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# SUGAR and spice...

...Of Becoming A Star Entrepreneur, As Decoded By Vineeta Singh



Anwasha Sinha & Palak Chopra  
AGS Gurugram, X

Vineeta Singh, co-founder and CEO, of SUGAR Cosmetics, an innovative entrepreneur, and a driving force in the realm of beauty, is a trailblazer whose vision has reshaped the industry. With prestigious awards like 'Start-up of the year' by Entrepreneur Awards, Delhi (2019), 'W-Power Award' by Forbes India (2021), 'BW Disrupt 40 Under 40' Award by Business-world (2021) & being included at number five in Impact's 50 Most Influential women list (2023), in her kitty, her journey embodies confidence, resilience, creativity, and most of all, commitment.

## The beginning of a story

I was 17 when I actually realised that I wanted to be an entrepreneur. I got into IIT Madras, followed by IIM Ahmedabad, and landed a cushy job but declined it because I wanted to turn my teenage dream into a reality. When my first startup didn't scale as desired, along with my co-founder Kaushik, I decided to launch a beauty subscription company in the year 2012. The 200,000 women who shared their detailed beauty preferences with us were at the heart of forming SUGAR Cosmetics.

When we launched SUGAR in 2015, we were very clear that we wanted a brand name with a high recall, international appeal, and will be loved by young women. We wanted it to represent emotions that women identify

with - that is to have fun, be playful, and be unstoppable. And so, we ran an opinion poll on social media, giving our users five options vis-à-vis brand names to choose from. Out of the five names, SUGAR emerged as the most loved name, and the rest as they say is history.

## The challenges on the way

Like any other aspiring entrepreneur, we were also faced with several roadblocks, the prime amongst them being the hunt for capital. However, things tend to get a tad bit tougher when you are a woman entrepreneur. I still

remember it was 2012-13 when we were scouring for investors and were told things like "We don't invest in solo women founders". Some potential investors even shared their past experiences with women entrepreneurs, who stopped focusing on the business after having a family. Traversing through, we realised that challenges and hurdles are part and parcel of everyone's journey. However, with time, I have learnt that it all starts with making up our mind that we are going to do this really well.

## The opportunities we tap

In the past ten years, we have seen a growing awareness about beauty products coupled with a surge in demand for premium personal grooming products and improved purchasing power among women. The Indian cosmetic industry is growing at a rate of 13%-18%, much higher when compared to international

markets, and is expected to touch 20 billion USD by the year 2025. Amongst various other factors, social media has played a key role in the vast growth of this sector. It has enabled businesses to increase their reach and visibility, improve customer engagement, etc. We at SUGAR Cosmetics have tried our best to tap into the power of social media, leveraging our influencer marketing. And the results are there for all to see, with SUGAR becoming India's first consumer beauty brand to have 2.8 million followers on Instagram.

## The journey we tread

Luck is indeed an intriguing factor that often finds its way into the entrepreneurial journey. While it's not something I can directly control, I do acknowledge its presence and impact to some extent. However, I place a greater emphasis on creating a solid foundation for SUGAR Cosmetics by focusing on sound business practices, staying attuned to market trends, and consistently delivering value to our customers. We aim to maximise opportunities and mitigate the impact of unfavourable circumstances - all while embracing the unpredictable nature of luck along the way. My message to everyone aspiring to be an entrepreneur is to never give up on your dreams, never be shy of failures, instead, learn from them and move ahead. Believe in yourself and your abilities, and you will achieve great things because fear kills more dreams than failure ever will.

INTERVIEW



Vineeta Singh, co-founder & CEO, SUGAR Cosmetics

Book Review

**Book:** Ikigai: The Japanese Secret To A Long and Happy Life

**Author:** Hector Garcia & Francesc Miralles

**Published in:** April 2016

**Genre:** Non-fiction

**Synopsis:** Ikigai (iki meaning life and gai meaning to be worthwhile) roughly translates to a sense of purpose, and that is exactly what the self-help book is all about. Divided into nine chapters, it discusses the enchanting secrets of living a long and a happy life, along with the different aspects upon which the life of an individual depends. Based on the lifestyle of inhabitants of Okinawa (located in south of Japan), who reportedly live longer than people anywhere else in the world, the book

## Finding ikigai

talks of the convergence of four components of ikigai: what you love, what you are good at, what the world needs and what you can be paid for. This combination fills us with passion, mission, vocation and profession. Further, the novel highlights how we can extend our lifespan by improving our diet routine by eating only about 80% of our hunger. Garcia and Miralles also share the secrets of Japan's population being so active. There is, in fact, no concept of 'retirement' in Japan, in the sense of 'leaving the workforce for good', but rather the book shares various ways of living a happy and a longer life, offering an insight into how one should eat, move,

work, and successfully contribute within their community.

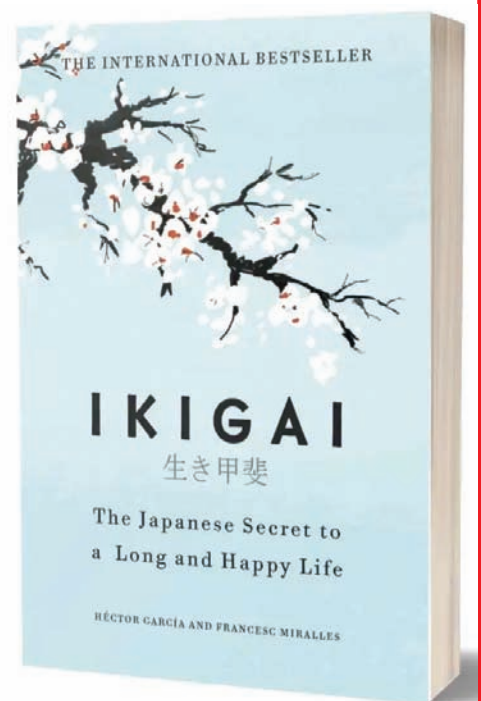
**Why is it worth reading:** It is an inspiring and uplifting book which acts as a guide for people who aspire to live a long, calm, and simple life. The Japanese zen philosophy cited in the book stimulates individuals to unearth their own ikigai. The novel encourages people to nurture their friendships and find their purpose, providing life-changing tools to do so.

**Iconic quote:** "Appreciate the beauty of imperfection as an opportunity for growth."

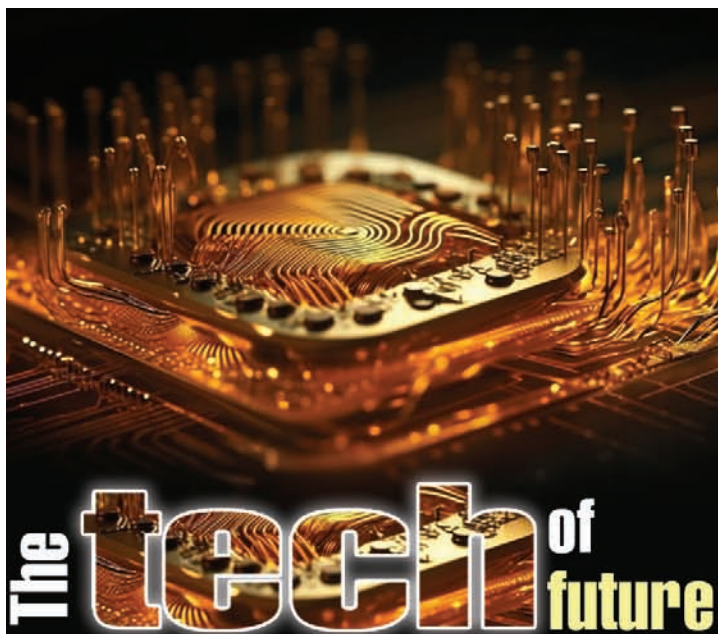
**Rating:** 4.5/5

**Review by:** Bhaavya Asthana

AIS VKC Lucknow, IX A







## The tech of future

### Grasping Quantum Computers

Twisha Prasad  
AIS Noida, XI I

When we talk of technology, we cannot help but notice how it has taken a drastic turn in its advancements, especially when the conversation comes to the development of quantum computers. Marking a significant milestone in the technological realm, they combine amazing processing capability with detailed complexity, and possess the potential to impact various industries because of their capabilities being much beyond than that of traditional computers. Having the ability to perform previously unthinkable tasks by utilising the special capabilities of quantum physics, these quantum computers majorly have two qualities – superposition and entanglement.

When we talk of these two major qualities – superposition specifically – it becomes crucial to understand that quantum computers use qubits, which can be in several states at once, as opposed to traditional computers that use bits that can only be in a state of 0s or 1s. As a result of this concept, quantum computers can investigate numerous possibilities concurrently, and can effectively execute computations on all of those possible solutions at once. It is similar to flipping a coin but with both the heads and tails facing upwards. Sounds futuristic, right?

Coming to its other qualities, entanglement is yet another remarkable characteristic, because no matter how far apart they are, two or more quantum particles can now instantly correlate with each other, all thanks to this concept of entanglement. When particles are entangled, they effectively constitute a single system, and no matter how far apart they are physically, even a single change in the state of one particle instantly affects the other. This phenomenon, commonly referred to as ‘spooky action at a distance’ by Albert Einstein, enables concurrent computations on entangled particles in quantum computers, unleashing enormous computational capacity. This is similar to how clocks synchronise our technological world, keeping things like stock markets and GPS systems in line.

In conclusion, quantum computing is a fascinating technological frontier that has the potential to fundamentally alter the field of science and technology. Possessing an incredible power to solve complicated problems, these quantum computers can revolutionise industries like chemistry, logistics, and cryptography by their ability to take advantage of superposition and entanglement. Though much more about them needs to be studied, one can say, with certainty, that their profound future influence will pave the way for new fields of study and invention.

Graphic: Anika Garg, AGS Gurugram, XI

# Debbie's discovery

## Search Of Science Behind Sound's Magic

Avikshit Sahil Upadhyay  
AGS Gurugram, XII

There once was a brave little girl named Debbie who always dreamt of going on an adventure, but because Debbie suffered from a severe hearing impairment, her mother feared for her safety and forbade her from adventure. “You won’t be able to hear threats coming, Debbie,” she would say.

Despite her mother’s warnings, Debbie snuck out one day and went to the royal river, which was known to grant wishes. She approached the river, thrilled by breaking her confines. With hopeful optimism, she dipped her hand into the river and said, “Oh, royal river, I wish to be able to hear.” Debbie waited, but nothing happened. Crushed, Debbie stood up and turned around to find herself facing a deer! She screamed, losing her footing on the bank and slipping into the river. She tried in vain to resist the current

but was ultimately swept below the surface.

Debbie woke

up in a defeated daze to find herself in a forest. She took a step. Crunch! “Ahhh”, she shrieked, terrifying herself with her own screech. Crunch! Snap! Woosh! Closing her eyes, Debbie fell onto the forest’s floor as the wind wrapped her.

The wind’s wailing calmed and everything fell silent. Accompanied by the uncertain sounds of her breathing, she stood up. Crack! A twig snapped beneath her palm and created a thrilling sound. Woosh! The wind had a resurgence and enveloped Debbie in a mystical aura. She was in utter disbelief.

Debbie heard the forest. The crack of twigs, rustling of the leaves, rhythmic calls of the beautiful birds, squeaks of the squirrel playing around on the branches; she heard all of it.

Woosh. Woosh. Woosh! As she adventured, she realised that the whimsical wooshes appeared and disappeared as she observed new sounds, as if the sound triggered the wind. Mystified yet determined, Debbie followed her instincts and questioned.

“Oh, great wind! How am I able to hear? Why does your breath blow only when I hear something?”

Which magic spell is this?”

The air around Debbie swirled, coalescing into a cloud like manifestation of the wind. “Your wish, Debbie. You wanted to be able to hear the world and for that reason, I swirl around you today. I’m the great wind. You see, what you are hearing is something known as sound.” “Oh, yes! Mom told me,” confirmed Debbie. “When you break a twig, the force of the snap creates a disturbance, a vibration. You disturb my peaceful slumber and I, the great wind, carry this disturbance from the twig and spread it all around. As I blow, I transfer this vibration from one miniscule particle to another. The vibration goes in all directions, for I am a fair power, yet I am not without my limits as eventually, the vibration dissipates, never to be heard again! My siblings liquid and solid do the same thing, but even they must go through me to reach you.” “I truly loved this experience, but my mother must be worried. Please return me to the royal river.” “Ask and ye shall receive.” Woosh! Debbie found herself back on the bank of the river. With an appreciation for sound, she embarked on an adventure to use her newfound knowledge to one day help all like her to have their wishes come true.

### The science of it

Sound travels when vibrations created by the objects produce pressure waves which disturb the particles in the surrounding medium (air, water or solid objects), and those particles disturb others next to them, and so on.







# The dwarf king

## Plight Of Pluto - The Little Planet With Mountains Of Abandonment Issues

**Anushree Khandelwal**  
AGS Gurugram, X

**S**tarry milky ways; fiery comets; uncharted planets... whenever you ponder upon the byzantine enigmas of the boundless solar system, these words cloud your brains. Alas, has anyone ever given me, Pluto, your ex ninth-planet-from-the-sun, a second glance?

Discovered in 1930, I was made a part of the majestic array of planets; nevertheless, I got relegated to the status of a dwarf planet not soon after - seven and a half decades later in 2006, to be precise. How can I ever forget that terribly dreadful day! But did it then or does it now, for that matter, really matter to anyone that 'the OG youngster', a mere 100 million years old, with an uncanny elliptical orbit and an eccentric axis (where I tip on the side like a graceful dancer) was brutally and horribly thrown out, because one day a group of scientists decided I was not worthy enough?

So what if I was the slowest planet - taking 238 years for one orbit, with one of my days being equal to 6.4 Earth days? Was it really imperative for the International Astronomical Union to cruelly

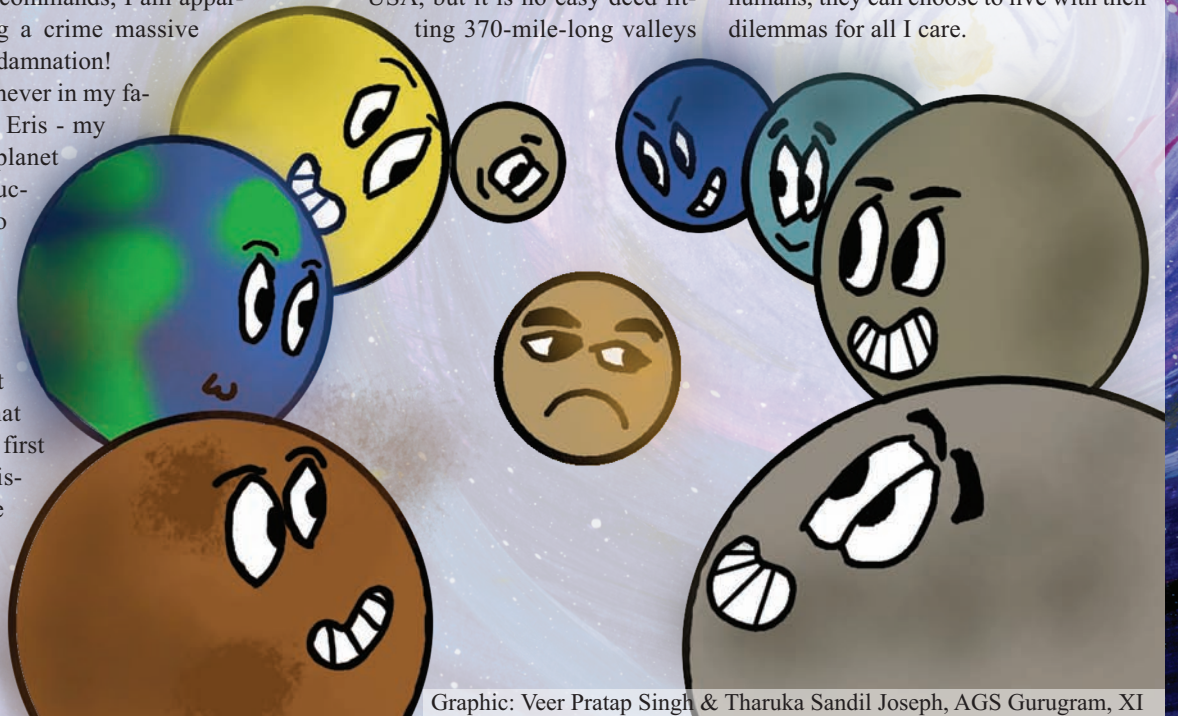
desert me because I met all the criterion of being a planet except one? Yes, I orbit the sun. I even am large enough to be spherical; I have a radius of around 715 miles (1151 kms). Howbeit, just because I showcase a little hospitality by sharing the residency in Kuiper Belt with other objects, hence 'not clearing my neighbouring region of other objects' as the third rule of being-a-planet commands, I am apparently committing a crime massive enough for such damnation!

My fate, thus, is never in my favour. Remember Eris - my fellow dwarf planet and its once successful plot to claim my largest dwarf planet status, anyone? Claimed it for 10 whole years at that; ask me what pain means! The first hints of my existence, too, arose when a 'problem' - strange deviations to be specific, was discovered in

Neptune and Uranus's orbits. Percival Lowell, the blessed, cerebral man, predicted my mystifying existence and paved the way for my final discovery and christening by Clyde 15 years later. Why the peculiar name of Pluto? Young 11-year-old Venetia Burney gave the clever suggestion - naming me after the all mighty Roman God of the underworld. Quite suiting, I would say. Now, I might be half the width of the USA, but it is no easy deed fitting 370-mile-long valleys

on such a small surface. My mantle may be icy, and my temperatures as chilly as -400 degrees Fahrenheit, but I too have a 'beating heart'. See it on my surface! Come on now, folks! Accept my beautifully flawed self, welcome my snake-like surface, and be daring enough to explore my big icy blocks of mountains. On Earth, you are brightened by one moon, but I possess five of them. So planet or no planet, I am happy the way I am. As for humans, they can choose to live with their dilemmas for all I care.

*Autobiography*



Graphic: Veer Pratap Singh & Tharuka Sandil Joseph, AGS Gurugram, XI

It's a match

## Grab A Coffee Cup That Is Bound To Match Perfectly With Your Personality!

**Shambhavi Verma**  
AIS Vasundhara 6, XI B

**T**o a layman, coffee is a refreshing drink consumed by millions, which has high levels of antioxidants and nutrients. But that's not all. Some believe (by 'some' we mean researchers and by 'believe' we mean concluded) that one's coffee order is an indicator of their personality. Though you may have never thought about it like that before, your coffee order says a lot about you. So, let's analyse everyone's order, shall we? [Though these results are interesting, they aren't 100% accurate, so don't hold us accountable!]

### Espresso enthusiast

This person is always lively and high-spirited. They live a hectic life with their schedule usually packed. However, they still get through their day, all thanks to their espresso shot. They are as keen as mustard, dedicated, and know how to get what they want. Though they are diligent, they can also be very moody at times, so watch out.



### Cappuccino connoisseur

Personality traits associated to cappuccino drinkers showed clear signs of wanting control and being obsessive. Nonetheless, these coffee lovers possess a lot of



positive traits – they are highly creative, candid in views, and always motivated. They are self-dependent, tend to choose logic, and are always ready to learn.

### Latte lover

Latte drinkers are just an open book. They are dependable but unlikely to perform activities out of their comfort zone because they are comfort seekers. Though they are dependable, they sometimes can be a bit of a people pleaser. They are efficient and realistic, realising that not all the world's problems can be solved, but that they know they can work to solve their own.



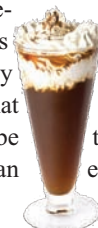
### Americano addict

Just like their preferred duo of espresso and hot water, americano drinkers like everything straight to the point. They are reliable, like to keep things simple, and are all about minimalism.



### Magnificent mocha

People who consider mocha as their favourite like the blend of sweet and bitter in their lives too. They are warm and sympathetic in nature and like to look at the world in an optimistic light. However, one thing they need to learn is that not everyone's burdens need to become their own.





# Playing with numbers



Dr Amita Chauhan  
Chairperson

Mathematics, for many students, is no less than a demon. However, I believe, that this 'phobia' or 'maths anxiety' can be overcome if the subject is taught more like a puzzle or a riddle, where numbers and equations are nothing else but fun elements for students to decipher. And Amity's Research and Development department, through its Mental Math Quiz programme, introduced in the year 2010, has successfully built a positive connection between maths and stu-

dents. It is a platform where Amitians study the subject with excitement and develop the required critical and logical skills.

In its first round, i.e., the 'Intra School' round, all students of Class I-X participate, and one student from each class qualifies for the second round, i.e., the 'Inter Amity' round. As the name suggests, this round is held between the qualifying students of the 17 branches of the Amity Group of Schools. The top five schools in each class then compete at the grand finale where the top three positions are awarded. Here, children experience an array of interactive sections, including questions on computation, patterns, shapes, practical application, tables, brain teasers, audio stories, and a high-paced rapid-fire round.

The platform has not only rekindled the love for maths in students but has also trained them in gaining the essential knowledge to attempt complex problems without any fear.

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

Seven Amitians bagged top honours at the Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition 2023, organised by The Royal Commonwealth Society. Avni Munjal from AIS Gur 43 won gold award. While Shriya Pasricha from AIS Gur 43, Alvina Parvez and Saharsh Mukherjee from AIS Noida, and Anupriya Nayak from AIS Saket bagged silver award. Also, Tannya Pasricha from AIS Gur 43 and Aanya Narula from AIS Vas 1 secured bronze award in the competition. [GT](#)

## Being reflective



Arti Gupta  
Principal  
AGS Gurugram

Being reflective is actually a way of life. In Amity, students are nurtured to be holistic global citizens, equipped with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that ensure success to Amitians in their personal as well as professional lives. Alas! Life is not a fairy tale following a glorious and 'happily ever after' pattern; reality shows that every success story has its own share of 'failures and fallings' that can unnerve any powerful person.

Thus, one of the critical skills needed in today's journey of life is being resilient. Any learner can rise from the ashes like the phoenix through the art of being reflective, if they try hard enough. Reflection, as an essential skill, should be made a way of life. Being open-minded as well as being self-reflective clears away the cloud of self-doubt in the face of challenging situations, leading towards a better version of oneself.

As Amity educators, we are equipped to prepare and empower students with the skill of reflection and introspection to lead a successful life. Following the same learnings, the amazing team of AGS Gurugram has launched their third contest edition, which, we hope, will leave all the readers with great lessons. [GT](#)

Pic: Veer Pratap Singh, AGS Gurugram, XI



# Star-crossed lovers

## Love Story Of Pineapple & Pizza — The Bone Of Contention

Tarush Bhalla  
AGS Gurugram, XI

Since time immemorial, humanity has been divided by several great debates – space exploration, ethical implications of human gene editing, and perhaps the greatest of them all – whether or not pineapple belongs on pizza. Of course, the crown of the conversation falls on Hawaiian pizza, invented in Canada by a Greek immigrant. The name is the least startling aspect of Hawaiian pizza, even though it strikes fear into those who even entertain the idea of discussing it openly.

To many, it's the Frankenstein's monster of food. To others, it's simply lunch. To Italians, it's...well, they've been through enough ever since the whole anchovies-on-pizza ordeal. But why all this division, one might wonder. Some believe this aversion comes from the carnal disgust of having fruit on pizza. Some believe that the more plausible explanation rather lies in tradition,

which is above considering it as a mere food item. Pizza, since the memory of our ancestors has served them, has always been tomato, cheese, and bread, with no sweet element. Maybe this vehement dismissal of pineapple has nothing to do with the fruit's new-found job as a topping, but instead with our aversion to a change from the status quo.

Another theory for the passion behind something so inconsequential in our daily lives is the publicity it has received through social media and by notable personalities. On the side of the pizza purists is Gordon Ramsay, who states, using his trademark colourful language, that pineapple, in no way, belongs on pizza. Followed by Ramsay is the president of Iceland, Guðni Th. Jóhannesson, who states that he would outlaw pineapple on pizza if he could. Such an intense statement by an elected official, no less the president of a country, was bound to be met with outrage. And it was; he was hailed

as a hero and a martyr of pies.

On Team Pineapple, however, is Justin Trudeau, standing by this Canadian invention. Needless to say, we're pretty sure things will be rough the next time these two world leaders meet up. With such influential figures adding fuel to the fire, it's no wonder the general public, who

hears such things from their idols, take just as strict a stance. As a result, a survey by Cinch Home Services found that 57% of

Americans are all for Hawaiian pizza whereas 9% of men and 11% women feel pineapple pizzas are a deal-breaker in relationships.

No matter the reason, years have gone by without any end in sight for this pressing bone of contention. Maybe pineapple on pizza is an issue with no resolution. Maybe there is no happy ending for pizza and pineapple, the star-crossed lovers; the gastrointestinal Romeo and Juliet, if you will. No matter how their story ends, we'll all just end up ordering pizza, of any kind, anyway.

**PERSPECTIVE**

## To read and grow

"Continuous learning is the minimum requirement for success in any field," said Brian Tracy, and it seems very appropriate for AGS Gurugram's editorial team as they present you another success saga, showcasing their talent and brilliant creativity in their third contest edition. Our guiding light, principal, Arti Gupta, stood by us at every step, making sure that we are pro-

vided with all the infrastructure and non-stop support to develop a yet another mind-blowing contest edition. As GT coordinator, I am proud of my team that has coped with all the odds and emerged stronger than before. These students have worked hard and proved their mettle by cre-

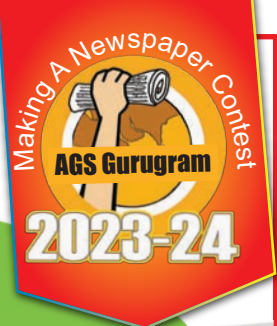


Priya Chhokra  
GT Coordinator

ating an engaging and scintillating GT edition with nail-biting stories, rhythmic poems, exciting current affairs, some insightful interviews, and so much more. It's rightly said by Lawrence Clark Powell that one must write to be understood, speak to be heard, and read to grow.

So, now that the team has written to be understood, we hope that all the readers will grow with what we have presented.





**Language:** Ainu  
**Family:** Ainuic  
**Region:** Hokkaido Island, Japan  
**Speakers left:** 10 approx  
**Endangerment grade:** CR\*

**About it:** Spoken by a few elderlies in the region, Ainu is a language isolate as it has no genetic relationship with any other language. It is owing to the Japanese colonisation of the island of Hokkaido in the late 1860s that its usage declined.

**Revival required because:** Ainu people are known to have a rich storytelling tradition. Without the language, these stories would be lost forever.

**Fun fact:** Ainu does not have any sort of grammatical genders.



**Language:** Hawaiian  
**Family:** Austronesian  
**Region:** Hawaii and Nihau  
**Speakers left:** 18,610  
**Endangerment grade:** SE\*

**About it:** A Polynesian language, Hawaiian is the official language of the US state of Hawaii. When the Kingdom of Hawaii, under Queen Lili'uokalani, got annexed in 1896, Hawaiian was forcefully replaced with English in schools, resulting in a huge decrease in its native speakers.

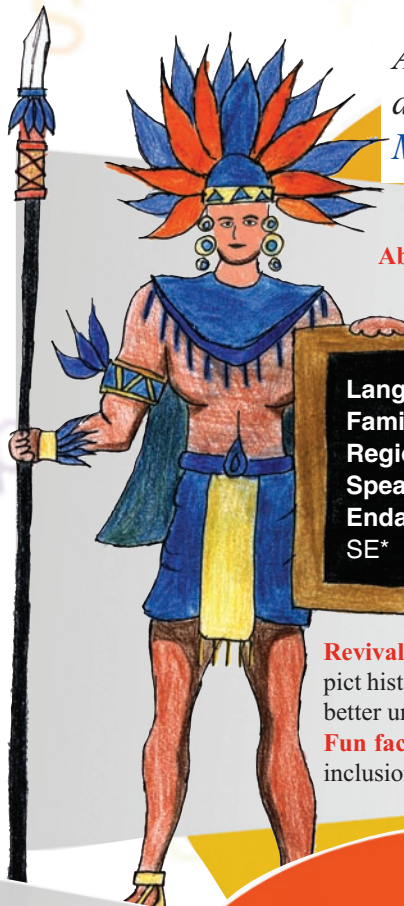
**Revival required because:** It is one of the oldest living languages in the world, and thus has a deep-rooted culture and influence worthy enough to be conserved.

**Fun fact:** The Hawaiian alphabet has only 13 letters in total.

not

# Lost and found

*Across time and civilisations, a multitude of languages have vanished into obscurity, wiping down unique cultures that they sought to act as carriers of. Read on as **Aarushi Agarwal & Maya Joshi, AGS Gur, XII**, guide you through the means of resuscitating some of them...*



**Language:** Itza  
**Family:** Mayan  
**Region:** Guatemala  
**Speakers left:** 50  
**Endangerment grade:** SE\*

**About it:** Itza was an administrative language during the supremacy of Chichen Itza, a pre-Columbian city, in the 17th century. Containing a complex grammatical composition, it is somewhat similar to the languages of today, especially when it comes to verb conjugations and complex sentence structures. Its usage declined when the government of Guatemala banned it in the 1930s, forcing two generations of Itza to be devoid of their own native tongue.

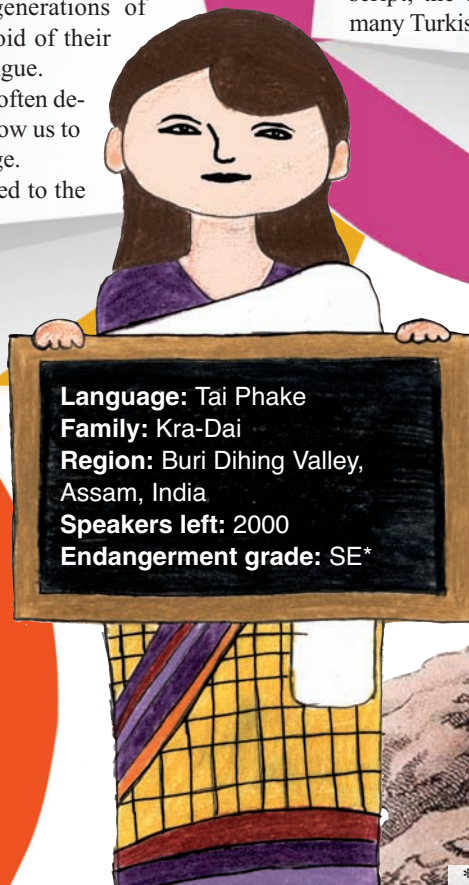
**Revival required because:** Its hieroglyphic texts often depict historical events, so its revival would only allow us to better understand the evolution of human language.

**Fun fact:** The arrival of Spanish conquistadors led to the inclusion of Spanish elements in Itza.

**About it:** Also known as Phakey, Phakial or just Phake, Tai Phake is a monosyllabic language spoken in nine different villages across Assam. Its endangerment was triggered by the mass migration of the Tai Phake people during the Burmese invasion of Assam in the late 18th century.

**Revival required because:** Since both the language and the culture it is associated with have survived mass migration, with the elders in the region having continued to think of unique ways to keep the language alive, including making modern songs, Thai Phake should be preserved as a testament to their strength.

**Fun fact:** The Tai Phake people have their own writing system, commonly referred to as 'Lik-Tai', which they share with the Khamti people and the Tai Aiton people.



**Language:** Tai Phake  
**Family:** Kra-Dai  
**Region:** Buri Dihing Valley, Assam, India  
**Speakers left:** 2000  
**Endangerment grade:** SE\*



**Language:** Forest Enets  
**Family:** Uralic, Samoyedic  
**Region:** Taymyr, Russia  
**Speakers left:** 69  
**Endangerment grade:** CR\*

**About it:** Largely spoken by those traditionally engaged in primitive jobs, such as fishing, hunting, and reindeer herding, Forest Enets was developed in the 1980s. Since it belongs to an incredibly isolated region, there are a few chances for it to be taught to others, raising the threat of extinction.

**Revival required because:** It has led to the creation of other indigenous languages in the region and has a complicated agglutinative structure that makes it fascinating enough to be revived.

**Fun fact:** It is written using the Cyrillic script, the designated national script for many Turkish and Mongolian languages.





# Puppet Master

Gauri Sharma

AGS Gurugram, XI

“Tell me about yourself; what has brought you here?” Dr Morgan inquired, her nails tapping the wooden desk. I shifted uncomfortably in the chair, feeling the weight of her gaze on me. “I’m Hana, and I’m 21. I need treatment for my paranoid behaviour.”

The next few hours were a blur. All I remember is the moment

when she diagnosed me with psychosis. “It’s okay, Hana. It might sound daunting, but it’s not that scary.” She kept her well-manicured hand over mine, and I felt comfort wash over me.

The medicine she gave me made me feel really sleepy, but whenever I brought up the issue, she said that’s how the medicine worked. I believed her because, after all, she was the best doc-

tor in town. But in reality, I was experiencing symptoms I never had before, and my paranoia was turning worse. “Hana,” she said, “we’ll perform a writing exercise that will help you understand what is real and what isn’t.” I held the pen shakily, writing whatever she uttered.

As days went by, every night, as I lay in bed, my thoughts and vision warped. The lines between reality and delusion

blurred, leaving me trapped in

a nightmarish limbo. Before I knew it, I was sitting alone in the white hallway outside her office once again. I sat for

seemingly hours, staring at the door

until I barged into the empty office. I looked around the office and saw a hard-bound journal. Barely able to keep my eyes open, I flipped the pages to my diagnosis and one term stood out - amphetamine. I shakily opened my phone and looked it up. “Long-term use of amphetamine may lead to psychosis. Excessive use of it can cause ongoing hallucinations and even the inability to tell what is real.” My heart was pounding. I felt betrayed. I couldn’t help but wonder how many lives

had been irreparably damaged under Dr Morgan’s care. Before I could do something, I heard her raspy voice. “Drop it, Hana,” she whispered. I clutched the diary protectively as I looked around in fear. I needed to get out of here. Every instinct told me to escape from the grip she had on my life. I kept moving towards the windowsill and then made the daring leap to roll down to the ground. “And that’s how you ran here?” the police officer asks, his eyebrows raised in surprise while he looks at the diary. “Yes, officer.” The officer leaves for a moment, and I close my eyes briefly, sitting in the interrogation room. I hear the chair being scraped again. Dr Morgan has taken a seat in front of me. “Stay away from me!” I scream. “Hana, look at the diary; it’s your handwriting!” A chill runs down my spine; it is indeed my writing. I look back at her and see her look at me in a sinister way, and then it hits me - the writing exercises - it was all orchestrated from the start till the end, like a grand puppet show.

“It’s okay, Hana. It might sound daunting, but it’s not that scary.” She kept her well-manicured hand over mine, and I felt comfort wash over me.



Illustration: Gauri Sharma, AGS Gurugram, XI

Anwasha Sinha, AGS Gurugram, X

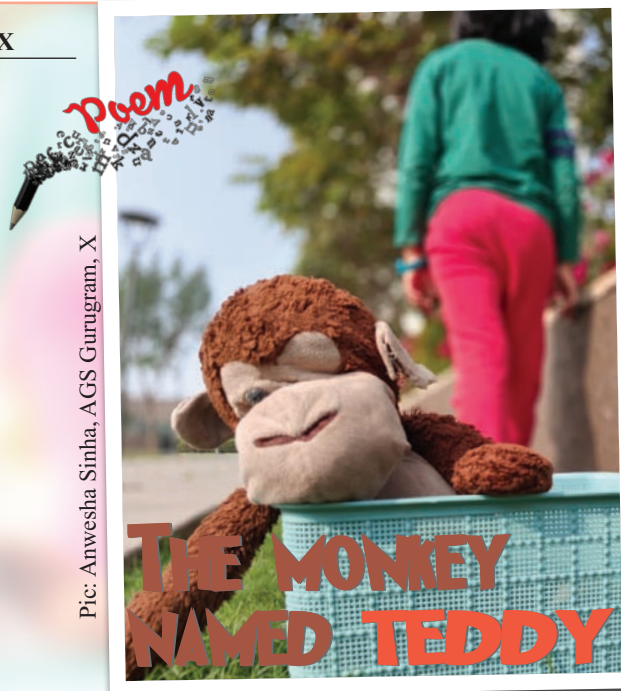
You entered the gift shop of the zoo  
You saw me while waiting in queue  
I do not know why but this is true  
I found myself going back with you

You gave me the lovely name Teddy  
Why, I wonder, but still don’t know  
For I am, in fact, just a toy monkey  
But I knew together we would grow

You took me wherever you gaily went  
To every single country, city, and event  
In your arms, I was happy and content  
From your life I would never be absent

When you turned four, things changed  
Disaster struck; we became estranged  
So, I found myself back in the toy box  
Nowhere near you, feeling deranged

Inside the box it was dark and desolate  
When I’d see you, I couldn’t estimate  
I prayed you’d find me, sooner than late  
And take me out as I was truly desperate



Pic: Anwasha Sinha, AGS Gurugram, X

Finally one day, I could see the light  
I’d forgotten it could ever be so bright  
You turned seven and held me so tight  
I thought, “now everything feels right.”

## Read Play and Win 40

Reading your favourite GT can fetch you a prize too. Complete all the boxes below. Click a picture and send it to editor@theglobaltimes.in or submit your responses by visiting The Global Times website (<http://theglobaltimes.in/readplaywin/>). Three lucky winners will win a prize every week!



Q.1 Which school has prepared this contest edition?

Q.2 Name the school that hosted the 14th edition of Amity Tarang.

Q.3 Which place is being repaired in the article ‘Lord of the pipes’?

Q.4 The article ‘The dwarf king’ is the autobiography of \_\_\_\_\_.

Q.5 How many lost languages are mentioned in the poster on page 7?

Q.6 Who is the illustrator of the article ‘Debbie’s discovery’ on page 4?

Q.7 Who is the author of the article ‘Star-crossed lovers’ on page 6?

Q.8 Vineeta Singh is the CEO and co-founder of \_\_\_\_\_.

Q.9 What is the name of the toy monkey in the poem ‘The monkey named Teddy’ on page 8?

Name:.....Class:.....School:.....

Results of Read Play & Win-39: **Ishanya Verma**, AIS Gur 43, IV B; **Shivam Kumar**, AIS Gur 46, V C; **Pratyaksh Rana**, AIMC, X



# DEEP into FAKES



**‘Deepfake’ – the word has been doing the rounds on news for some time now. From actors falling prey to deepfake, including the likes of Alia Bhatt, Rashmika Mandanna, and Priyanka Chopra, to government meetings with social media giants to discuss strategies on dealing with the problem, deepfake sure seems to be the word of the day. So, allow Jayashree Kumar, XII & Khevna Pankaj, X, AGS Gurugram, to dive deep into the fake world of morphed media to give you an in-depth feature.**

## Defining deepfake

Portmanteau of ‘deep learning’ and ‘fake’, deepfake involves using AI known as Deep Learning to manipulate and produce fake images, videos, and audios to alter people’s appearances, making them look like someone else. Fundamentally, deepfake is the alteration of existing content by swapping one person for another. Another infamous version is where entirely original content is created where someone can be seen doing or saying something they never did.

## Dawn of deepfake

Contrary to popular belief, deepfakes first originated in 1997 in the form of the Video Rewrite programme, by Christoph Bregler, Michele Covell, and Malcolm Slaney, which used existing footage to reanimate faces and create a new video of a person mouthing words they did not speak. However, deepfakes, as we know them, became a reality in 2017, when a Reddit user named Deepfakes circulated manipulated videos of celebrities, along with a Generative Adversarial Network tool that is required to swap faces in videos. The videos went viral on the internet, and the rest is history.

## Distinguished deepfakes

The good, the terrible, and the

ugly are all now achieved through deepfakes. Most recent example is the deepfake video of Rashmika Mandanna, which caused an uproar and sparked an entire debate. And let’s not forget the manipulated videos of Barack Obama, Mark Zuckerberg, and Ukrainian president Zelensky which once made rounds on the internet.

In contrast to such cases, there are innocuous deepfakes, like Jon Snow’s apology for Game Of Thrones finale, entertaining many. Filmmakers, too, are employing deepfakes; Solo: A Star Wars Story is one instance when Harrison Ford’s youthful visage was superimposed over Han Solo. The tech is being used in ads as well; look at Zomato’s deepfake ad featuring Hrithik Roshan. And let’s not forget the collab between ITC and Akool for the #HarDilKiFantasy campaign for Sunfeast Dark Fantasy, which let users share a screen with SRK. The most fascinating one, however, was the Dali Museum bringing Salvador Dali back to life, for an exhibition, using deepfake.

## Dangers of deepfake

- Deepfakes can easily mislead people.

Their purportedly realistic recordings of famous persons saying or doing things they never did can be used to manipulate public opinion, influence elections, and propagate misleading information.

- Deepfakes might produce fabricated images of military or political figures, disrupting the geopolitical scene.
- Deepfakes put laws governing consent, intellectual property, and privacy in jeopardy.
- By producing convincing films or sounds that mimic reliable people, they might enable complex phishing tactics.
- It makes it hard to know if the content is real or fake, endangering journalism’s authenticity.
- Being exposed to distorted information may cause one to become less sensitive to reality, which can have an adverse effect on one’s ability to think critically and mentally.

## Dismantling deepfakes

In response to recent events involving deepfakes in India, Ashwini Vaishnav, from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, has announced that the government intends to take action by coming up with new regulations and amending the

## WATCH OUT...

...for these signs to ascertain if a video is deepfake

- Peculiar or uncomfortable expression on the face
- Abnormal movement of the body or the face
- Unnatural hues
- Videos that appear strange when enlarged or zoomed in
- The audio is inconsistent
- People who don’t blink

existing laws to tackle deepfakes. Although deepfakes aren’t specifically covered by any legislation, the Information Technology Act does contain relevant rules that are active. For instance, the IT Act and IT Rules 2021 prohibits online impersonation. In addition, there are clauses in the Indian Consumer Protection Act and the Copyright Act 1957 that can be used to prosecute cases involving the production and distribution of deepfakes. But the reach of these laws is constrained as social media cannot fully police private content created by users. Private players like Google, too, have waged a war against the technology, with the company intending to flag AI generated content by utilising embedded watermarks. Making it mandatory for creators to specify if they have used AI generated content and allowing users to have content taken down in case their face is used are some measures proposed by the tech giant.

## Diverse directives

The problem affects not just India, but the entire world, with each country dealing with it on a war footing.

- The US passed the 2020 Identifying Outputs of Generative Adversarial Networks Act to provide measurements and standards for deepfake detection systems.
- China has enacted regulations through Cyberspace Administration of China, covering various aspects of deepfakes.
- European Union has imposed regulations that require digital giants like Google, Meta, and X (formerly Twitter) to initiate action against deepfakes. The EU AI Act and Digital Services Act entails observation of social media platforms.
- UK Online Safety Act keeps a close eye on spreading of deepfakes.



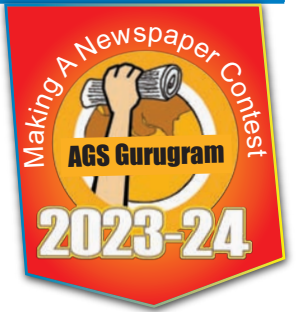




Ananiah Wheeler & Tiya Vermani  
AGS Gurugram, X

# At your doorstep

## When School Is Not Far But Just Next To Your Home



Without education there is no future. So what can be possibly said about the future of India, where 287 million people are illiterate. Steps in – Door Step School, a non profit organisation with an aim to teach children in the most marginalised sections of the society. Operating from Mumbai and Pune, it runs community based programmes, school partnership programmes and more, touching countless lives in the process.

### A touching experience

Every story has a once-upon-a-time, even if not as clearly outlined. Prof Rajani Paranjpe, founder and president, Door Step Schools, has similar recollections of the beginnings of this initiative, “I don’t think there was an inspiration as such to start Door Step, but rather an experience.” She takes us back 35 years ago, when she was teaching at the CSW, Mumbai. “While supervising students during a field trip and working with under-privileged children, I realised the numerous challenges that obstructs child education in India - low enrolment rates and attendance and poor quality of education.”

### At your doorstep

With an aim to overcome these challenges, Prof Paranjpe set out to lay the foundation stone of an organisation, with an emphasis



Rajani Tai with the students



A glimpse of the Door Step School

unable to attend conventional schools due to financial responsibilities, it equips them with reading skills. The fourth initiative establishes libraries within the slums and govt. schools, helping students enhance reading skills. The convenience of taking books home caters to their schedule, acknowledging the limited space for reading within the slums.

on primary education. But opening a conventional school alone was not the solution. “Back then, the enrolment rate was very low – 58% or so. And those who did enrol would mostly drop out. While it is easy to lay the blame, the problem runs way deeper. It is hard for these children to stay away from home for 6-8 hours, as both the parents go to work and nobody is at home. In fact, most of them live on footpath or in makeshift huts, and there is nobody to watch their belongings, siblings or even collect water when the water tanker comes,” she surmises, highlighting the obstacles with conventional schooling. With children finding it difficult to leave home, the solution thus lay in taking the school to their homes. And thus Door Step was born.

### A bouquet approach

Taking school to construction sites and slum areas, where children could study in the proximity of their dwellings, Door Step touched upon students already going to govt. schools with four major initiatives, one of them being the Balwadi programme. Catering to children aged 3-6 years, this programme focuses on pre-primary education and enables both children and parents to get an idea of what school is like. The duration of the programme is thus kept short at 2.5 hours. The second initiative entails study classes, dedicated to older children and covers basic skills and general knowledge. Addressing the unique challenges faced by children over 12, the third programme introduces literacy classes. Designed for those

### No fairytale endings

Having been involved in this endeavour one would expect Door Step to be brimming with success stories, but the reality is different. “Many children have come and gone, some have progressed, some became engineers, but these are not as many as we have touched. Each year, we are touching over a lakh children between Mumbai and Pune, but the progress that is conspicuous is far and few in between,” she shares, citing generational illiteracy as the reason behind it. Prof Paranjpe expounds, “The people we are working with, have education as first generation experience. It requires at least three generations of a family to be literate to be called an educated family.” Here’s hoping that the numbers will grow in future.



Designers on a quest, to curate the best



AGS Gurugram Editorial Team is nothing but a testimony to a well defined plan



Ink in perfect blend, imaginations ascend



Clicking pictures so fine, every tale shines



With words at play, the stories slay



All thumbs up, as the edition is up

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# Learn with Japan



Participants and their mentor with dignitaries in Japan

## Heralding Amity At RITS Super Global Forum

### AERC

Three students namely Suhani Chauhan (AIS Pushp Vihar), Prisha Talwar (AIS Noida) and Avni Drolia (AIS Mayur Vihar) of Class XI, participated in the 10th edition of RITS Super Global Forum (RSGF), organised by Ritsumeikan Junior and Senior High School, Japan, from November 10-17, 2023. Avni Drolia and her mixed group team won the 'Best New Idea Award' on the final day of the presentation. The initiative is a platform for the students to increase their awareness on global issues through knowledge-based learning and overseas outreach. Students from 16 countries including UK, Sweden, Hong Kong, France, Taiwan, Singapore, Philippines etc, participated in the programme. The participation of Amitians in this conference, based on the theme 'Diversity and Inclusion - It takes all kinds to make a world!', was facilitated by Amity Educational Resource Centre (AERC) under the guidance of Dr (Mrs) Amita Chauhan, Chairperson, Amity Group of Schools and RBEF.

The event was a stimulating confluence of learning and experiences, which unfolded solutions to the theme and its sub topics - ethnicity, disability, gender and biodiversity through poster presentations, discussion groups, and fieldwork. The participants also created magazines, comics, websites, spectacles,



Cultural showcase at the event

fashion items, and lunch boxes based on different subtopics of the central theme.

Students had an opportunity to listen to the keynote lecture by Professor Oussouby Sacko, president, Kyoto Seika University, on his experiences of diversity. They also visited different places in Japan like city of Arashiyama and its iconic landmarks - the Bamboo Forest and Yasaka Shrine. The campus tour of Ritsumeikan School provided them a glimpse into the intricacies of Japanese culture like calligraphy, forms of martial arts and Japanese culinary delights. On cultural performance day, the participating schools presented their country's rich cultural heritage. Suhani Chauhan, Avni Drolia, Prisha Talwar, and Sanyukta Priya (mentor) presented Sanskrit shlokas which were translated to English and enacted gracefully by them. Prisha Talwar and Avni Drolia performed kathak and bharatnatyam respectively. [G.T](#)

## An impeccable win

Amitians once again bagged laurels at the Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition (QCEC) 2023, the world's oldest international schools' writing competition, organised by The Royal Common-

### Amity Group of Schools

wealth Society. Based on the theme 'A Youth-Powered Commonwealth' the competition received a record-breaking 34,924 entries from the commonwealth

network of 54 nations. Avni Munjal (X) of AIS Gurugram 43 won gold award. Anupriya Nayak (XII) AIS Saket, Shriya Pasricha (VII) AIS Gurugram 43, Alvina Parvez (IX) and Saharsh Mukherjee (XI) AIS Noida bagged silver award, while Adama Munjal (V) AIS Gurugram 43 and Anya Narula (XII) AIS Vasundhara 1 won bronze award. [G.T](#)



Winners of QCEC 2023 (L-R): Shriya, Adama, Avni, Alvina, Saharsh, Anya & Anupriya



Felicitation of winners at the award ceremony

# Amity Tarang

### AIS Saket

The 14th edition of Amity Tarang, an inter-school fest of creativity in language, art, dance, and music was hosted by the school on August 25, 2023. The euphoric event witnessed participation from over 30 schools across Delhi/NCR and was held in six categories. This year, three new categories namely 'Psychology Act', 'Culinary Tarang', and 'Tarang Ka Ulhas' were also added. In the category, 'The Psychology Act, Kritim Aatma: A dialogue', students showcased an enthralling conversation to bring forth the advantages and disadvantages of AI. 'Culinary Tarang' challenged their culinary skills with miracle millets and 'Tarang Ka Ulhas' was a combination of live song, music, and dance. The other categories were

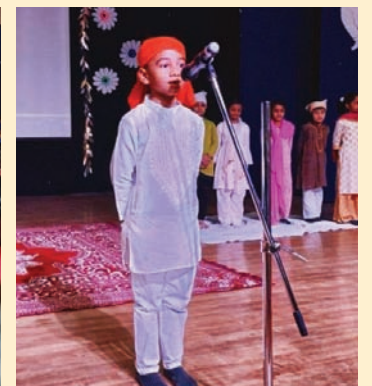
'War of Wits (English debate)', 'Rang Tarang (Art)' and 'Abhiv-yakti Tarang (Hindi debate)'.

The jury included both experts and alumni, where the panel comprised Dr Mausumi Bose (associate professor, Ramjas college, DU), Suvvro P Basu (visual artist), Astha Jain Archana (author and educator), Achla Wadhwa (educationist), and Vrinda Chadha (Faculty and repertoire member, Utsav educational and cultural society), while the alumni judges consisted of Yashwardhan Jain, Amreen Lamba, Kumar Aryan Saxena, Bhuvi Pandey, Rashmi Bala and Katyani Bhargava. The rolling trophy 'Shreemati Leelavati Shastri' was won by AIS Gurugram 46, with AIS Gurugram 43 and AIS Mayur Vihar securing the first runner up and second runner up position respectively. [G.T](#)

## Guru's light



A glimpse from Sewa simran



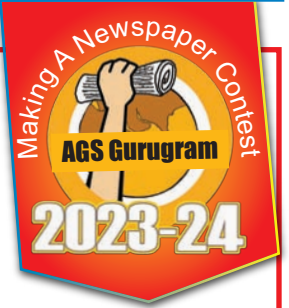
Student participates in the skit

### AIS VYC Lucknow

To mark the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev ji, students from Class II to V conducted a special assembly on November 23, 2023. The assembly commenced with shabad kirtan 'Ek Onkar Satnam'. Dressed up in colourful attire,

the students enacted a short skit based on the life and times of Guru Nanak Dev ji. They also shared the messages of kindness, compassion, and love as propagated by the guru. In her address, school principal Roli Tripathi spoke about the life of Guru Nanak Dev and urged students to follow the path of *sewa simran*.





# The Incessant Yet Life-Altering Ordeal Of Dealing With A Plumber



Avikshit Sahil Upadhyay  
AGS Gurugram, XII

Ah, the noble toilet, a throne fit for a king and the epicentre of our contemplations. And yet, in the great tapestry of domestic life, even the sturdiest thrones find themselves facing rebellion from pesky pipes. And thus begins the quest for a knight with shining wrenches to win this battle of bathroom breakdowns. The ensuing chaos will certainly clog your peace.

### Phase I | Terror strikes

Oh, the toilet, the unsung hero of household serenity. The porcelain throne, when under siege, can disrupt the balance of domestic bliss. So, a malfunctioning toilet, thus, is a severe threat to the very fabric of familial happiness.

### Phase II | Hunt for knight

Enter the labyrinth of plumber procurement, a journey longer than a sloth's commute. Plumbers are, in a way, the exorcists of the toilet world, and when your bathroom is possessed, you must pray for a knowledgeable person to come to break the hardware hex. This is where you must consult the ancient scrolls of Aunty Groups to summon the right one.

### Phase III | Trap doors

Gazillion light years later, the

# Lord of the

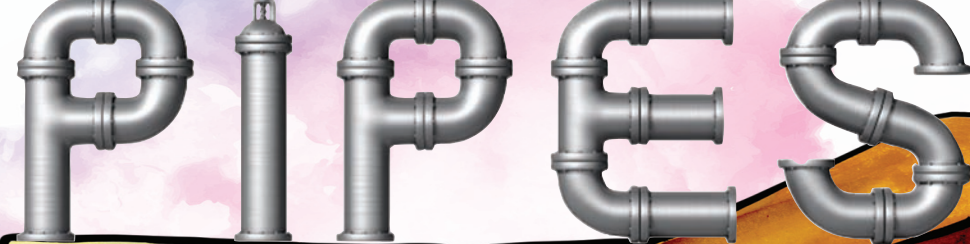


Illustration: Shlok Siddhartha, AGS Gurugram, XI

fabled white shining knight, armed with his majestic wrenches, finally emerges. You thank the plumbing Gods for this messiah, but thunder strikes, as he tells you, "I don't do this kind of repair work." Dejected, you question your fate and the meaning of life,

as you go back to the previous stage.

### Phase IV | Plumber prowls in

After a series of twists and turns in the plumbing labyrinth, which definitely makes you question your sanity, you find someone

who agrees to turn to your aid.

The next few hours are dedicated to a riveting sitcom that narrates the tale of a plumber disassembling and reassembling your bathroom fixtures like a confused

IKEA enthusiast. Identification of the problem is merely the opening act in this drama.

### Phase V | Pursuit of parts

Embarking on a quest reminiscent of a Tolkien epic, armed with a shopping list that may as well be written in Elvish, you set out on a wild goose chase to find the part that will magically be missing from all stores you can find in your reach. All of them will tell you, rather comedically, that X store probably has it, at which point this X store will again redirect you to another store. In the end, you find your spirit flushed out of your body.

### Phase VI | The climax

Breaking down due to all the ordeals present in front of you, you contact every friend, helpline, and therapist to find the missing piece and the missing peace. Armed with the knowledge of the problem and the solution, you now cross every finger in your limbs and pipes, praying for peace.

### Phase VII | Bathroom bliss

The tempest has passed and the pipes sing a harmonious ode to victory. You return to your throne with the swagger of a plumbing gladiator. And why not, for you have survived the tumultuous adventure of plumber procurement, emerging victorious and flush with success.

In spotlight



Editor-in-chief: Gauri Sharma



All smiles, the amazing team of AGS Gurugram



Editor-in-chief: Avikshit Sahil Upadhyay