the 1830s by Sir Charles Wheatstone who unveiled stereopsis, revealing how binocular vision grants us depth perception. Today, VR orchestrates a simulated 3D world, fusing cutting-edge software and hardware. Evolving from Non-Immersive to Semi-Immersive to fully immersive, the tech has helped users to craft and traverse virtual landscapes.

### **Immersive gaming**

Launched as a training simulator for pilots and astronauts, VR equipment found a home in arcade games and gaming consoles in the 1990s. VR became a household name when SEGA, Nintendo, and VictorMaxx released their own headsets. VR gaming uses an arti-



ficial environment to superimpose computer games on the real world. These games are built to strengthen the belief that the player is in a virtual world. Some of the popular VR headset are HP Reverb, Meta Quest, Samsung Gear VR, etc.

### **Embracing EdTech**

A rise in technology has led to the implementation of VR in education. Virtual language learning, art education, lab environment and workforce training give the learners a handson experience. According to the Global Ed-Tech Market Outlook & Forecast Report 2022, the market for VR EdTech will reach 605.4 billion USD by 2027.

### Therapeutic transformation

VR is also being investigated in the realm of healthcare, where the users enter a simulation to calm their mind. The tech is utilised to assist people in relieving stress, combating anxiety, etc. Under the supervision of their doctors, patients who use VR exposure therapy participate in Exposure and Response Prevention psychotherapy via virtual reality. The US military is even financing research to treat PTSD in army veterans using VR.

A boundless virtual frontier awaits us all, revolutionising the future of education, entertainment, and gaming through VR. GIT

Continued from page 1

### At the expense of environment

As per the World Economic Forum report, luxury brands' high-end packaging alone accounts for around 40% of plastic use, significantly contributing to the fashion industry's annual waste production of 92 million tons. The sector is also responsible for 10% of global carbon emissions. As if that wasn't enough, these labels exploit animals too in their quest for quality resources. Every year, luxury brands use 500,000 animals for cosmetic testing, and kill another 100 million for their skin, fur et al. Gucci, for instance, makes use of "ethically and sustainably sourced" python skin for its renowned Dionysus Bag. All these facts point towards the very fact that it is us, the consumers, who have risen these brands to unprecedented heights in our quest for luxury. And it is us who can bring it all to a halt once and for all, by asking ourselves the important question, i.e., is it all really worth it?

# Since lebrity memoirs



### It's Time For Us To Bite Back!

Khanak Lal, AIS Vas 1, XI A

sn't it absolutely hissterical how the same people who make me look like the most ferocious reptile on National Geographic make me twist and turn on the beat of DJ Saperah? They make me work so much that I feel like a civil *serpant* at the end of the day, all tired and twisted. If you are still failing to grasp who I am, let me spell it out for you - I'm none other than the "snakes" every gujju boy asks for at the snacks counter. Yes, creepy crawly is what I am, and I no longer wish to dance to your desi jams.

Maybe it's time you get ready to die out of laughter and not venom because that's not my job, and I say that on behalf of 75% of our populace. The remaining 25% poisonous ones are the real culprit, specifically Inland Taipan, known for being the most venomous. But I don't blame you humans for misunderstanding us, since there are 3700 different types of us, to be specific. Equally high is the number of our charms, absence of eyelids being one of

them. What? Can you sleep with your eyes open? I do. Adding to

my mystique is my sense of smell that comes from my tongue. Confusssed? While we do have nostrils, we smell from our tongue, and excellently so, which is why it has often been described as 'smelling in stereo'. And then there's my tongue's excellent swallowing capability. How else do you think I am able to eat animals that are 75%-100% larger than my head? You know what else we are good at? Well, "math", that's why we are called pie-thons \*laughs hysterically\*.

Contrary to what you think, I wasn't always travelling from basket to basket. We have evolved from prehistoric lizards, blooming into the beautiful beings that we are today. I've set trends from Medusa's chic hairstyles to rebellious Japanese hebi tattoos. I've had my debut in the West, starring in movies like Anaconda, Snakes on a Plane, and Fangs. Our charm has even extended into the realm of cartoons and animes; kids have seen me appear on Octanauts

on the Disney channel. In Comicverse, I am seen with my good friend Obanai

from Demon Slayer. As for the bookworms and Potterheads, I know you are all waiting for me to mention my role in the Harry Potter world. I represent "Slytherin", the house of ambitious, shrewd. and achievement-oriented students. And yet all you humans do is spread rumours about us - like we all lay eggs. Honestly, if given a chance, I'd put the "leave me alone" sign outside my room to avoid any human interaction at all. This is also why I used to hang out with the Gods in ancient Greece, where I was the mighty messenger between hell and heaven, places you won't spot on the map. In fact, we have a much more renowned, superhero background in Hinduism; not to brag but cobras are associated with the big three. Lord Shiva, the one who guides all serpents, has gracefully adorned me around his neck, representing both power and bravery.

We are thus here to stay, and as the sun sets, dance gracefully on the melodies of the modern era. Slither you later!





## The good ol' gilli danda

Jiya Francis, XI F & Roshni Debaja, XII E

AIS Noida

eflecting on the pre-pandemic era evokes memories of a time when my entertainment didn't revolve around television screens or social media. Instead, I immersed myself in outdoor games, with Gilli Danda standing out as the most thrilling among them, a traditional Indian sport rooted in our cultural history for over 2000 years. Originating during the Mauryan era, Gilli Danda is played with two sticks – a larger one called a Danda and a smaller one, the Gilli. The Gilli is placed in an oval-shaped hole or between stones to stabilise it, and the striker aims to hit the Gilli with the Danda, sending it flying. Timing in this game is crucial, as a well-timed smack propels it further. Variations like incorporating running for maximum scores and introducing the concept of 'catch out' have been added over time, maintaining the game's charm. What makes Gilli Danda special is its accessibility - it requires no major expenses or gadgets, making it a game for everyone.

Despite its rich history, Gilli Danda has witnessed a decline in popularity, succumbing to the dominance of indoor video games in today's lifestyle. The prevalence of gadgets has led children away from the outdoor joys of this traditional sport, impacting them mentally and physically. Although forgotten by many, Gilli Danda holds a special place in my heart, serving as a reminder of the pure and bonding experiences of childhood.



# Nurturing excellence



Chairperson

The Olympics are a true test of an athlete's relentless pursuit of excellence, and it is to instil this same spirit in our students that the Amity Olympiad Program was instituted in 2017, under the aegis of Amity Institute for Competitive Examinations (AICE). This one-of-its kind platform gives young learners, from Class V onwards, all the necessary tools and training to compete in national and international Olympiads. The students are trained by subject experts

through meticulously designed question banks and intense doubt-clearing sessions.

Over 600 students have clinched top ranks in events like Regional Mathematics Olympiad (RMO), Indian National Mathematics Olympiad (INMO), NSEB, NSEC, NSEP, and NSEJS. In addition, more than 50 students have received NTSE scholarship. In fact, Amitians have bagged the first rank all over India in INPO 2019 and INChO 2023. What also makes me proud is that we were the first in India to start the residential Amity International Olympiad for physics, chemistry, mathematics, and biology in 2012. Till date, over 2000 students from countries like Afghanistan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, etc., have participated in the same. Students brainstorm on concepts of science and math, and share about each other's culture, over a span of 10-15 days. Participants also get to learn from experts invited from institutes like Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, DU, University of Madras, Indian Statistical Institute, etc.

### It's time to say, Hip, Hip, Hurray!

Eight students from AIS Vasundhara 6 became the national winners, as well as toppers from the Noida region, in the CBSE Reading Challenge 2023-24. The month-long annual challenge aims to hone language and literacy skills of the students.

## The first chapter



Raina Krishnatray Principal AIS Vasundhara 1

As we begin with the first chapter of 2024, a canvas unfurls before us, painted with new hopes, promises, and the anticipation of undiscovered triumphs. In the pages of the first edition of 2024, we extend a warm embrace to a year brimming with positivity and success.

Under the visionary leadership of respected Chairperson ma'am, Amitians are not mere students but ambassadors of 21st-century skills - leadership, critical

thinking, social and cultural competence, and the art of effective problem-solving. These skills are the compass that directs them toward a larger narrative and a future steeped in success.

The Global Times, a cherished platform for Amitians, resonates with the echoes of Amity's vibrant thoughts and ideas. This edition, meticulously crafted by the unwavering dedication of our students and mentors, sets the stage for the year ahead. It is not just an edition; it is a proclamation, a celebration of the potential and promise that accompanies the dawn of a new year. May the words within these pages inspire you to embrace the unfolding chapters of 2024 with renewed enthusiasm. Welcome to the first edition of the year, an ode to the collective brilliance that defines the hard work of the editorial board of AIS Vas 1. Here's to a year full of growth and in pursuit of excellence.



Pic: Shivanshi Chakraborty, AIS Vasundhara 1, XI C

### Here's To Embracing My Not-So-Insta-Worthy Life

Harshal Sinha, AIS Vasundhara 1, X D

esthetic nahi lagega yaar!" Have you ever made use of this statement at a "picture-perfect" place? How often do you trade savouring the moment for a few likes and comments? Do you recall the last time you soaked in a sunset, instead of sharing it on your stories? In a world seemingly obsessed with Instagrammable moments, I've, however, consciously chosen not to flash my life out there for everyone to see. My life isn't a series of snapshots meticulously curated to impress my followers, and I'm perfectly okay with that. There's a profound richness to my unfiltered, unposted experiences, and it's precisely that richness I've come to embrace and celebrate.

The world uploads some 1.8 billion photos every day! But does this expose us to opportunities to explore, or has social media made everybody accessible for comparison? Studies show that posts, likes, and comments greatly contribute to anxiety and feelings of perfectionism, even more so among teens. Almost 88% of young adults active on social media tend to hold unrealistic expectations of how they should dress, what they should do, and all that they need to pursue.

Social media, in collaboration with its influencers, has kindled our obsession with projecting only the crème de la crème of our lives, which in turn has fostered a space where flaws and struggles - and all that makes us human - are often swept under the virtual rug. As per a study by the Child Welfare League Foundation, more than 90% of social media users routinely follow influencers, and about a third of those have a propensity to copy them.

The influencers, too, are not immune to the adversity that comes with being entangled in the online world. The pressure to produce fresh, interesting content every day is mounting, and it takes a toll on their mental health. Several influencers have come forward to talk about the constant pressure to not lose their audience, along with the insufferable trolls that nag at their mental health. Choosing to embrace my life's imperfections in the midst of this "social media perfection" has allowed me to break out from this pattern. What do you mean by "it didn't happen if I didn't post about it?" Of course, it did. It did because I revelled in that unfiltered moment, whether it was my messy room after finally painting my wall, or an early sunrise with my hair all tangled up.

So, while many are fussing over the perfect pictures for their "fall dump", I've chosen to live in real, raw moments. My life is a delicacy of authentic moments, and even when the masala is too much or too less, it doesn't require validation from anyone but myself, because however it is, it is genuine and most importantly, mine.

## Ensemble of thoughts

Our actions are born from our thoughts, our thoughts are the product of our values, and those values come from our belief system. Respected Chairperson ma'am has embedded these values within Amitians, shaping them to confidently embrace the world through articulate expression of their thoughts.

The key to fantastic writing lies in concise articulation, and The Global

Times has skillfully showcased a diverse array of artistic and scientific expressions, each bearing the unique signature of our students. Delving

into the creative minds of the writers and poets of AIS Vas 1, one witnesses a perennial outpouring of creativity, resulting in an impressive



Debosmita Mukherjee GT Coordinator

collection of passionate writings. As the editorial board of AIS Vas 1 proudly presents this prismatic publication as a harbinger of hope and love, I, as their mentor, express my gratitude to the GT team for guiding the students throughout. The editorial team has set in motion a magical ball that

promises to both soothe and stimulate the reader's mind. So, let's immerse ourselves in the world of reading yet again, shall we?

Seconis a natural phenomenon that has been gracefully woven into the existence of every species on earth. For most of us, it is nothing more than a simple routine where we just close our eyes and encounter vivid dreams. However, it is a complex journey that we experience every single day. Read on as Abhay Sharma, AIS Vasundhara 1, X A, navigates us through the different types and stages of sleep.

Illustrations: Abhay Sharma, X A & Divisha Mohanty, XI D, AIS Vas 1

One sleep cycle lasts for 90-110 minutes and is further divided into four stages. The first three stages (N1, N2 & N3) fall under NREM (Non-Rapid Eye Movement) phase while the last stage is REM (Rapid Eye Movement). Also, each sleep cycle gets repeated four-six times.

accounts for more than 50% of the time we sleep. Your heartbeat and breathing become more regular, eye movement stops, and muscles relax further. The brain releases theta waves (four- eight The first five-ten mi-

hertz) which are accompanied by nutes involve a transisleep spindle brainwaves and single-long delta waves. Here, you wakefulness to sleep. let everything go and embrace Here you 'drift' into sleep. sleep like an old friend. The body begins to show

Known as light sleep, this stage

This is a period of deep sleep where no external noise min can wake you up. The muscles are completely relaxed, blood pressure

drops, and breathing slows as you progress into the deepest sleep. At this stage, the brain produces slow delta waves (0.5 four hertz) which become dominant, thus putting your brain in the process of resting and regenerating. Even the loudest of alarm clock cannot wake ψου υρ.

The deepest part of sleep, REM is all about rapid eye movements and completely inhibited motor neurons. The brain intentionally paralyses

REM 10-60

your muscles and brainwaves of fast and low amplitude are released. Your heart rate speeds up and breathing pattern becomes irregular. The key aspect of this stage is dreaming, along with emotional processing, memory consoli-

> dation, brain development (in case of infants), as well as wakefulness preparation.

When we fall asleep, our sleep cycle begins to function in two phases namely Non-REM (NREM) and REM (Rapid eye movement).

### Non-REM



tion between

changes which include

brain, heartbeat, eye move-

ments, and breathing slow-

ing down. Gradually, you

experience drowsiness

because of the alpha

waves (three - 13

hertz) produced by

the brain. You feel re-

laxed but, at the same

<mark>time, can wake up easily.</mark>



Sleep is restorative & accounts for 80% of the sleep time. It is marked by a reduction

of physiological activity as bodily functions slow down & is regulated by brain structures - thalamus & cerebral cortex. Moreover, each stage here highlights unique characteristics.





Referred to as rapid eye movement, this phase is marked by in-

tense brain activity  $\delta$  is regulated by the brainstem. REM sleep takes place after the brain passes through stages of non-REM sleep & occurs approx. every 90 min.

From lengthy siestas to power naps, here's diverse sleep schedules of various species around the globe.





Page editor: Divisha Mohanty, AIS Vasundhara 1, XI D

# THE LOST WONDE

Kanishka Sharma

AIS Vasundhara 1, IX D

liked my leisurely pace of life. As a small-time detective chasing petty thieves and recovering lost cats, I was the master of my time, and mostly spent my day keeping track of the intriguing and daring adventures of the great Sherlock Holmes. Lit-

tle did I know that all of this was about to change when I woke up one morning to the chilly October breeze. I had poured myself a cup of tea and turned on the radio when came the announcement, "The seven wonders of the world have vanished! Since Mr Holmes is on vacation, the Scotland Yard has assigned his cousin Mr Miles Lambert the task of finding the world. It was chaotic, but also time for me to prove that I deserved the honour.

I took the first flight out to the alleged crime scene - Bangalore, India. While navigating through the city, I inquired about the precise time of the robbery. To my surprise, they told me a pretty exact time - 2:21 am. As I investigated further, I was led to the letter 'S' inscribed in Hindi, but I

proved that the thief was a skilled professional. Undeterred, I embarked upon my journey to Seychelles, where the second robbery had occurred, once again at 2:21 pm, with the letter 'S' scripted in Mandarin. This pattern was repeated in all the other locations. However, a significant departure from the pattern emerged at Machu Picchu, where I discovered both 'S' and 'H' at the crime scene. Reluctantly, I began to suspect a particular individual, al-

though his motive remained unclear.

Not wanting to declare to the police what I suspected, I went

straight to confront him myself. As I walked into 221B Baker Street, I saw Holmes, the legendary detective, looking completely dishevelled and weary. While confronting him, I wasn't expecting a direct answer, but Holmes surprisingly confessed to the crime. He told me he had or-

Read Play

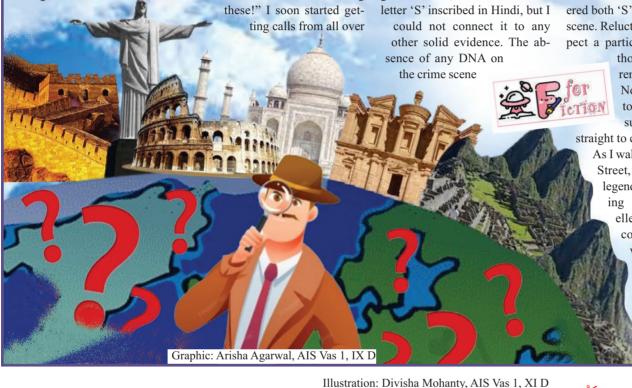
chestrated the

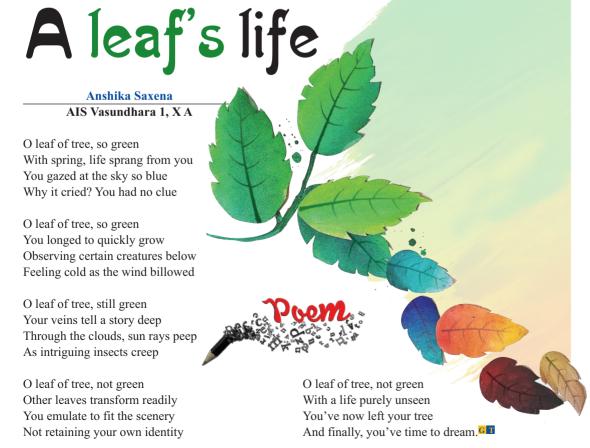
Little did I know that all of this was about to change when I woke up one morning to the chilly October breeze.

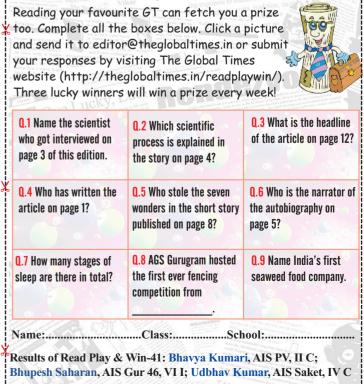
thefts and clues to engineer his own capture, seeking an escape from the 'detective life' he had grown tired of. "It's time for me to pass on the

mantle, Miles. And only you can do justice to my legacy," he said. His final act was even more poignant, as he left everything behind for me, including the iconic address from where he had helped the world solve the most complex of mysteries.

The police eventually recovered all the seven wonders, but did not charge Holmes for obvious reasons. After all, he was almost a 'national treasure'. A few weeks later. I found out that Holmes had retired to Sussex. I wish I could have told him that his absence would be felt much more than his presence was ever noticed. And that certainly is the true legacy of a great detective.







Se Caral III Min Se Mi Juan CANDHI I I Taran

# The road less travelled

AIS Vas 1
2028-24

### Unveiling The Harrowing Realities Of The 'Donkey Route'

Samaira Verma

AIS Vasundhara 1, XI C

The recent detention of the France-Nicaragua flight, that was carrying over 300 passengers and got grounded over suspected human trafficking, sent shockwaves through the nation, illuminating the shadowy and infamous 'Donkey Route'. Rerouted with some 276 passengers onboard, the flight landed in India on December 26, 2023, after intense questioning of the passengers that shed light on their harrowing ordeal and the desperation that drove them to embark on this perilous journey to reach the country of their dreams, albeit illegally. The term Donkey or Dunki has since been making rounds on the internet, with the recently released Shahrukh Khan starrer Bollywood film 'Dunki' further fuelling the discourse. But beyond the buzzwords and jargons lies a brutal reality of these routes for us to decode. Read on...

### What is the donkey route?

The Donkey route, also known as 'Dunki' - the regional pronunciation of the word in Punjabi - is a well-known yet unlawful immigration route used to enter the US, UK, Canada, and other first-world countries. The term essentially refers to hopping from place to place to reach the destination illegally. Driven by the aspiration to relocate to developed nations,

young individuals, particularly those from South Asian and African countries, go on a circuitous path toward achieving their dreams. Data from US Customs and Border Protection indicates that, in 2023 alone, over 2.8 million migrants attempted to enter the country illegally and were stopped by the law enforcement agencies. And the numbers are rising annually. However, the issue is not limited to being apprehended; there are several hazards involved, such as going days without food and having to cross rivers, forests, and oceans to avoid being caught.

### Why the donkey route?

Several factors, including economic opportunities and rising levels of unemployment, contribute to the appeal of taking the donkey route, despite the dangers involved. People belonging to the lower or middle class who wish to go abroad for a new and better life, but cannot opt for legal means due to lack of money or qualification go for such routes. The village of Dingucha, in Gujarat, is famous for having at least one member of each family migrate to the USA or Canada. Recently, in 2022 to be precise, Dingucha hit the headlines after an Indian family of four froze to death while attempting to illegally enter the US via the Canadian border.

### The perilous donkey trek

To make the multi-hop journey, in-

dividuals pay upwards of 70-80 lakh INR to agents, who take advantage of any legal loopholes or have links with criminal smuggling networks across the European Union's Schengen Area. These agents help individuals embark on the journey by first creating a trail of fake documentation and even fake English language test scores. The exact route varies as per the destination country and their prevailing border policies. But once the journey commences, it involves traveling from the parent country

to an unsuspecting tourist destination, typically with a visa-on-arrival policy like Ecuador, Bolivia, Guyana, Brazil, and Venezuela. And then embarking on a perilous land journey lasting anywhere between 7-8 days, often culminating in a treacherous trek through the Darien Gap, a dense and dangerous jungle on the border of Colombia and Panama. A study estimates a mortality rate of 4-8% for those traveling through the Darien Gap, and the remains of

those who die are neither recovered nor reported, hence this figure is nowhere close to the actual number of lives lost.

### Dark side of going donkey

The donkey route is fraught with a multitude of perils along the way. The Darien Gap is notorious for its unforgiving terrain, flash floods, and wild animals. The dense jungles, with no roads or mountains

and river streams, prove to be plagued with various challenges. Many people die due to starvation, many get killed by

animals, or fall off the mountain cliffs, and some die on the way due to extreme weather conditions. The unscrupulous agents often prey upon the desperation of individuals who end up selling their farms, homes, and their entire life's savings. The physical and emotional toll of the journey is so immense that it can leave lasting scars on the psyche of the dunkers. According to a report published by UNODOC, several cases of migrants drowning in unsafe vessels and suffocating to death in overcrowded truck compartments and ships have come to light. One such accident took place in 1996,

> 283 migrants, a majority of whom were from Punjab, drowned in the Mediterranean

when

Sea after their overcrowded boat capsized on the way to Italy.

### **Seeking solutions for donkeys**

The human cost of the donkey route is undeniably huge, and countless individuals lose their lives while attempting this route. However, due to the rising trend of illegal immigration, various countries around the world have taken strict measures and are continuously strengthening and monitoring their border and security control systems by using new-age cameras, drones, intelligent fencing systems, etc, at their borders. One of the major examples of border security enhancement is when the Tijuana border fence was made at the US-Mexican border during Donald Trump's Presidency. Today, the fence presents a formidable challenge to the immigrants due to its great height.

Conclusively, the donkey route serves as a sobering reminder of the extreme lengths individuals are ready to take in their pursuit of a better life. While the allure of living in a developed nation may be tempting, the risks involved in the process are too great to be ignored. Ensuring that vulnerable individuals do not become entangled in the webs of agents and traffickers and are not taken advantage of in their hasty pursuit of a better future is the only way in which we can effectively tackle this concerning issue.

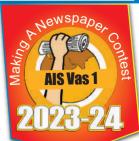


## **Ground Reporting**

# **Creating waves with seaweed**



GROUND REPORTING The Good Ocean: Bringing Nutrition To The Table 2019



Anshika Saxena & Jia Rajput

AIS Vasundhara 1, X A

eaweed'. There is no way you have not heard of it, unless you have been living under an ocean (pun intended). Replete with regenerative properties, highly sought-after in the beauty industry, and offering potential usage in fertilizers, health supplements and bioplastics; seaweed is the next 'it' thing. Harnessing the untapped potential of this magic ingredient, is The Good Ocean, a Goa based company that ethically harvests and processes indigenous seaweed from the coast of Goa.

### **Diving deep**

As a trained ecologist with a masters in conservation biology, Gabriella D'Cruz, founder of The Good Ocean, spent a lot of time working with coral reef ecosystems along India's coastline. During one of her visits in Tamil Nadu, she met a community of women who collected seaweed and sold it in the market. This gave D'Cruz the idea to start a company. "There are over 800 indigenous species along the coast of India, and nearly all of them are edible. I wanted to create a sustainable seaweed supply chain. And currently, we are India's first sea-



weed food company supplying seaweed to niche restaurants," she says.

### **Staying afloat**

Being an entrepreneur comes with many challenges and more so if the product is a relatively unknown one. Agrees D'Cruz, "Seaweed is an alien product. It's not like your regular coffee. I had to do a lot of innovation to make seaweed appealing."

The company started out initially with cultivation of seaweed, but was met with challenges like water temperature, disease outbreaks, cyclones etc that made it difficult to continue farming. Hence, the company was forced to change route. "Right now, we



are only harvesting seaweed, predominantly a species called Sargassum Schwartz, which is most abundantly available in Goa." The company follows strict guidelines to cause the least amount of damage to the ecosystem. By identifying tide pools where there's enough seaweed, the seaweed is cut from a certain height. "We don't pull it out from the roots and that's how the seaweed keeps growing. Once harvested, we take it to our processing unit, clean and dry it, and then package it and sell it to restaurants." The venture also entails the hurdles of being a labour intensive process. "There is always need for people who are skilled and finding them can be quite a task," she adds.

### Swimming ahead

For The Good Ocean, the first year of its operations has been successful and this bodes well for its future as well. "There's so much potential for the company to grow. Apart from restaurants, there are various other high value markets where seaweed can do well, like the beauty industry, given that several Korean and Europeans skincare brands have seaweed," she propounds. The future challenge is to educate people about how seaweed forests are important for local biodiversity. "Seaweed supports our local fish stock, helps absorb carbon so it's really important for climate mitigation, it buffers coastlines from storm surges, and is the base of the oceanic food chain. So, while harvesting seaweed, we have to make sure that we protect the seaweed forest. It is a shame that several people have begun to grow invasive species, or species not native to India, which is harmful for our environment," she says.

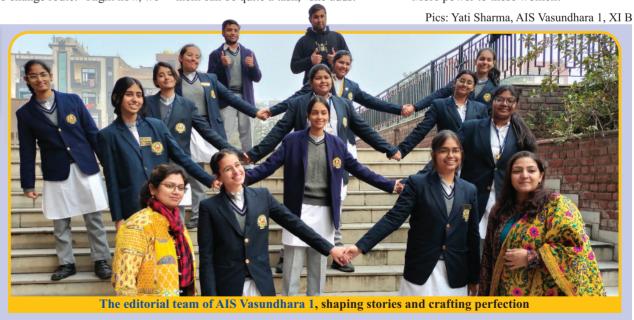
While D'Cruz is in the forefront of calling out such people, she is also optimistic that a booming seaweed industry will encourage many women in coastal communities to find employment, as seaweed harvesting is an inshore activity and closer to their homes. More power to these women!





The editors, brainstorming ideas





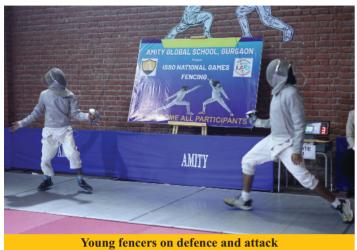




For more pictures, log on to www.facebook.com/theglobaltimesnewspaper or www.instagram.com/the global times

# **ISSO National Games**

### First Ever Fencing Tournament At AGS Gurugram





AGS Gurugram

The school played proud host to the first ever fencing competition held as part of the fifth annual International Schools Sports Organisation (ISSO) National Games, from November 4- 5, 2023. The school also bagged several accolades at the exciting two-day event which witnessed the participation of 200 young fencers from 28 eminent schools across India. The tournament was graced by the presence of Harpreet Singh, secretary general, Delhi State for Fencing Association and executive member, Fencing Association of India. It was also attended by Gaurav Dixit, director (collaborations), ISSO, and Abhishek Saraswat, admin head (ISSO) and senior sports consultant, Amity Group of Schools. The competition was held in three categories, namely under-14, under-17, and under-19, and the participants competed in individual and team events using three weapons, i.e., epee, foil, and sabre. The school clinched 28 medals in total (7 gold, 6 silver, and 15 bronze) and was declared the winner.

The gold medal winners for the competition were: Aashi (VIII), Gavin Jog and Utkarsh Chauhan (IX), Anushree Khandelwal (X), Vanya Mehta (XI), Arnav Agarwal and Sucheer Sajit Menon (XII). Silver medal baggers were

Darsh Bisht (VII), Aarush Verma and Gavin Jog (IX), Shivansh Singh and Veer Pratap Singh (XI), and Venuka Rison Joseph (XII). The ones who hauled up the bronze medals were: Shreyank Singh (VI), Rudrakshi Takkar (VIII), Swastik Rana, Mayank Sharma, Ankit Kumar, Abhinav Monga, Utkarsh Chauhan, Aarush Verma and Saanchi Dalmia (IX), Eshaan Yadav, Samriddhi Fogat and Tiya Vermani (X), and Sucheer Sajit Menon and Aryan Singh Manral (XII).

This first of its kind competition added another feather to AGS Gurugram's hat for being the praiseworthy host. The students displayed exemplary skills and sportsmanship at the event.

## It's the readers' world

### AIS Vasundhara 6

he junior and senior teams of the school emerged as national winners as well as toppers of the Noida region in the CBSE Reading Challenge held online in the month of October in both English and Hindi. The month long quiz held annually aimed at honing the reading skills of children and exposing them to the important components of language. The result of the quiz was declared on December 21, 2023. Winners in the junior category were Tannishtha Gupta (Class VI), Shashwat Jain (Class VI), Naisha Das (Class VII) and Shreeya Gunupur (Class VI) while in the senior category, Mishel Agarwal and Riddhi Singh



Senior category (L-R): Charvi, Mishel, Shubhi & Riddhi Junior category (L-R): Shashwat, Tannishtha, Shreeya & Naisha

(Class X), Shubhi Gupta (Class IX), and Charvi Agarwal (Class VIII) bagged the laurels.

During the challenge, they read a diverse range of texts with accuracy and had to also construct meaning, draw inferences, and reflect upon the given material. There were passages on King Ashoka, endangered animals, nature conservation, and a particularly challenging passage was the case study on urban lifestyle and its varied repercussions.



## **Robotronics '23**

### AIS Gurugram 46

he school hosted its tenth Robotronics, an annual inter-school robotech championship for Class III-XII on November 3, 2023. A total of 22 teams and 100 participants from various schools of Delhi-NCR participated in a plethora of competitions aimed at challenging innovation and designing prowess in building robots. Students from Amity also bagged several awards in various competitions. AIS Mayur Vihar won first prize in en-

cryptid and junior robotics, and AIS Pushp Vihar won first prize in scratch. AIS Gurugram 43 bagged third prize in photography while AIS Mayur Vihar bagged third prize in group discussion and gaming. Paint 3D had AIS Noida and AIS Vasundhara 1 win second and third prize respectively. AIS Gurugram 46 bagged third prize in app development. Creative designathon had AIS Mayur Vihar win second prize while creative hackathon saw AIS Saket win the third prize. AIS Saket also bagged third prize in senior robotics.

## **Adolescent summit**



### AIS Vasundhara 6

team of three students from Class XI (Keertana Harish, Siya Makhija, and Aashee) participated in a three-day National Adolescent Leadership Summit on life skills, mental health, safety, and well-being organised by CBSE in collaboration with Expressions India at National Bal Bhawan from December 19-21, 2023. The team exhibited multiple posters and displays, which highlighted the ideas of Inclusive Education and Social & Emotional Quotient, and showcased benefits of different asanas of yoga through the unique spinning wheel.

The team bagged special jury award in Sur Sangam (classical dance) and Mindsmart (national health and wellness quiz), and impressed the audience with their powerful performances in *nukkad natak*.

The event was graced by news anchor Rajat Sharma; Nidhi Chhibber, chairperson, CBSE; Joseph Emmanual, director (academics) CBSE, and Dr Praggya M Singh, joint director (assessments), CBSE. A total of 900 students from 220 schools across India participated in the event designed to share the best practices for enriching adolescent life-skills like critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and interpersonal relationships.

# ACTIVITY

Abhay Sharma, AIS Vas 1, X A

It definitely can heal a broken heart Bring smile to the saddest faces Who doesn't crave pakodas & tea When sky begins to weep and wail? No celebration is complete without it Whether it is weddings or birthdays Its flavours, complex yet simple They never fail to surprise & amaze It can make the worst of days bearable Tell me, dear reader, that if I offer Will you be able to resist blue lays?

### Dear diary,

Snacking in the dead of the night without getting noticed is like going on a spy mission. Over the years, I have mastered my skills to ninja level precision. Picture this: tiptoeing as silent as a mouse, as if I'm about to steal the

crown jewels, except it's just chips. Ready for the risk of getting caught, and most importantly, leaving no evidence behind. To summarise, snacking is not meant for the faint-hearted. But who can resist the temptation of biting into a flaky yet masaledaar samosa, or a creamy and sweet bar of milk chocolate? Ah! Just speaking of these makes my mouth water. Oh, excuse me, for it's time for an artist to perform his art.

Eternally hungry, A serial snacker

### Dear diary,

This pain is actually very difficult to bear; I cannot take any more sorrow and pain. This world is such a cruel and barbaric place, and such deception won't be tolerated! Why are there sewing needles in a box of cookies? Oh, what inhu-



mane world! A lump forms in my throat as tears blur my vision to no end. Oh, why did this have to happen to me! My innocent heart only wanted a taste of buttery, sweet cookies, but no! Dear diary, lesson learned. Trust no one, especially when it comes to food. There's only one cure for my broken heart - onto a bowl of Maggi.

> Disgruntled. A cookie casualty

### Dear diary,

When will people stop making abominations of food? It was a

fine Tuesday afternoon when I stumbled upon a video that shattered my innocent 15-year-old soul. Fanta Maggi, chocolate pizza, Oreo pakoda – who in their right mind thought these abominations would taste anything but revolting? My heart aches with culinary sorrow. Is there any provision for taking legal action against such a heinous act? My eyes are welling up as I pen down these words. I'm not made for such a world. If anyone reads this diary anytime in the future, consider this a plea for help. Please take me to a place where food is given the respect it so rightfully deserves. I dream of that heaven!

Distraught, A culinary critic



Pic: Devvan Rathour, IX A | Model: Jivisha Sharma, III B: AIS Vasundhara 1

### Dear diary,

After contemplation, I've realised that the answer to all worldly problems is tasty food. If the person who came up with the concept of exams would have sat down for pizza before committing such blasphemy, would they have succeeded in devising the neverending torment? No! Food has always been the solution to all of my plights. Feeling low? Eat some chips. Feeling happy? Rejoice by eating some fries and don't forget to get a burger on the side. Feeling guilty for eating too much junk food and snacks? Fall into the depths of sweetness and a tinge of bitterness with a piece of brownie. It's that simple!

Craving momos, A snack philosopher

Pics: Shivanshi Chakraborty, AIS Vasundhara 1, XI C





The team of AIS Vas 1: Shining through the GT city with funk and soul



**Associate editor: Aditi Gupta**