

SPORT

THE CROSSROADS

KHEL MELA 2026

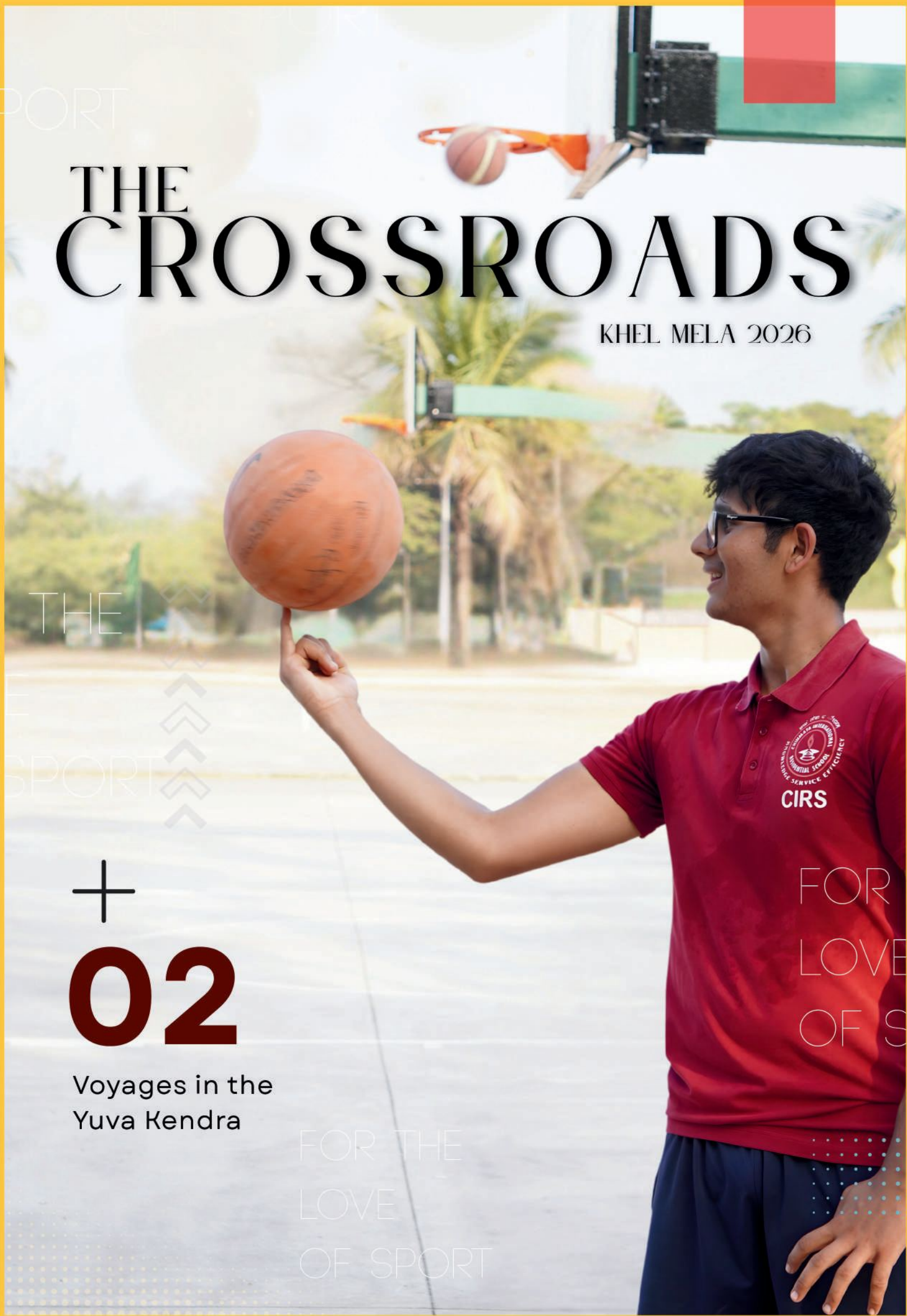
THE
SPORT

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Voyages in the
Yuva Kendra

FOR THE
LOVE
OF SPORT

FOR
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The Crossroads

February 2026

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khel mela Issue


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My home

A place where you are always welcome and surrounded by those who love you

Like most other kids, I had an enjoyable childhood with my family, so naturally, making the tough decision to join a boarding school 2,359 long kilometres away from home was an emotional one. But by fate or by chance, I landed at CIRS in 2022 after almost a year of online classes due to the pandemic, and since then, I've had quite the experience of a lifetime.

Joining in 6th grade as a shy young boy who played too much Minecraft and coming to a beautiful campus filled with so many other boys and girls my age hailing from all over the country and world, whom I would literally have to live with 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the majority of each year, was an experience like no other. Some would argue that it's the best part of a boarding school - the friends you make and the family you learn to live with.



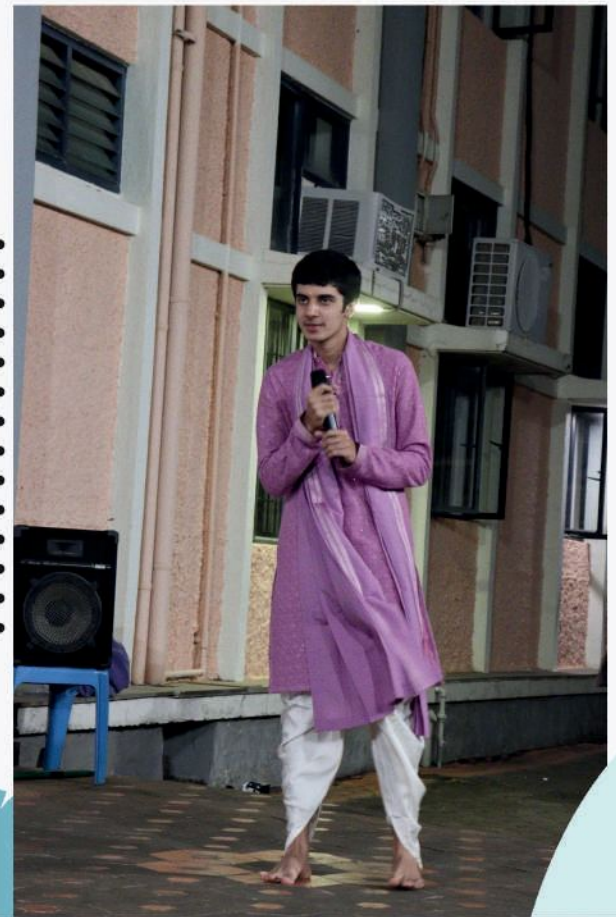
Fast forward 4 years, and now that my journey is nearing its end. I can't help but remember all the good times I've had, from the weekly pleasure of paneer and the bustling economies that thrive with it, to the Sunday morning Yuvakendra classes. From my liberal and romantic encounter with the rules and regulations to the joy of fast-paced quizzing for the school team, from the light-hearted moments on the tennis court to the heavier ones in the last few nights before Anand Utsav. From the innocence of Govindalaya, the laughter of Krishnalaya, and the love of Keshavalaya to the home I've found in the prime real estate of the office.

Above all, I feel the best part about this school is the abundant opportunities given to all who are willing to take them. The opportunity to be stronger and faster, gain more experience, participate in and perform



in competitions, sports, quizzes, debates, and so on. But the most unique opportunity, and arguably the one that matters the most, is the opportunity to become spiritually strong, patriotic, and culturally grounded. This is a school run on the values and the vision of Gurudev by his followers, and after joining here, I've become more aware of the glorious past of this nation and more patriotic towards its promise of the future, and that has made me a more genuine and better person than I was to begin with. And for that, I will forever be grateful to this school.

At the end of the day, the rising sun must set at dusk, for the golden dawn of tomorrow. I understand that this journey has come to an end, and that all that is left to do is embrace its course and keep it in my heart as I go. I've come to terms with the fact that I'll be packed and boarded back to Gurguram for the last time as a student on the 10th of March, and I'm beginning to realize how much I'm going to miss my second home, the beautiful hills (that I hoped to climb), the unique excellence of our Annakshetra, the worn tiles of the crossroads, the dorm rooms, the wilderness of the C-sectioned classrooms, the charm of the tennis court, the clean air, the cool pool, the dusty tracks, and of course, the people that bore me through 5 years. A school is beyond its mere infrastructure, and becomes a home to so many people because of everyone who studies, teaches, and stays there. And to all of them, my teachers, mentors, dorm parents and friends I am forever grateful. Thank you!



Voyages

in the

Yuva Kendra

ADITHYAN
DIWAKAR
VIDYA |
CLASS IB II |
CIRS

Feared less,
cared more.
Talked less,
worked more.
Fought less,
thought more.



A memoir of my brief experiences in the shadow of Gurudev's light for the youth.

Bag stuffed, folder filled, and brain completely devoid of meaning: that would accurately encapsulate my state in the very first class of CHYK CIRS. Seated in a circle with faces familiar and unfamiliar, I felt more apprehension than inspiration. And yet, here I find myself three years on, molded by the hands of giants, in the service of the God called Man, with my eyes blissfully opened to the infinite potential in all things living.

This was no instant transformation. At first glance, the Chinmaya Yuva Kendra at CIRS was only a tangled mass of philosophical sessions, with perhaps a few outings filled with exciting activities and performances in between. But as we turned the pages of 'Freedom and Licence,' the first chapter of our study, Gurudev's words seemed to leap out of the pages and into the core of our hearts. I felt an indescribable weight in them, jolting me to move beyond mere intellectual wanderings into living and breathing spirituality.

There exists a gross misconception of spirituality, that it is only a field for the old and decrepit folk, living out their days in solitude and isolation. CHYK showed me the polar opposite - a gathering of young people constantly chipping away to mold their character, building themselves to build Bharat. Their infectious dynamism proved to me that spirituality is no secluded field. In fact, it is not a field at all, because it deals instead with the one commonality that threads together all fields of the world: your Self.

There exists a gap between good and bad, a chasm between the righteous and the ignoble. Every student feels the strong tug of the latter side, egging them on to settle for lesser, the more appealing and pleasurable. I certainly did. But self-control is not the absence of temptation; it is one's triumph over it.

My greatest battles were not blind competitions for marks with my peers or my struggles on the sports field - they were in quiet moments in the dead of night - warring against my own mind. And while I had several companions in my other endeavors, my sole

pillar in this inward fight was CHYK. CIRS offers us two paths - one of industrious work, dedicated effort and unwavering character, and another of wasteful lethargy, impermanent joys, and low-quality living. Our unfortunate reality is that the first path is a road not taken, while the second sees several travellers with each passing moment.

My own path-changer was a single habit; the Yuva Kendra's greatest gift to me: Sadhana. Simply chanting a set of 24 syllables might seem like the most mundane activity



on this planet, and yet a mere 108 turns of my mala beads every day have brought quietude to my once-wayward mind. It has imparted to me a strength unspeakable: one that allows me to take a stand against hundreds and thousands without batting an eye. It has hardened me to become immune to any challenge, trouble or tribulation that the world may throw at me, and it has also softened me to withdraw the venomous hatred that I once used to throw out into the world.

CHYK's activities are not unlike those at several other schools: light-and-sound shows, school-wide yatras with interactive stations, temple treks, and the foundational weekly classes are nothing outside the perceived normal. But I soon discovered that CHYK's real beauty lay not in its activities, but in the spirit with which they were executed. The determined ideation, enthusiastic execution, and whole-hearted servitude pushed me to constantly, joyously serve the Yuva Kendra. In return, it gave me perhaps even more: it took me across Bharat to the International Youth Convention, placed an entire cohort of aspiring Chyksters in my hands, and brought my words to thousands of people through the Chinmaya Udghosh.

Slowly, silently, the months of sadhana, study and reflection piled on top of each other to bring about a revolution from within. I feared less and cared more. I talked less and worked more. I fought less and thought more. I cannot pinpoint exactly where or when these changes came about. I can only stand today on the shore, look back at the raging storm, and bow in gratitude to the organization that sailed me through it. I know still that I have accomplished nothing - that there are many more mountains to climb, and many more storms to weather. But the Yuva Kendra has brought me some part of the way up the highest peak - the peak of self-mastery - and so I know that the challenges of the world, no matter how large they may seem, are never insurmountable.



“

**HERE I FIND MYSELF
THREE YEARS ON, MOLDED
BY THE HANDS OF GIANTS,
IN THE SERVICE OF THE
GOD CALLED MAN, WITH
MY EYES BLISSFULLY
OPENED TO THE INFINITE
POTENTIAL IN ALL THINGS
LIVING.**

To all those who wish to truly join CHYK: leave your ego at the doorstep, open up narrowed notions and embrace these teachings with pure love and unwavering faith. Question everything. Hate nothing. Reflect daily. Speak boldly. Act powerfully. Slowly, you will find yourself staring back and wondering what magical touch must have taken place to turn you into the person you will be. That is no magic. It is transformation - slow, strenuous, and unfathomably rewarding. It is the hallmark of this organisation. Yuva Kendra is not a place for the spineless. Its first principle is that spirituality is about lived experience, never about purposeless discussion. I have made difficult choices, sometimes excruciatingly painful ones, but behind every choice is the call of dharma - of that unfailing righteousness that separates the mighty from the millions.

Somewhere far along this journey you may catch a glimpse of God, and beyond that there is nothing more I can tell you about - only an existence so beautiful that describing it would be defacing it. You will find Him, not with a great white beard in the clouds, but shining through every man, woman and child around you. That is a faraway summit, but we can begin today with a choice - the Yuva Kendra choice - of slowly removing that vile selfishness from ourselves and growing into more successful individuals in the service of noble causes. Until that day, my humble farewell.

Do games even benefit us?

HRIDAAN RUSHABH
ZAVERI
| VIII A

Do games even benefit us? Or are they just a way to pass the time?

Well, we all live in a world full of competition, all around us, especially after we grow up. In our teenage years, we may have been told to “start being serious” or “this isn’t the time for games”, but I think life itself is just a really big game. When we are only children, the competition is different - it is supposed to prepare us for the future. Things like races and competitive marks do matter, but the common teacher is fun.

Which brings me to my point - How do games benefit us? When we think of games, we imagine a circle of kids playing and laughing. Games can be played by anyone, from old people to young kids. Games like chess help us develop analytical thinking, where we think before every move. But that's just the indoor games; other games like basketball, football, hockey, cricket teach us loads of other things like strategy.

Other games like Monopoly, Risk, and Life teach us how to handle money, make smart decisions, and explore life.

Well, that means that the other games are just for fun, right? Obviously not. All games have a specific significance. Take the game Dobble, for example. It develops our skill of visualisation.

So, next time you play a game, remember that it's not always about winning, but what you learn and develop from it, and how much you've improved through playing.

THE RACE BEYOND

It's Sunday. Millions are tuning into their digital screens to watch one thing. Fast cars. Actually, 20 of them, racing at speeds that vaporize everything in their path. Behind their wheels lies the brave racer, experiencing the rush. All for one cause. Pass the checkered flag first. For 2 hours, engines scream, tires burn, and the world witnesses pure acceleration. For most, F1 ends there. The Pinnacle of Speed, Motorsport. A simple race. But wars are not fought in press meets and are not won in TV interviews. Beneath the glamor and the rush exists a system where the \$\$\$ dictates performance, existence and survival. Three years ago F1 generated over \$3.4 billion in revenue. Mind you that is a figure which can fund a small nation for 365 days. F1 is not just a mere motorsport, it is an economic machine.

Money enters F1 through channels that are specifically designed for control and predictability. The largest piece of this cake comes from the broadcast and the media rights. Companies are desperate over owning the rights to show F1. These rights are sold to various networks around the world, in safe, long term contracts. This is a failsafe that ensures no matter who the victor may be, the sport retains its money. Governments too pay a staggering huge amount to host these races, with the figure being around 30 to 60 million dollars. This price is paid by the governments as F1 offers many perks with them. It offers visibility, prestige and strong geo-political branding. Add to this huge capital injections from corporate sponsorships, buying association with the team with innovation and dominance, these streams manage to create the constant ever flowing capital into the sport.

Beneath the roar of engines lies Formula One Management (FOM), the entity that truly commands the world of adrenaline. It owns the commercial rights, oversees and controls negotiations and easily decides who eats and who starves. It doesn't race, engineer or innovate, but this entity dictates the future of F1 motorsports.



It's role is one of a Financial gatekeeper. The FOM collects tons of money and cleverly redistributes them selectively under the jurisdiction of the 'CONCORDE' agreement, while retaining its own benefits for its parent company, Liberty Media. This tells us that this is not competition. It is centralised, formalized, cold hard control. F1, exists as Monopoly

The teams delve into their sector, rounding up to the crucial question. "How can i, cross the checkered flag, first," injecting millions into aerodynamics, simulations and clean, data driven, statistic based marginal gains. The engineers responsible for this are absolute assets. The commanders of the engine, the drivers, are commodities. The logistics by itself, amounts to millions, with the teams shifting across the continents all year round. The induction of the cost cap was cleverly marketed as reform, but in reality, it barely slowed down the spending. This reform was unable to touch the decades of accumulated advantages.

Outside the circuits, the F1 economy plunges into the national economies and the host countries observe massive boosts in their revenue due to tourism and active infrastructure betterment. The team owners reap their benefits. The payout system in F1 might seem unfair to most people, but in reality, the system is clear cut. The strongest and the fastest survive. The payments are based on the legacy of the wins and the team's current performance.

The successful teams receive the "Legacy Bonus." The sponsors increasingly gravitate to the dominant and the proven teams. This creates a feedback loop. Money produces performance, the performance attracts the money, and restart.

While all of this is true, the public funds spent by the governments bears massive opportunity costs, which are ignored in this global race for recognition

So what is F1 really about? Is it about speed? about skill? Is it even about the competition? F1, is a closed, deep and a beautifully detailed economic environment where the money is injected through the media deals and public funds, formalised under the FOM, redistributed to protect its dominance, while reinvesting to maintain the positions, and exported as global influence. The racing isn't fake. But the outcome is often decided before the lights go silent. Money not only rewards success, it actively manufactures it.

So the next time you witness a system don't stop at the surface level details. Question it, observe it and then come up with your own thesis. The world is filled with puzzles to solve, and your mind is waiting for you to unlock them.

See you in the next issue, with yet another Fiscal Narrative!



In today's rapidly urbanizing world, the spotlight is often stolen by western trends and Hollywood movies. Amidst this global background, our age-old Indic practices are often overshadowed.

When we talk about Bharat - specifically Southern Bharat, there are a lot of predominant cultural practices such as Thai-Poosam and Theyyam, to name a few. Beneath all these popular traditions lies the practice of Bhoot-a-Kola, that came into the limelight in 2022 with the release of the movie Kantara.

The movie depicts an ancient ritualistic practice performed by the people of the Tulu tribe. This practice dates back to almost a thousand years. In Bhoot-a Kola, two primary deities are worshipped, the boar-deity Panjurli and the fearsome deity Guliga. To summon them, the villagers would perform a "Bhoot a Kola" wherein the main performer would dress up elaborately and intricately paint his face. Then, the performers would perform a few sacred steps to invoke the deities. Once they are invoked, the performer would go into a trance. It was believed that the deity - usually called by Tulu people as the 'Daiva' - would possess the body and use it as a medium to communicate with the people.

The two Daiva's are polar opposites in terms of duty, yet together they ensure the safety of the people and of the forest they call home. The deity Panjurli is usually invoked to settle disputes as he is seen as the forgiver, whereas Guliga is invoked as the fierce protector, who ensures safety of people in times of great danger.

Bhoot a Kola is a perfect example of absolute faith and belief in the divine Lord. It also serves as a stark portal to the richness and diversity of Ancient Indian Culture.

Bhoota Kola

TANMMAY N
HAMBIGI | IX A



TRUST

THE NEVER-ENDING PROBLEM OF THE PRISONER'S DILEMMA

Imagine yourself in this familiar high school scene where you and your best friend are tasked with a huge project, the kind that demands hours of focused, dedicated work. Both of you want an A, but a tempting choice arises. Your friend is a highly motivated, driven student, capable of doing excellent work alone. This knowledge creates a loophole in your mind, a calculated bias that whispers: "Why should I put in the full effort if I know my friend will carry the load anyway?". This internal conflict between helping your teammate and prioritizing your own leisure is a situation quite common in classrooms, and is best understood through the concept of Game Theory.

The basic conflict revolves on the choice between cooperation by doing your half of the work and defection by slacking off, hoping for a free ride. If both you and your friend choose to cooperate, you both work less and get an excellent grade - the desired outcome. But that tempting choice lingers - what if you defect? If your motivated friend still cooperates, you get the same excellent grade with zero effort. In pure rational terms, choosing defection seems like the most beneficial path for an individual. However, if both friends decide to be "rational" and defect, that is, assume that the other will do all the work, the project fails, and you both get a failing grade.

The aforementioned situation demonstrates the core paradox about rational individuals making the best choice for themselves, while the collective outcome is often worse for everyone. This is an undervalued and rarely recognized concept, and can be seen in almost every situation where there is a dilemma. This concept of Game Theory is famously illustrated by the Prisoner's Dilemma, where two suspects are arrested for a crime and placed in separate rooms. They are each offered a choice: Either confess to committing the crime, or remain silent and refuse to cooperate.

There can only be 4 outcomes:

1. Both of the suspects remain silent, they each get a minor sentence due to lack of evidence - prison for 1 year.
2. One of the suspects betrays the other, by confessing to the crime, and goes scott free, while the other gets the maximum sentence of 20 years.
3. Both of the suspects aim for betrayal, and confess - yet due to the honesty of both our criminals, they get a lesser sentence of 5 years each.

Neither has any idea of what the other will say, and have no method of confirming what the other has said. Hence, without knowing the other's choice, the most rational and selfish strategy for an individual is to confess. This is the most cost-effective solution, regardless of the other suspect's choice. Either you get the best outcome of freedom, or the sub-optimal 5 year sentence. Naturally, a "fair" choice would be to both remain silent and get the minimum common punishment of 1 year, which is the best "collective" outcome, comes with a higher risk to the individual.



This mutual defection - where rational self-interest leads to a poor collective outcome - is known as the Nash Equilibrium. In most of the cases, the end product almost always turns out to be the selfish mutual defection. Even when the activity is repeated, the result is most often this assured "win", due to a lack of trust.

The real-world application of this strategic interaction is most evident in the market structure known as oligopoly, where a few large companies dominate the sector, but ironically their decisions completely depend on their competitors' actions.

Consider the rivalry between substitute goods like Pepsi and Coke. Their market is a constant, real-time Prisoner's Dilemma, and they live under constant fear. If both companies cooperate by keeping prices high, both profit substantially. If one defects by initiating a price war (lowering prices), that company gains a short-term advantage, but the competitor is forced to retaliate. The end result is that both companies suffer reduced profit margins, trapped in the equivalent of the 3-year sentence.

This competitive dynamic extends beyond pricing. Actions by a brand ambassador, such as Cristiano Ronaldo's famous decision to move Coke bottles aside in favor of water during a press conference, are moves that instantly impact the competitor's value and decision-making calculus. These companies live in a perennial crisis mentality, constantly seeking an upper hand in a game where their own decisions are completely dependent on the expected moves of the competition.

Ultimately, the only way out of the "Defect/Defect" trap, whether in a high school project or a multi-billion dollar market, is through trust. The fundamental element that allows both the parties to move toward the wanted outcome is the confidence that the other side will not pursue a self-serving route, a confidence gained only through complete trust. Unfortunately, these days trust has almost become like a brittle chalk, and this scenario is like a game of chess where the players are scared to even make a move. In all strategic interactions, from the classroom to the world stage of climate negotiations and even oligopolies, the critical choice to be made remains: Trust or Bust.



LIGHT IN DARKNESS

THE ROOM IS BLACK, NO
STARS OUTSIDE,
JUST WALLS CLOSING IN,
HEAVY AND TIGHT.
BUT THERE'S THIS GLOW,
SMALL LIKE THE STARLIGHT,
CUTTING THROUGH THE MESS
INSIDE MY MIND.

IT STARTED SMALL, THAT
TINY SPARK,
FROM A FRIEND'S TEXT OR A
SONG THAT HITS.
WHEN EVERYTHING CRASHES,
HOMEWORK PILES HIGH,
THIS LIGHT PULLS ME UP, SAYS
I CAN FIGHT.

TESTS AND DRAMA TRY TO
SNUFF IT OUT,
NIGHTS FEEL ENDLESS, ALONE
IN THE FIGHT,
I FAN THE GLOW, NO ROOM FOR
DOUBT,
TURN MY PAIN TO POWER, OWN
THE NIGHT.

DOUBTS SCREAM LOUD,
"YOU'RE NOT ENOUGH,"
FRIENDS FAKE, FAMILY'S FAR,
WORLD'S TOO MUCH.
YET HERE IT BURNS, WARM IN
MY CHEST,
REMINDING ME; TOMORROW'S
MY BEST.

NO MORE HIDING, I CHASE
THAT FLAME,
THROUGH THE DARK NIGHTS, I
OWN MY NAME.
IT'S NOT MAGIC, JUST ME
STANDING TALL,
MY LIGHT IN THE DARK—I'LL
NEVER FALL.

SRVYAA RISHAB SHAH
II NGMT



The Global

CHYK Camp



Three Swamis, five Brahmacharins, more than 100 Chyks, and an infinite amount of learning - this was my journey as the youngest boy in the 18th Global Chyk Camp! Delayed flights, lingering jet lag, and unfamiliar faces plagued us all, but by the first evening, all of that was washed away by the energy of meeting like-minded people from across the world. Hanuman Chalisa in Swamiji's *kutiya* set a tone of vibrance and reflection for the week.

The first day was a blur, yet filled with small moments that brought us together through the ice-breakers and an interactive session on self-confidence. That same night, our mentors talked about what connected them to Gurudev. Despite most of them never meeting him personally, he was still their source of inspiration. It was something we could all *feel*, because we all had similar experiences, which were the reason we were there. This was the moment where every single person in the amphitheatre became a collective, a family.

An important point to establish is how every single thing we did was designed to be fun, energetic and enriching. The Brahmacharis played a huge role in this. Chanting was turned into a playful contest where Br. Hari ji took a fast-paced approach to the Gita Panchamrit. Br. Darshan ji was our co-conspirator in our various activities, being a CIRS alumni!



Brni. Sripriya ji was an impossible combination of warmth and energy, which showed through her activities and bubbly personality. Naturally, we cannot forget our dear Sanatan ji and Bhakti didi, the familiar faces that made the camp even more memorable.

Camp was a place where learning never stopped. Two daily sessions with Swami Swaroopanandaji, reflection groups, Brahmachari sessions, yatras: every day brought something new and kept us on our toes. The camp was entirely based on the Gita Panchamrit, the lessons to learn from them, and stories from our past to relate with. This gave us the theme: 'Potential to Performance', and the tagline for the camp: 'NACHO NACHO!'

Sessions covered different topics which were must-learns for any youth aiming to grow higher - centred around the lessons from the Panchamrit, taking us through sadhana, introspection, intuition, and even workouts! Seva was a must through breakfast service. Speaking of food, we were treated to the most diverse and delicious food from around the world! Nachos, lasagna, the most creamy tiramisus, and even ratatouille! Every day saw another international cuisine, mixed with the homey cooking of CIRS.

Naturally, one of the most impactful parts of the camp were the discussion groups, where people of the same age group came together and had discussions on what we had been taught that day. Due to the introspective questions by Swamiji, we were able to reflect on our own and come to our own conclusions on how to apply these concepts in our lives. It was exactly what we needed every day: faced with such an onslaught of information, this time was an avenue to process and clarify our thoughts.

Of course, it can't be a CHYK camp without activities. Kicking it off with reel making, we divided ourselves into teams and tried to come up with different ideas to convey the ideals of the Panchamrit through fast-paced, interesting and thoughtful reels. We also had not one but two yatras, each of which felt like a practical journey through the ideals that we learnt about. These



yatras were on a much higher scale than any yatra seen before in school. Where else would you find people trying to cross a pool filled with freezing water, in weather that makes your face go numb? Or an activity where you have to willingly make a three-foot drop into concrete, trusting only the people who you had met the day before? Not to mention, we carried an *appalam* throughout one of the yatras, and had to ensure it did not break!

Every evening, we all gathered for aartis, singing our hearts out, dancing and completely getting immersed in devotion. The nights that followed were filled with interesting thoughts to take away through unusual means. For example, we had Darshan ji take snippets of movies to explain various concepts across the span of an hour, from movies like *Forrest Gump*.

As the camp drew to a close, it became clear that the camp was way more than just sessions and activities. The fun was endless and the learning was way beyond the session halls. As the youngest boy, I arrived with confusion, fear and excitement, but left with confidence, and a deeper connection with myself and others. The friends I made will last with me for the rest of my life. Ultimately, it is the people who elevated this camp for me, and left me with memories and lessons that will lift me whenever I face any issue in life. The learning, fun and devotion will stay with me long after the camp, and this experience will not conclude in GCC, but will stay with me forever.

THE JOURNEY BEHIND EXCELLENCE

AARAV BHARTIA | XB

"No, I cannot do it anymore" - Have you said this to yourself in the middle of a 5,000 metres race? And later, regret the same while reflecting? If you have, then you must read my journey in sports and how it shaped me.

I was in grade 5. It had been 6 months since my school was shut down because of Covid-19. I was very bored. My father and I are die-hard fans of cricket, a group of people exclusively recognisable only to its members. Just as every kid's ambition changes daily, I decided to take a stand on a night of a cricket match. That night I said to my father, "papa, I want to play cricket." My father replied, 'Okay, we will go tomorrow morning.' I said, "No papa! I mean I want to become a cricketer."

My father is the reason for whoever I am today and I hold nothing but gratitude to him. The next day, he went to the best academy in Nagpur and got me registered there. There were around five batches in the academy, from the basic to the advanced batch. Everyone had to join the basic batch and then, according to their progress, they got promoted to the higher batches. I was no exception. My coach used to bowl around 20 balls underarm, and that was counted as one set. Then all the players had to pick up all the balls and put it back into a tub so that the next batsmen could play his set.

"Self-belief and hard work will always earn you success."

- Virat Kohli

On the first day, my coach did not allow me to touch the bat. I thought that maybe that is how everyone starts their training. The second day, I went with double my original enthusiasm, but was disappointed again. This continued on for one week, and my initial energy was exhausted. I started going to the ground late and stopped doing my warm ups properly. I complained to my father, "Papa, the academy is a scam, they took money from you for me to pick up balls for other players." My father encouraged me by saying that it was probably part of the training. After 2 weeks, suddenly Coach gave me the bat and told me to defend the ball. After reflecting on it now, I realise that my coach wanted players who could stay committed to cricket no matter what. He was checking if I would come with the same energy every day, even if I was stuck between picking up the balls or quitting. Sometimes, life is just stuck at one level and that is when the majority of people quit, not realising how close they were from success.



After my set, he saw how bad my technique was. My wrists were weak and I did not have the power to defend the ball. He made me do single hand defence everyday until my left hand built strength. Every single day I would try my best to convince Coach with my improved batting, but every day I would go back disappointed. After 3 months, my defence became perfect. I had never been this patient in my life.

Of course, with batting settled, the time came to start bowling. The coach took the choice to train me as a leg-spinner. I failed miserably. Every day the batsmen had to be careful of my bowling. Often, it was either a no ball or a dead ball. The batsman's job was not to hit the ball, but to pick up the ball after the wide. I practiced day and night and somehow got a stable and consistent line and length. This is when I learnt the power of consistency and hard work. If I was passionate about something and had the drive to be the best at it then nothing else would matter to me. I would not get distracted by small desires that would bring me one step down from my goal.



Six months passed, I was still in the basic group and I started feeling that I had wasted a lot of my precious morning time and learnt very little cricket. Then suddenly one morning everything changed. In one of the senior most batches, a bowler ended up injured, and needed a substitute for a match immediately. The coach who trained that batch was walking around the nets and saw my bowling. He called me and asked, "Match khelega?" I was very scared of him. I had seen him yell at his players and punish them until they fainted. There was a mixed feeling inside me, of excitement and fear. I said, "Haan sir, khelunga."

That was the first official match I played. No one could believe I took 5 wickets that day and became the Man of The Match. The senior coach invited me to join his team. That day onwards, my life changed, and there was no looking back. I observed that opportunities always came to me, as long as I remained sincere in my practice. Not only in sport but in every field.

My timings for training changed from 6 am to 4:30 am. My father used to wake up at 4, wake me up and we both used to be on the field at 4:30 am sharp. One hour we used to do intense fitness workouts. Then from 6 am to 8 am, cricket training.

Today, whatever I have achieved in the field of sports is because of these 3 years. Along with increasing my stamina, it helped me make strong mindsets and commitments. I want to mention that you do not need talent to become successful. In fact, you need skills that do not take talent like punctuality, consistency and the spirit to outlast everyone else. If you are sincere in your passion then no one can stop you from becoming the best in the world. I know that I am a sum of the hard work of many people. This makes me more humble and motivates me to achieve more to make all of those people proud of me. I am still nothing and there is a long way to go.

A MESSAGE TO MY

NAITIK NEMISH MEHTA | VII C

Phoolon ka taron ka sabka kehna hai, ek hazaron mein meri behna hai, saari umar hamein sang rehna hai.



Meri Pyari Behna,

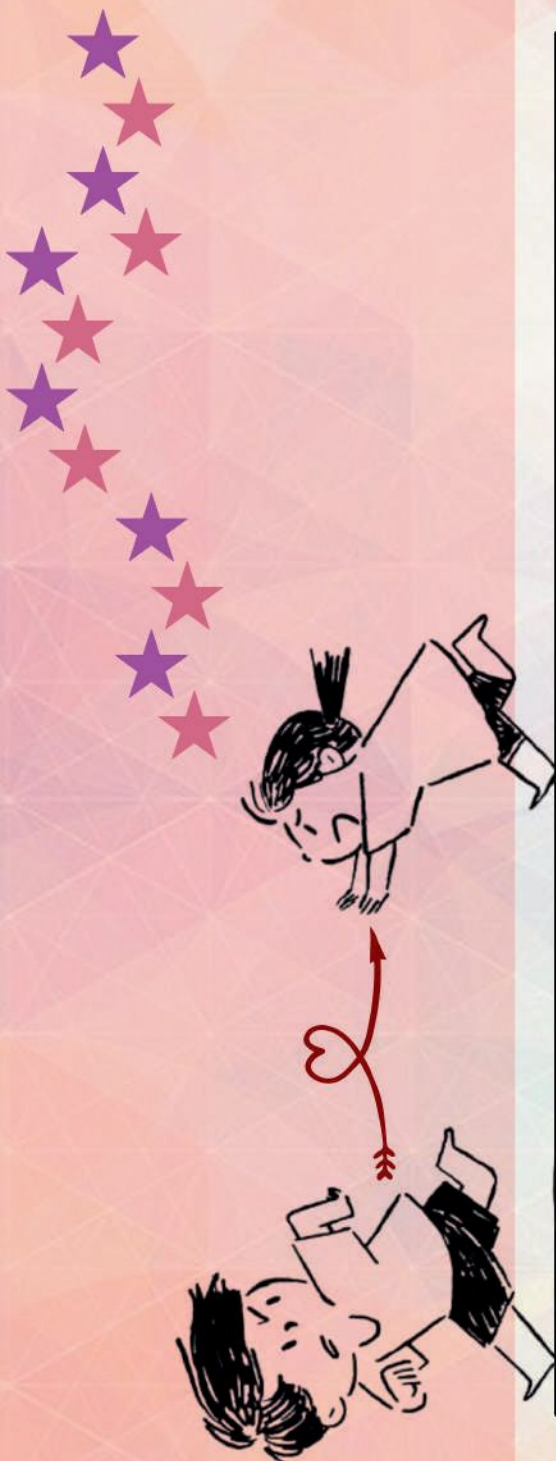
You have always been a very special person in my life. You've always helped me whenever I needed you. That's my favorite thing about you - You always care for me. You taught me the rights and wrongs, by applauding my wins and stopping my mistakes. Whether it's a student talk or a huge competition, you were there to motivate me. Even when I messed with you and irritated you, you always came around quickly. Like when I stole your shawl or the TV remote, and you went straight to mom, but still ended up talking to me out of boredom!

But now, as you leave school, I feel really sad. I was a small 10 year old when I came here, scared and a little lonely. You helped me settle in, when I got into my first fights, when I got low marks, or whenever I missed home. In fact, sometimes you even defended me when mom scolded me!

Some of my happiest memories are with you. The best of adventures, always with masala sprinkled in! When you went skydiving when I had to sit on the grass and wait, or when the both of us somehow managed to get sick at the same time when mom was out! When I got 19 ½ in maths, you reminded me that it's not about marks, but about patience and perseverance. When my birthday was during your educational tour, you got me a gift to compensate, and it was the best gift ever!

So as you leave, I wanted to tell you all of this, and to remind every little brother out there about what a big sister means to them, even if they don't realise it. A big sister can be very irritating, bossy, and will fight with you all the time. Despite that, she will stand with you and help you, no matter what. Naturally, whenever she is stressed, you will have to help her. She will also make you do every single chore possible, even though she herself is useless. Well, it's a give and take relationship. At the end of the day, it will always be worth it, as she is the only one who will listen to you and solve your problems easily. You will end up trusting her with everything that you go through, and will also get a permanent friend and teacher who feels like they know everything sometimes.

Now, to all the brothers reading this, it's your turn to show just how you can reciprocate for EVERYTHING that your sister has done for you. Of course, it's a huge task, and will probably take a long time, but for her, I think there is nothing you can do to repay her fully. The very least we can do is try. Finally, I would say that sisters are invaluable gems, and are worth infinity. Never lose them, and always make sure that yours is safe and happy.





Amar Ramesh

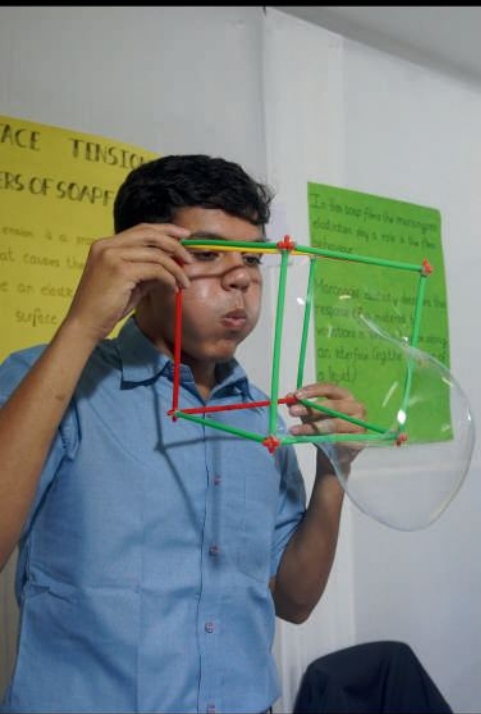
KOLLI KANNU

Have you stopped and stared at a face that stares right back at you? Raised brows, wide mouth, unkempt hair, flared nostrils, and the eyes; Oh, those eyes that fix you in their frightening gaze. No, it wasn't you stumbling around the bathroom when you tumbled out of bed this morning. Although you may have given this gentleman a run for his money, he's clearly in a league of his own. Meet Kolli Kannu, the ancient, unassuming guardian of Tamil Nadu. You'll be surprised where you can find him, vividly hand-painted onto walls, homes, factories, and trucks by generations of artists. He's kind of hard to miss. But that's precisely the point: by unapologetically grabbing eyeballs, he absorbs negativity and averts 'nazar,' or the evil eye. Such an attention seeker, that man. And now, with a little help from ace visual storyteller Amar Ramesh, he's here in the frightening flesh. Go ahead, open the book and check him out. If it's not love at first sight, you'll find he's not painted for praise, but to guard all that should be kept safe.



CAPTURES







CREATIVE CORNER



Hasti Aghera - XI 🐾



V Abarna Renu - XII 🐦

Full of twists and turns,
And a furnace with coal which burns.
Hard planks and cold floors,
Following every shut door.

This is the fable of a mouse,
Living in a big abandoned house.
Avoiding cheese in front of a trap,
Knowing it leads to a long "nap".

But what the mouse fears the most,
Is not the splinters or springs or ghosts.
It's the footsteps thundering like the fan,
The cruel face of the creature called "Man".

Yet in this dark and thundering hail,
Comes a situation we face with brave tails.
For here the human is the only mouse,
Living in the big twisted old house.

With every problem that comes along,
We survive somehow among the throng.
In this place called life we walk around,
Us, humans thrive with courage profound.

The Fable of a **MOUSE**

KAVYA ARUN PRASAD | VIII C



Harnessing Youth Potential Through Transformation | February 2026

We expect from you, hard and sincere work, self-less dedication, total surrender, admirable discipline, and industrious sadhana. We are not asking you to change, but we shall ask you to watch the transmutation of your outer lifestyle, taking place as a result of your inner unfoldment. Perfect yourself, so that you can help others in perfecting themselves.



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