

THE OLD HOUSE ON THE HILL



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Maha Kumbh

Faith, Festivity and Economy

-Aanya Paul Sarkar, Deputy Editor, Class XII

In the heart of India, beneath the vibrant skies, a celestial spectacle is unfolding. The Maha Kumbh Mela, a confluence of faith, culture, and spirituality, is back after 144 long years. For the first time in more than a century, the world's largest human congregation is taking place once again in Prayagraj, where millions of devotees from across the globe have gathered to cleanse their souls in the holy waters of the Ganges, Yamuna, and the fabled Saraswati. This event, steeped in centuries of history and myth, is more than just a religious festival— it's a magnificent intersection of spirituality, economics, and national pride.

It is an event not just for the devout but for anyone seeking to experience the power of the mass spirituality lingering in the air. A ritual that began in ancient times, the Maha Kumbh is believed to have roots in the myth of the gods and

demons churning the ocean of milk to retrieve the nectar of immortality, also known as the 'Amrit'. During this churning, drops of the divine nectar fell at four locations— Haridwar, Nashik, Ujjain, and

It is the amalgamation of faith and economics that will define the success of the 2025 Kumbh.

Prayagraj—where the Kumbh Mela is held. But this Kumbh is unlike any before. The Maha Kumbh which is being held at Prayagraj has dawned after 144 years and its importance lies in a specific astronomical alignment

of the sun, the moon and Jupiter which is considered to be extremely auspicious. While the crowds have gathered in Prayagraj, it's not only the empyreal that draws attention but also the ground realities—the intense preparations, the massive infrastructure, and the economic wheels that power this enormous event.

The Uttar Pradesh government, under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, has invested approximately \$765 million to enhance infrastructure, including the expansion of roads, airports, and transportation networks, to accommodate the unprecedented influx of pilgrims while ensuring sustainability. This investment has transformed the region into a temporary city spanning 4,000 hectares, equipped with essential amenities such as kitchens,

sanitation facilities, solar power and healthcare services. The economic impact extends beyond infrastructure; the event stimulates local businesses, tourism, and job creation, with small and medium-sized enterprises flourishing from the global attention the event brings which is expected to generate over 2 lakh crore in income.

The 2025 Maha Kumbh Mela stands as a beacon of India's

spiritual and cultural heritage. It is an event that brings people from all walks of life together—Hindus and non-Hindus, pilgrims and tourists, the curious and the devout. "It is this amalgamation of faith and economics that will define the success of the 2025 Kumbh"—a historic event that will resonate for years to come, not only for its spiritual significance but for its role in shaping the future of India.

The convergence of millions at the banks of the Ganga will continue to send goosebumps down the spines of those lucky enough to witness this mesmerising sight. As the holy waters of the confluence flow by Prayagraj, so too will the spirit of a nation at the crossroads of tradition and progress. It is a once-in-a-lifetime moment—a profound reminder that some things, in the face of time, remain unbroken.

THE OLD HOUSE ON THE HILL

-Jentina Yaomei Shangkhu,
Subansiri House Prefect, Class XII

The old house stood on a hill overlooking the town.

Locals whispered stories about it, tales of a family that vanished without a trace a century ago. I, of course, dismissed them as folklore. I was young, arrogant, and convinced I knew better. Besides, the rent was ridiculously cheap.

The first few weeks were uneventful. The house was dusty, sure, and the floorboards creaked a bit, but nothing out of the ordinary for a place that old. Then, the whispers started. Faint at first, like someone murmuring just beyond my hearing. I'd whirl around, but there was never anyone there.

One night, I woke to a bone-chilling cold. The air hung heavy, and the whispers were louder, clearer. They seemed to be calling my name. I sat up in bed, heart pounding, and saw it. A flicker of movement in the corner of the room. Just a shadow, I told myself. But then it coalesced. A figure, translucent and gaunt, with hollow eyes that stared directly at me.

I screamed, scrambling back against the headboard. The



Illustrated by Baibhav Dutta, VII

figure didn't move, didn't speak. It just... watched. And as I stared back, frozen with terror, I noticed something else. Behind the translucent figure, barely visible, were others. Dozens of them. All watching. All silent. All... waiting.

I didn't sleep that night. I sat there, rigid, as the first rays of dawn crept through the window. As the light grew stronger, the figures began to fade, until finally, they were gone. I didn't wait. I packed my bags and fled that house, never looking back.

I tried to tell people what I saw, but they just gave me that knowing look, the one reserved for those who have lost their minds. Maybe they're right. Maybe I imagined it all. But sometimes, late at night, when everything is quiet, I still hear the whispers. And I know, deep down, that they're still waiting. Waiting for me to come back. And sometimes, I think I see them in the shadows, watching me even now. And the worst part is, sometimes I think I see their eyes in the mirror, staring back at me, no longer hollow, but filled with a chilling familiarity.

The Science Behind Love

What Happens in Your Brain?

-Aaryan Kumar Shullai, Batch of 2026

Love—it's in movies, songs, and even your favorite TV shows. But what actually happens in your brain when you start liking someone? Why do people act a little strange when they have a crush? Science has the answers! Let's break it down.

Step 1: The Brain Chemicals That Make You Like Someone

Ever noticed your heart races when you see someone you like? That's dopamine at work! This “feel-good” chemical makes you excited, happy, and even a little obsessed. Then comes norepinephrine, which gives you that rush of energy (and sweaty palms). When you get closer to someone, oxytocin—known as the “bonding hormone”—makes you feel attached, while vasopressin helps you feel connected. Basically, your brain is running a chemical experiment without telling you.

Step 2: Why Crushes Make You See Things Differently

Did you ever think someone's weird habits were “cool” just because you liked them? That's because love affects your brain's ability to judge. Studies show that when people like someone, their brain temporarily stops focusing on flaws. Scans of the brain even show that being in love activates the same areas as eating chocolate or winning a game. No wonder people enjoy the feeling!

Step 3: Why You're Drawn to Certain People

Ever wonder why you have a “type”? That's because of something called a “love map.” It's a list of traits your brain finds interesting, shaped by your experiences, family, and culture. And get this—smell plays a role too! Pheromones (natural scent

signals) help your brain decide if someone is a good match. So if you like how someone smells without knowing why, that's just biology doing its thing.

Step 4: Long-Term Friendship vs. Short-Term Excitement

At first, liking someone feels exciting and new, but over time, the brain shifts gears. Instead of constant excitement, it focuses on trust, comfort, and teamwork—kind of like having a best friend you can always count on. But keeping friendships and relationships strong takes effort. Small surprises, spending time together, and being supportive help keep the connection strong.

Step 5: Why Breakups Feel Like a Headache

When people lose a close connection, the brain reacts like it's in physical pain. It releases stress hormones, making you feel tired and upset. But just like a sports injury, your brain heals over time. Staying active, talking to friends, and focusing on hobbies can help speed up the process.

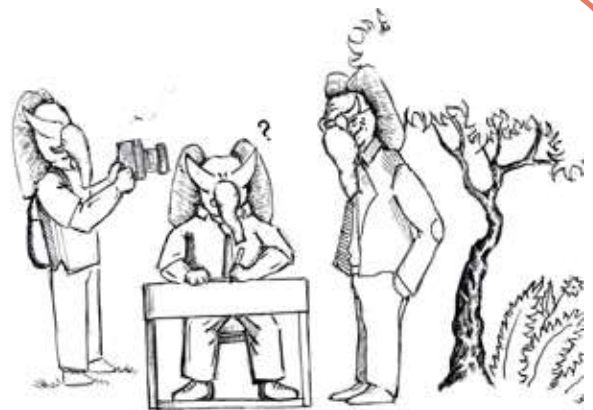
Love: A Brainy Adventure

So, what's the big takeaway? Love is just science in action! From brain chemicals to personal preferences, everything happens for a reason. And next time you feel excited, nervous, or even confused about someone, remember—it's not just you, it's your brain at work!

Campus Caricature

THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS

Illustrated by Baibhav Dutta, VII



THE KOREAN CATASTROPHE

-Ranvijay Singh, Class VII

At 9:00 AM on December 29, 2024, all was quiet at Muan International Airport in South Korea—until the radio crackled: “Mayday, Mayday, Mayday... Bird strike, bird strike, go-around.” It was Jeju Air Flight 2216. In an instant, calm turned to chaos. The massive aircraft skidded along the asphalt, and time seemed to freeze. Would the plane remain intact? No one knew. The Boeing 737 veered off the runway, hurtling toward the perimeter fence. Air traffic controllers braced for the inevitable. Seconds later, a fireball erupted. Flames engulfed the wreckage as emergency services rushed in. For those in the ATC tower, time crawled—each second stretched into eternity, each wisp of smoke a silent tragedy. The aftermath was devastating. Barely anything remained of the aircraft. Only two survivors, were found and both were in critical condition. Social media erupted. This disaster reignited the urgency within South Korea’s aviation safety administration. As in every crash, there are lessons to be learned. After all, as a well-known pilot once said, “One crash early on is a blessing—it prevents a thousand more in the future.”

Heritage

-Ananya Yadav, Class X

The allure of western culture has captivated the current generation, leading them to disown their heritage. Embarrassed by their own language and origins, they blindly follow foreign trends. Westernisation of social media connects us globally but it also influences people to uncritically follow celebrities and trends focusing too much on beauty standards and consumerism. While some think this is revolutionary broadening of perspectives, they neglect their country’s unique identity. In contrast, South Korea, despite westernization proudly upholds its language, customs and tradition earning global admiration. Indians, once suppressed under the British rule, struggle to rediscover their identity. Instead of repeating history, it’s time to forge a new identity and create a brighter future. Let’s celebrate our diversity, address our nation’s challenges and craft a new narrative for generations to come.

In-a-NUTSHELL

-Khichu Kath, Associate Editor, Class XII

Vice- President J.D Vance’s speech at the Munich Security conference sets the cat amongst the pigeons as he criticizes Europe over free speech and migration. Most leaders found a taste of their own medicine, distasteful. The Russia-Ukraine war promises to come to a halt soon, now that talks have begun over a ceasefire. This arrangement however, remains under clouds in certain parts of Europe. The Maha Kumbh comes to an end with the Mahashivratri celebrations as thousands flock to Prayagraj for the final dip. The exodus from the Congress continues and this time threatens to take the chrysostomic Sashi Tharoor with it. PM Modi visits Assam to inaugurate, witness and celebrate the historic Jhumoir Binandini where over 8500 Jhumur dancers from tea-gardens across the state have performed. Amongst the visiting dignitaries were also EAM Jaishankar along with a litany of foreign dignitaries as well as Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani. The event promises to generate massive investments in the state while also promoting tourism.

CEASEFIRE

-Sreestee Paul, Class VIII

A ceasefire and hostage deal between Israel and Hamas began on January 19. But does this signal the true end of the devastating war? That remains uncertain. As the ceasefire continued, eight hostages were released from Gaza on January 30, while Israel freed 110 Palestinian prisoners in the West Bank.

Gazans celebrated the temporary truce. However, Israel delayed some releases in response to the treatment of hostages during the handover. Now that Trump is back in power, he has the potential to influence the conflict’s outcome.

If he chooses not to support the war, he could play a role in ending it—but would he risk opposing the broader Arab world? Only time will tell.

THE VISIONARIES BEHIND AVS A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

-Mrs. Sagarika Dutta, Department of Mathematics

Every great institution begins with a dream. For The Assam Valley School (AVS), that dream was nurtured by Mrs. Julia Magor, Mr. B.M. Khaitan, and Mr. David Summerscale, whose dedication turned an idea into reality on the 11th of February, 1995. To commemorate this day a special Foundation Day Assembly was held on the 11th of this month, 2025. The assembly was presented by the Class 8's of Kopili and Dhansiri and the morning was graced by Mr. Summerscale, Chairman of the Governing Body along with his wife Mrs. Pauline Summerscale.

The vision took root decades ago when Mrs. Magor, visiting Assam's tea estates with her husband, Richard Magor, recognized the urgent need for quality education. Families working on the estates had to send their children miles away for schooling, enduring long separations. Determined to create a world-class institution in Assam, Mrs. Magor discussed the idea with Mr. B.M. Khaitan in the late 1980s, sparking a mission to establish AVS.

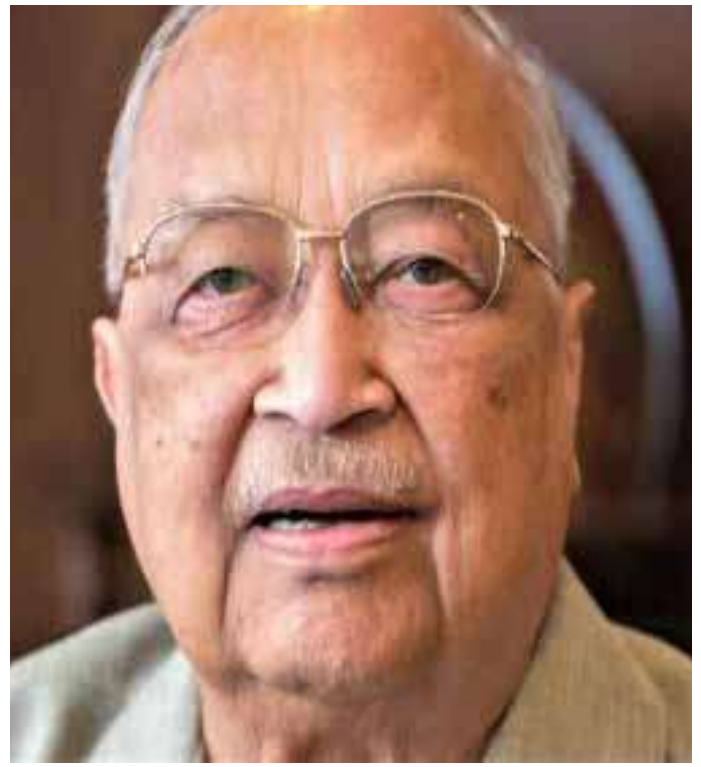
Mr. Khaitan, a visionary industrialist, played a pivotal role in bringing AVS to life. With unwavering generosity and leadership, he provided the financial and strategic support necessary to build an institution

that would redefine education in the Northeast. His involvement extended beyond funding—he meticulously oversaw infrastructure, curriculum development, and faculty recruitment, ensuring AVS upheld the highest standards of excellence.

A key figure in shaping AVS was Mr. David Summerscale, former Headmaster of Westminster School, London. Personally invited by Richard Magor, he lent his expertise to guide the school's foundation and served as Chairman of the Board of Governors, helping establish AVS as a premier educational institution.

On February 11, 1990, the foundation stone was laid at Harchurah Tea Estate, marking the transformation of vision into reality. Today, AVS stands as a beacon of holistic education, fostering academic brilliance, creativity, and leadership—all made possible by the foresight and dedication of its founders.

As we walk these corridors, we honour their legacy by upholding the values of excellence, innovation, and service, ensuring that AVS continues to inspire generations to come.



UK GAP STUDENTS VISIT AVS

On the 8th of February, 2025, AVS welcomed three Gap Year students from the UK—Esme, Josephine, and Eleanor—who are participating in a 55-day immersive learning program organized by East Quest, a bespoke travel company focused on nature, wildlife, and community engagement. The program includes a 10-day cultural tour, 10 days of nature learning across three national parks, and five weeks of community work, where the students engage in teaching, volunteering, assisting with farming, and supporting local homestays and kitchens. Their visit to AVS was particularly special, as one of the students, Esme Brawn, has a unique connection to the school—her mother, Ms. Emily Brawn, attended AVS as a GAP student from 1998 to 1999. This visit not only brought back memories but also reinforced the strong legacy of cultural exchange and learning that AVS continues to foster.

The school community was delighted to interact with the students, who shared insights into their experiences and the impact of their program. Their journey exemplifies the importance of experiential learning, cross-cultural understanding, and community engagement—values that align closely with AVS’s educational philosophy. We look forward to welcoming more students in the future.



LOWER SCHOOL INTER HOUSE HINDI DEBATES

The Lower School Inter-House Debate Competition was held on 8th February 2025 at 6:30 PM in Williams Magor Hall. Teams of four debaters from each brother and sister house participated, debating the topic Social Media is Misleading Children. The competition highlighted students’ eloquence and critical thinking, with participants presenting well-researched arguments for and against the motion. They demonstrated confidence and poise, captivating the audience with insightful perspectives. Students and teachers in attendance appreciated the debaters’ efforts and depth of analysis. The event fostered intellectual exchange and encouraged meaningful discussion on a contemporary issue. The result of the debate was as follows:



Best Speaker - Aanvi Ghosh Class 8
Samarth Jain Class 8

Most Promising Speaker - Urja Jain

Best Questioner - Lakshyaveer Das Barman

House Positions are as follows:

Subansiri-Namdang = First Position - 251 Points
Bhoroli-Lohit = Second Position - 250 Points
Jinari-Manas = Third Position - 242 Points
Kopili-Dhansiri = 217 Points



HINDI POETRY COMPETITION

The Lower School Hindi Poetry Competition held on the 18th of February, 2025 showcased an inspiring display of literary brilliance. The event was anchored by Anushka Shivkumar Iyer of class 7. Held under the guidance of the Hindi Department, the event saw enthusiastic participation from students across various grades. The competition not only highlighted the students' creative talents but also reinforced the beauty of Hindi literature across genres. Results of the competition were as follows:

Class 5:

First position: Aaradhya Dixit

Second position: Shirel Dixit

Class 6:

First position -Arpit Yadav

Second position -Keerat Kaur Rawat

-Aaradhya Eon Baruah

Class 7:

First position - Nilav Prajapati

Second position - Anaika Ginoria

-Ryan Dutta

Class 8:

First position -Nishika Patodia

Second position -Urja Jain



INTER HOUSE LOWER SCHOOL ART

Inter-House Lower School Art Competition was held at AVS on February 2, 2025.

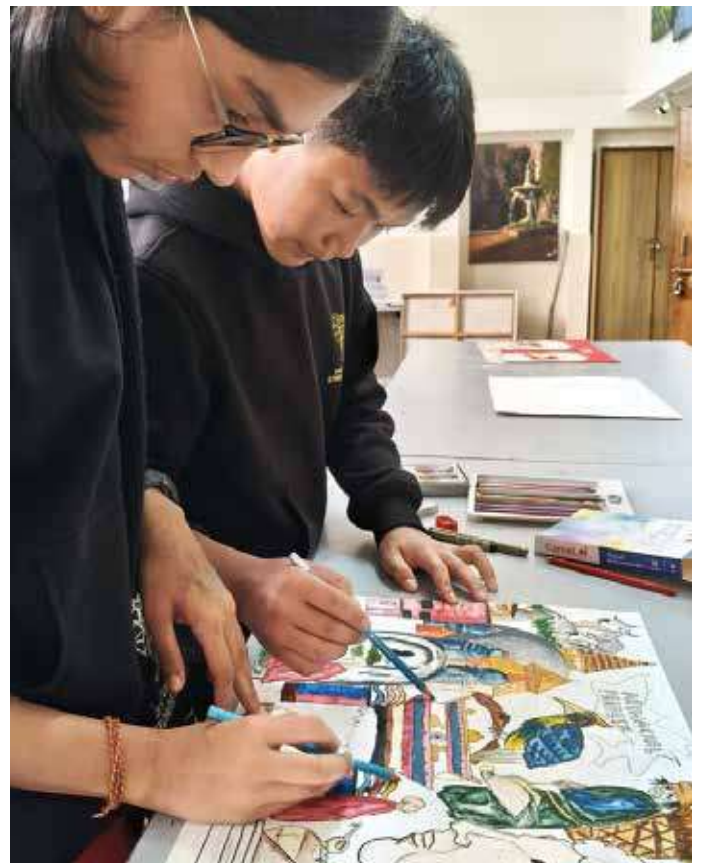
The painting category had 'Travel Diaries' as its theme while for clay modelling the theme was 'Flower Composition in Relief Work'.

Results are as follows:

First Position: Bhoroli-Lohit

Second Position: Jinari-Manas

Third Position: Kopili-Dhansiri



Ripple #243

-Mikita Riba, XII

Jasmine raced through the old city,
longing to escape.

The wind whispered her name as she
laughed, gripping the worn carpet.

Soaring over Baghdad, freedom
intoxicated her.

“They won’t remember,” she thought—
unaware she would live forever in the
pages of *The Arabian Nights*.

Tongue Of Slip!!

1. “I haven’t dranken any water today” -
Imchalong Longchari, XII (*And you will stay
parched*)

2. “I part took in choir.” -Kagam Tech, XII
(*Liar.*)

3. “I just say to came hi” - Mrs. Sagarika
Dutta (*Well, Hello Ma’am.*)

4. “I think trigo is my game of tea” - Bhumika
Ranjan, X (*Destroy Math like you have English*)

5. “Physics is before Physics” - Rajkumari
Anya Devi, X (*Give Mr. Taufique a break.*)

Keep It Reel!

Starting off
-Archives



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