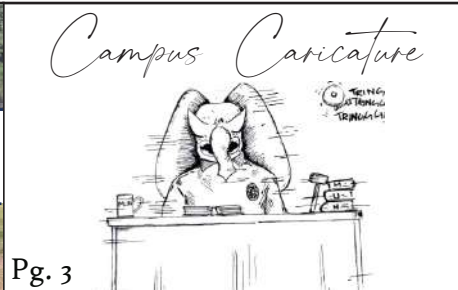


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THE ACCIDENTAL PRIME MINISTER

-Tanveer Ahmed, Associate Editor, XI

Dr. Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister of India, passed away on December 26, 2024, at the age of 92. The nation observed a period of mourning until January 1 when the cremation was held at Nigam Bodh Ghat, Delhi, on December 28.

A renowned economist, Singh earned his Economics Tripos from Cambridge and a PhD from the University of Oxford.

He served as a senior lecturer at Panjab University, worked with the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and held academic roles at the Delhi School of Economics. Recognized for his expertise, he became an advisor in the Ministry of Foreign Trade and later rose to positions like Chief Economic Advisor and Secretary in the Ministry of Finance. As Finance Minister under Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, Singh played a pivotal role in liberalizing India's economy in 1991. By abolishing the License Raj, he ended decades of slow growth and corruption,

opening India to global markets and initiating a new era of economic reforms. This transformation is widely regarded as a turning point in India's development, cementing Singh's legacy as a key architect of modern India's economy. In 2004, Singh became India's 13th Prime Minister, leading the nation to record a GDP growth rate of 9%, making it the world's second-fastest-growing

KEY ARCHITECT OF MODERN INDIA'S ECONOMY

major economy. His government introduced significant initiatives like the Right to Education (RTE) Act, which expanded access to education, particularly in rural areas, reducing illiteracy rates. Singh also strengthened India's foreign relations, notably with Afghanistan and Japan.

However, Singh's tenure was not without criticism. His leadership was often overshadowed by allegations of undue influence from Congress president Sonia Gandhi, leading many to dub him the "Accidental Prime Minister." Furthermore, his government faced intense scrutiny during the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks, where the response was seen as slow and ineffective. Critics argued that Singh's measured demeanor failed to provide the decisive leadership required during such a critical national crisis.

Despite these controversies, Dr. Manmohan Singh remains one of India's most respected leaders. His contributions to economic reforms and social development are widely acknowledged, making him a transformative figure in Indian history. His legacy as an economist turned-statesman continues to inspire, underscoring his pivotal role in shaping modern India.

Title taken from Sanjaya Baru's book "The Accidental Primister"

REPUBLIC DAY:

CELEBRATING UNITY AND DEMOCRACY

-Tushar Malik, IX

Republic Day, celebrated annually on January 26, marks a significant moment in India's history with the adoption of the Constitution in 1950. As India prepares to observe its 76th Republic Day on January 26, 2025, the significance of this day matters deeply within the nation's collective awareness. This year's theme, "Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas", highlights the dual focus on India's rich cultural heritage and ongoing development.

The importance of Republic Day extends beyond mere celebration. It serves as a reminder of the values mentioned in the Constitution i.e. justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity. These principles are not just historical ideas but living ideals that guide the nation's democratic culture. The date itself is symbolic because it was chosen to honor the declaration of Purna Swaraj (complete independence) made by the Indian National Congress in 1930 which links India's struggle for freedom with its constitutional governance. This year, the presence of H.E. Prabowo Subianto,

President of Indonesia, as the chief guest adds an worldwide excitement to the celebrations, strengthening India's diplomatic ties and relation across the globe. The Republic Day Parade in New Delhi will showcase not only military might but also cultural diversity, reflecting India's unity amidst its vast differences. Republic Day teaches us vital lessons about responsibility and citizenship. It urges citizens to uphold democratic values and contribute positively to society. The sacrifices made by freedom fighters remind us of our duty to protect these ideals as students.

As India continues to evolve, this day inspires a renewed commitment to fostering a united and prosperous nation which encourages every citizen, especially the youth to engage actively in shaping a better future. This day embraces the value of unity and diversity which honours our past while striving for progress and growth which will keep the future generations aspiring for more.

Folktales:

Chapter IX Pulie Badze

-Jentina Yaomei Shangkhu, XI

Deep in the mountains of Pulie Badze lives an unhappy spirit, desperately seeking for his family. Pulie Badze is a prominent hill situated near Kohima. It holds both historical and cultural significance for the local people, especially the Angami Naga tribe. The name "Pulie Badze" translates to "Pulie's hill" and is tied to a local legend about a brave Angami youth named Pulie. Pulie belonged to the Nakhro clan of Jotsoma Village. As a young bachelor, Pulie was seeking a wife. He later married a woman from Kohima Village named Chaselie-u . After the wedding, Pulie wanted to host a big feast called " Chümetsie chükecü " to celebrate the fruitful harvest they had. To prepare for the feast, Pulie worked hard alongside his wife to harvest the crops but to their horror, found that an animal had been razing their crops. To find this animal, he prepared his dao and spear, sharpening it so finely that the spear could cut the grass so precisely. It was past midnight when

Pulie found an enormous snake slithering across his field. He quickly threw his sharp spear at the snake but unfortunately, the snake got away with the spear lodged in its body. Pulie returned home, feeling oddly ill. Several rituals were performed for his recovery which failed to cure him. This was because Pulie had unknowingly killed a mountain spirit. After Pulie died, the villagers went in search of the snake and found the snake lying dead inside a hole in the foothill with the spear still intact in its body. On the day of Pulie's funeral, his father went up the peak and mourned for his son crying out, " Pulie, who couldn't hold the feast", to which Pulie's spirit responded,"Ho.., Ho..", His father raised a stone platform as a seat for his son at the top of the hill, believing his son to be residing over there then on the hill came to be known as PULIEBADZE . To this day, villagers say that if you call upon Pulie in the mountains, he may respond to you.



ANOTHER VIEW

REMEMBERING 7/10/23

-Mrs. Mita Goswami, Department of English

The root of the Palestine-Israel conflict rests in the Balfour Declaration which was ‘a public statement/pledge issued by the British Government in 1917 during the First World War announcing its support for the establishment of a “national home for the Jewish people” in Palestine, then an Ottoman region with a small minority Jewish population.’[1] The pledge is generally viewed as one of the main catalysts of the Nakba, meaning catastrophe – the ethnic cleansing of Palestine in 1948 – and the conflict that ensued with the Zionist state of Israel[2]. Today’s Israel was established in 1948, after displacing up to 750,000 Palestinians, from their ancestral homes. Neither they nor their descendants have been allowed by Israel to return. After the 1967 war in which Israel defeated the Arab states, it occupied more Palestinian land including Jerusalem (which is holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims alike), almost doubled its territory and built illegal Jewish settlements on that land. Since its establishment in 1948, Israel has never defined its borders, and keeps on expanding its territory while the Palestinians are hemmed in like cattle in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.[3]

Today, Palestinians are not an independent nation and do not have an independent armed force, so even if they are bombed, displaced, massacred- how do they defend themselves? One can concede that Hamas and Hezbollah are terrorist organizations and have purposely targeted not only the Israeli military but also innocent citizens spurred by religious extremism which can never yield the desired goal of Palestinian freedom. However, some key questions need to be reflected upon. To begin, let’s look at some numbers- in the numerous episodes of violence between the Palestinians and Israelis since 1948, around 10,000 Israelis have been killed and nearly 186,000 Palestinians. In contrast to

a negligible number of Israelis living abroad due to the conflict, 6 million Palestinians live outside their homeland than in the prison-like enclaves in the West Bank (3 million) and Gaza Strip (2 million). The Israelis have been committing atrocities on the Palestinians long before Hamas and Hezbollah were born, in 1987 and 1982 respectively. These terrorist organizations are the products and not the reason for the relentless violence of the Israelis. We need to look at our moral compass if we disregard the cause and blame only the effect.[4]

Statesmen like Atal Bihari Vajpayee had said in 1975 that Palestinians must be given their land back as it was before 1967 and allowed to have their own independent state. Even a majority of Israel’s former prime ministers and leaders such as Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, Ehud Olmert and Ehud Barak have opined that a two-state solution is the only viable political solution to the conflict.

Today, 42,000 Palestinians have been slaughtered in one of the worst genocides of our times, half of which are children and women. No one should pay such a price for the terrorist attack of 7th October 2023. Humanity should hang its head in shame for regressing to such barbarism when we should be learning from our mistakes and building a world of peace and harmony where compassion and empathy reign supreme. It is time to acknowledge and live by our shared humanity transcending, religious and national borders. It is time to stop this genocide and do what is right.

1. Balfour Declaration - Wikipedia
2. More than a century on: Balfour Declaration explained - Al Jazeera
3. Suheendra Kulkarni - The Quint
4. Suheendra Kulkarni - The Quint

Campus Caricature

**MAYDAY!
MAYDAY!**



Illustrated by Bhaibhav Dutta, VII

CAMPUS NEWS

REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATION AT AVS

On 26th of January, Aviators met on a wintry morning to celebrate with gusto India's 76th Republic Day. The ceremony began with the Headmaster Dr. Jugran taking the salute of the Guard of Honour followed by the congregation proudly singing the National Anthem. The morning saw Arushi

Jakhmola recite the fiery poem 'Mein Bharat ki Samvidhan bol raha huen'. the collaborative effort of the Assamese department under Mrs. Parinita Goswami and the AVS Music Department saw a beautiful rendition of the Assamese song 'Aaji Bandoki Sondere' composed by Ambikagiri Rai Choudhury.

Mrs. Dayita B. Dutta, Head of the Department of History, spoke about the vision of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as the father of the Indian Constitution. The morning came to an end with a distribution of sweets and a stream of photographs being clicked on the happy occasion.

Photographs by Mr. Matharu



AVIATORS TO GREECE

The Assam Valley School collaborated with Hellenic American College in Greece to offer a transformative educational opportunity to 25 students and 2 teachers in a week-long program held from January 7-13, 2025 at the Hellenic American College in Athens. It was an enriching experience for both students and accompanying teachers, featuring academic sessions on psychology, business, and Greek culture. Their visits to iconic historic sites such as the Acropolis and Delphi and initiation into Greek dance lessons, discussions on leadership and democracy, and engaging lectures added depth to the learning experience.



GLIMPSES OF THE SPORTS GALA



Photographs by Erih Angie Riba

THE OUTPOST

The return of the prodigal son in the form of Trump has sent the world in a spin. While Musk begins the reduction of government employees, the first aircraft with illegal immigrants returns to Columbia in a bid to stop Trump's tariff war. The uneasy truce between Israel and Hamas wavers even as the return of the hostages trickles through. While 1.34 lakh people attend Coldplay's Ahmedabad concert, their attendance is overshadowed by the footfall in Prayagraj which saw an unprecedented 6.5 crore people take the holy dip in the Ganga on the 29 th of January alone for Maha-Kumbh.



Illustrated by Tanceer Ahmed, Associate Editor, XI

Ripple #241

-Erik Angie Riba, Editor-in-Chief, XI

*Her ink spills, a tale unfolds.
Somewhere, a man stumbles, then speaks her lines,
The unseen puppeteer, she pulls the strings,
her pen guiding him to his fate which awaits.*

Tongue Of Slip!

1. "I will be waitingly patient." -Atoti Zhimomi, XII (*Waiting for your language to get better. Impatiently.*)
2. "The horse was riding in me." - Mr. Taufique Alam Ansari (*The new Riding Captain appointed.*)
3. "I have an empty room in my bed." - Erik Angie Riba, XI (*Please move out.*)
4. "Everybody thinks she is lid." - Aanya Paul Sarkar, XI (*And you are the pot?!*)
5. "I have to cry my eyes." - Bhavni Kshetrimayum (*Bawling at your English.*)



Keep It Reel!

Black Beauty.



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