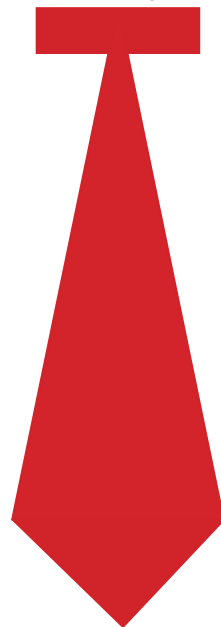


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# TRUMP 2.0

How Trump, 78, won the presidential elections for the second time will be material for history books. “Just a really, really good salesman,” some would claim. Entering the White House again, Donald John Trump won with 86 votes over Kamala Harris. A political arc unlike any in 250 years of American history. Three years ago, in an attempt to reverse his electoral defeat, he incited a crowd of supporters to loot the U.S. Capitol, an act led to his eventual ouster in 2021. Making a comeback, he orchestrated a remarkable political resurgence in an overwhelming triumph that surpassed almost everyone’s expectations. Trump comfortably pushed President Joe Biden out of the race. In the process, he managed to dismiss a 34-count felony conviction.

-Urvee Rathi,  
Academics Captain, XI



administration’s “America First” policy—a nostalgic call for a bygone era, which prioritised national interests over international commitments. “America First” is simply a catch-all term for long-standing isolationist policies. The U.S. economy depends on global dominance and isolationist policies, could hurl the world towards a global debacle. On internal policies, Trump has said that he would veto a federal abortion ban but allow each state to restrict the procedure as it wishes: “I was able to kill Roe v. Wade, much to the ‘shock’ of everyone,” he remarked on his social media platform, embracing his key role in selecting the Supreme Court justices who ultimately overturned Roe v. Wade, a landmark decision that had protected

“I’m not going to start wars; I’m going to stop wars,” he said in his victory speech, proposing that one of his main policy choices would be to reduce American military involvement abroad. Geopolitical experts have pointed to Israel and Ukraine as high on Trump’s priority list. His approach appears rooted in his previous

abortion rights nationwide for over fifty years Trump has kept to his promise and implemented strict immigration policies, which has triggered the mass deportation program.

Realistically speaking, in terms of economics, such a crackdown may have a substantial impact on the agricultural and construction sectors, which rely largely on migrant labour. Politically, Trump has

approached negotiations with Mexico, Guatemala, and other Latin American countries with heavy tariffs in order to push them to accept deported migrants. The first flight with Colombian migrants have left American soil as has a second flight for Punjab with illegal Indian immigrants.

After proposing such bold, lofty positions on foreign affairs, immigration, abortion rights, and even resolving the Russia-Ukraine war, there is no doubt that Trump means business at the very

start of his term. The next few months promise to be tumultuous for global diplomacy. Trump's transactional attitude will mean that Europe is forced to pull up its socks while the Middle-East and India can hope for better days ahead. With time we shall discover which claims were exaggerated and what was legitimate; "God save America" indeed—because, whether we like it or not, one thing is clear: his second term will be as unpredictable as the first.

# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

## ===== REVOLUTION AND REGULATORY GAPS IN INDIA =====

-Vivaan Agarwalla, Academics Captain, XI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become one of the most transformative technologies of the 21st century, revolutionizing industries and shaping the future in ways once imagined only in science fiction. Powered by algorithms and vast data, AI allows machines to mimic human-like reasoning and perception.

The concept of AI dates back to the 1950s, when British mathematician Alan Turing proposed machines that could mimic human intelligence. His famous 1950 paper "Computing Machinery and Intelligence" introduced the Turing Test, measuring a machine's ability to exhibit intelligent behavior indistinguishable from humans. Since then, AI has evolved from rule-based systems to today's deep learning algorithms.

Today, AI is reshaping industries. In healthcare, it helps doctors diagnose diseases faster and more accurately, analyzing medical images and genetic data. In finance, AI aids in fraud detection, algorithmic trading, and personalized financial advice. It also powers innovations across sectors, optimizing processes and creating new opportunities. However, AI also raises significant concerns. One key issue is job displacement, as automation threatens industries such as manufacturing, transportation, and customer service. While AI can create new jobs, it could also lead to widespread unemployment in sectors dependent on human labour.

**“The most important thing humans have is our ability to think, and the greatest challenge of the 21st century will be to preserve our humanity while we reshape the world with AI.”**

**-Yuval Noah Harari**

Another major concern is the lack of proper regulation, especially in countries like India. AI is advancing rapidly, but there are minimal laws addressing its ethical use, data privacy, or impacts on employment. India's absence of a comprehensive legal framework for AI could result in ethical issues, inequality, and misuse. Without clear policies, the technology could worsen existing societal challenges.

As AI continues to evolve, it is crucial for India to prioritize regulation that ensures ethical development, protects citizens' rights, and fosters innovation responsibly. Addressing these concerns is vital for the balanced growth of AI technologies that serve humanity as a whole.

# WITHIN MY FEMININE LIMITS

-Dr. Navodita Pande, Department of English

As the USA votes for its president on November 5, Tuesday, the big question this time is- has America matured for its women presidential candidates? Last time Hillary Clinton was in the fray in 2016 presidential election, she did manage to win many a popular vote and has had a very active political career. She was the first woman in the history of America to contest for the presidential race against Donald Trump while Kamala Harris is the first woman to become Vice President in 2021.

However, the fact remains that women often remain out of the domain of active politics with only a few holding fort like Nikki Haley and this time Kamala Harris. A country that takes pride in being the epitome of freedom and dignity to everybody irrespective of gender, race, colour and ethnicity still manages to discriminate in a subtle way on the basis of gender.

In a major blow to reproductive rights in America, two years ago the Supreme Court stated that there is no constitutional right to abortion in the United States, reversing a long-settled law. While President Joe Biden dismissed the court ruling as 'an extreme and dangerous path' for America. As a few women fight it out to stay put in a male bastion, the truth is that historically in the first one hundred and thirty years of its existence, It was an all-male Senate. Margaret Chase Smith was the first woman to come to power in the House and in the Senate in 1949.

Of course things have changed for the better in the 21 st century where women like Madeleine Albright and Condoleezza Rice have created history; Madeleine Albright being the first woman U.S. Secretary of State and Condoleezza Rice being the first woman of colour Secretary of State. Alongside in 2007, Italian-origin Nancy Pelosi became the first woman Speaker of the House too.

However, the picture becomes dismal in a few cases- one-third of single women live in extreme poverty, there is still a wage gap between men and women, women still making up the majority of the population that takes up low-paid jobs and doing unpaid caregiving work; a large number of women are still victimized by violence and abuse- women in the U.S. military are more likely to be assaulted by fellow soldiers than killed in combat. A large number of women still remain underrepresented in leadership positions.

## *Campus Caricature*

*Illustrated by Bhaibhav Dutta, VII*





# Wah Ustad! Zakir Hussain

The legend of the  
Tabla Maestro

-Aanya Paul Sarkar, Deputy Editor, XI

## 1. Who was Ustad Zakir Hussain?

Zakir Hussain Allarakha Qureshi (March 9, 1951 – December 15, 2024) was a legendary Indian tabla player and composer, celebrated as one of the greatest percussionists in history. Born in Mumbai to renowned tabla maestro Ustad Alla Rakha, he began performing at a young age and gained international acclaim for his virtuosity. Hussain won four Grammy Awards and received numerous honours, including the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Vibhushan. He played a crucial role in popularising Indian classical music worldwide through collaborations with artists across various genres, including jazz and rock. His innovative techniques elevated the tabla to a prominent solo instrument, and he was also dedicated to music education. Hussain's legacy is marked by a unique blend of tradition and modernity, making him an iconic figure in Indian and global music.

## 2. How did growing up in a family of musicians impact his approach to music?

Growing up in a family of musicians profoundly shaped Zakir Hussain's approach to music, instilling in him a deep appreciation for the rich traditions of Indian classical music. Surrounded by the sounds of tabla and other instruments from an early age, he absorbed various musical styles and techniques, fostering his innate talent. His father, Ustad Alla Rakha, served as a mentor and introduced him to the importance of discipline and dedication in mastering the craft. He famously mentioned in an interview that on his birth his father whispered ragas into his ears instead of the traditional practice of whispering the religious 'Adhan'. He was known to begin his performances with a Saraswati Vandana and his most famous performances included playing the Shiv Vandana accompanied by the sound of a conch shell which he generated from his tabla.

*“Don't worry about being a great master. Just try to be a great student.”*



Illustrated by Erik Angie Riba, XI

### 3. What made Zakir Hussain a maestro?

Hussain transformed the tabla from a supporting instrument into a centrepiece of performance, captivating audiences worldwide with his ability to blend Indian classical music with various global genres. His collaborations with iconic musicians such as George Harrison and Mickey Hart not only showcased his versatility but also helped popularise Indian music on international platforms. Throughout his illustrious career, he chose to constantly experiment with various fields with his music. He became a trendsetter when he appeared in the advertisement for the Taj Mahal Tea, a TATA brand, where his famous quip ‘Wah Taj!’ became a clarion call for tea drinkers across the world.

### 4. What were his accomplishments?

Starting his musical journey at the age of seven, Zakir Hussain became a prominent tabla player, collaborating with legendary Indian musicians such as Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, and Shivkumar Sharma. His innovative fusion of Indian classical music with Western genres led to significant collaborations with artists like Yo-Yo Ma and Béla Fleck. Hussain achieved remarkable recognition, winning four Grammy Awards, including three in a single night at the 2024 Grammy Awards, making him the first Indian musician to do so. His contributions have not only elevated the status of Indian classical music globally but made him a youth icon across the globe.

**“Wah  
Taj!”**

**“You have to stay very close to your tradition, but also be able to inject some of what the world has to offer.”**

### 5. What was Zakir Hussain’s family life like?

As the only son of the Tabla legend Ustad Alla Rakha Khan, Zakir Hussain grew up under a conservative mother and a creative genius father who fostered in him a hunger to learn and explore his music. He met the Italian- American Kathak dancer Antonia Minnecola who he married after many years of togetherness. They were blessed with two daughters Anisa and Isabella. Despite his global fame, Zakir remains grounded, cherishing family values alongside his musical legacy.



Illustrated by Bhaibhav Dutta, VII



# BHOOTER \* GOLPO

-Sreestee Paul, Class VIII



I was 8 years old when I was first introduced to the wondrous supernatural tales of Bhoot, the equivalent of a ghost in Bangla. Shivers went down my spine as my mother told me endless spooky stories of this legend. As I grew, I understood that ghosts are an important and integral part of Bengali lore. Ghosts have been important in the socio-cultural beliefs, superstitions, and popular entertainment of Bengalis. Folktales from 'Thakurmar Jhuli' or Grandmother's tales are a staple part of growing up in a Bengali home along with the inescapable green tube of Boroline. Thakurmar Jhuli is a collection of stories that come with its own tribe of ghosts each special for its peculiar characteristic. One of the most popular tales from Thakurmar Jhuli is the tale of 'Shakchunni'. In local folklore, Shakchunni is depicted as the exact opposite of a traditional Bengali woman. They are depicted as evil, revenge-seeking, scary entities with pointy ears. Shakchunni is a 'petni' (a close cousin to the witch) who is said to live on top of willow trees and attack women who may catch their interest for one reason or the other. As a person who grew up in a typical Bengali household, I had come across innumerable tales of Shakchunni. I remember my mother telling me stories about this supernatural

creature which fueled my imagination as a child. The trees around our home which seemed to my young eyes the perfect abode of the Shakchunni. My mother used to say, "There lived a petni named Shakchunni on top of dense trees, and she was an evil spirit of a married woman who had an unsuccessful marriage. She loved to destroy the homes of happy families as she could not bear to see them live happily. Once her eyes fell on a Brahmin family, and she wanted to take the place of the Brahmin's wife. One day when the Brahmin's wife went out searching for her cattle with her beautiful hair left open and untied, Shakchunni took this as an invitation and attacked her and possessed her body, thus successfully destroying the happy family". This tale worked brilliantly in ensuring the 8-year-old me buried deeper under my covers with my eyes shut tight, losing myself to sleep and escaping into a world of tales before Shakchunni

Illustrated by Erik Angie Riba, XI

## THE OUTPOST

The AI race between America and China took on another gigabyte with the cheaper Chinese version called Deepseek hitting the market and taking a bite off the AI giant Nvidia's stock. Nirmala Sitaraman's 7th budget brought a wave of exuberance to the middle class as it waves off taxes up to 12.75 lakhs, changing the mood of the Opposition. In yet another blitzkrieg announcement, Trump promises to continue funding Zelensky's war provided Ukraine gives America its rare earth minerals. The U-19 women's cricket team did India proud by winning the T20 World Cup marking the start of 2025 with a brilliant achievement.



Illustrated by Tanveer Ahmed, XI

## AFS MEET

The Assam Valley School actively participated in the AFS East Zone Regional Meet jointly hosted by The Royal Global School and The Maria Public School from 4th to 6th of October, 2024. This Regional Meet centred on the theme of ‘Culture and Sustainability’: United for a Better World’ was a three-day event, packed with enriching experiences. This regional meet provided a wonderful opportunity for our aviators to interact with peers from different schools in the East, fostering cultural exchange and camaraderie.

## READING TORCH

On the eve of Teachers’ Day, 4th September 2024, the Reading Torch organized its 1st National Level Conference and Award Ceremony at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi and celebrated the significant contributions of over 150 schools and educators, including The Assam Valley School, recognized as a “Progressive Reading School.” This initiative cultivates a deeper and more structured reading culture across institutions. Some prominent figures present on the occasion were Dr. Shayama Chona; Dr. Deepak Vohra; Mr. Sanjay Kumar, Secretary, School Education and Literacy, Government of India; Mr Himanshu Gupta, Secretary, CBSE; Dr. Sanyam Bhardwaj, CBSE; Mr. Malik, NBT; Mr. Mark Rabbron, Director of Red Zebra, South Africa.



## OLYMPIADS

On 21st November 2024, students from classes 5 to 9 enthusiastically participated in the LogIQids Mental Aptitude Test 2024-25. This Olympiad serves as a cornerstone of our academic program, inspiring students to pursue academic excellence while fostering a love for learning. Beyond academics, this test empowers students with critical 21st-century skills, including analytical thinking, critical reasoning, and problem-solving abilities—skills essential for thriving in today’s world. Such initiatives extend learning beyond the classroom, shaping well-rounded, future-ready individuals.



## ALUMNI NEWS

We are glad to share with our stakeholders that one of our former alumnus, Bhargav Saikia’s directorial debut feature “Bokshi”, a folk horror fantasy shot in the deep forests of Sikkim in Northeast India and at The Assam Valley School is making its World Premiere at the highly prestigious International Film Festival Rotterdam in the Netherlands in January, 2025. It’s a unique horror film that everyone needs to experience!



## Ripple #242

-Rianna Irom, X

All hail the Prince,

Who has forsaken everything for  
the throne

For he has even betrayed his  
brother,

And now, with hands stained by  
the blood of his own,

He cradles his crown—

Ready to become King,

His sanity flown.

## Tongue Of Slip!!

1. "Why are you punching me? I was defending."-Vivek Gattani, XII (*Your grammar simply hurts.*)

2. "I didn't got."- Cheansal Agitok Sangma, XI (*And we doubt you ever will..*)

3. "To mocking kill a bird."- Chingloi Angh, Class XI (*You grammar murderer*)

4. "I need many much dumbbells."

-Nuntluanga, XII (*Try lifting a book first.*)

5. "I evaporated the house that night."-  
Krithartha Koushik, XII (*Manas vapourised.*)



## Keep It Reel!

*The Room above the Library.*

-Erik Angie Riba, XI



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