

xpression

Department of Mass Communication, St. Xavier's University, Kolkata

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St. Xavier's University, Kolkata celebrates Xavrang '26

Aritri Chanda (MA Sem 2)

Anushka Bhattacharya (MA Sem 2)

Kolkata: Xavrang'26 was a two-day fest conducted by Xavier's Student Board Association on 16th January and 17th January. This year, the theme was The Indian Mosaic: Traditions and Tales. The two-day fest was a package of entertainment, showcasing talent filled with joy and love. The opening and closing ceremonies were graced with the presence of Hon'ble Principal Father John Felix Raj. This year, the fest focused on some very unique and challenging events where universities in Kolkata participated, making it the best. Cultural events include Mr and Ms Xavrang and Draped In Itihaas; sports events include chess, volleyball and basketball; and business events include Sharp Tank. For events like Mr and Ms Xavrang, there were over 18 universities that participated, including Techno Main, Heritage, SNU, and Jadavpur University. The Mr Xavrang award was won by Amartya Ganguly from Techno Main, and the Miss Xavrang was won by Anisha Sengupta from Bethune. Event head of Draped



SXUK celebrates Xavrang 2026

(Source: Xposure)

In Itihaas Nayanika Guha from Xavier's reported, "This time the theme includes the traditional history of the Mughal, Chola and Gupta dynasties, where SNU got first prize for excellence." Also, talented bands performed in the "Retro Rewind" event, where IEM secured first position. Renowned judges from modelling, music and theatre backgrounds came, like Ankita Mandal, Aryan Sengupta, and Shoaib Ahmed Mollah. Also, for sports, NSHM secured first in football, the first male and female volleyball award was bagged by Xavier's University, the table tennis winners included Bhawan-

ipore Education Society, and the chess winner was awarded to NSHM College. As the faculty convenor of the Xavrang'26, Dr. Sovik Mukherjee shared his ideas about the number of colleges that participated and won awards. He said, "Like all previous years, this time also we passed awards to other colleges. Bhawanipore College got the first award, the runner-up trophy was given to SNU, and the best college representative award was won by GD Birla Institute." St Xavier's University was awarded the core position for different events conducted by different societies, including sports."

Dr. Mukherjee shared about the prime theme that made Xavrang'26 different from other years and the most highlighted one: "This time the prime theme of Xavrang was 'Indian Mosaic Times And Tales', which focused on the Indian culture, its diversity and heritage, folklore, narratives, and sports, weaving together traditional arts and creativity."

"This time, the students came up with the idea of honouring the Indian perspective in all events, to feel proud about who we are and what we are achieving. The theme 'Indian Mosaic' was all about India, its unity and diversity. Xavrang wanted to connect the dots so that each mosaic would tell a story. Compared to themes of the last three years, like Enchanted Gardens and Mythical Odyssey, this time the theme embraces not only cultural diversity but also different art forms that broaden its engagement. This time, Xavrang also crossed 60, with over 62 colleges that participated. Also, we organised a glamfest where Bollywood singer Asees Kaur came; the programme, co-sponsored by Myntra, made it more special."

SXUK celebrates the Republic Day 2026



SXUK celebrates the Republic Day 2026

(Source: SXUK Website)

Dr. Sovik Mukherjee

Kolkata: St. Xavier's University, Kolkata (SXUK) celebrated the 77th Republic Day at the university campus on January 26, 2026, with great solemnity and patriotic spirit. The programme commenced with the hoisting of the National Flag by Father Dr. Xavier Jeyaraj, SJ, Registrar of the university in the presence of respected Jesuit Fathers, Sisters, faculty members, officers, support staff members, and students, followed by the collective singing of the National Anthem. The occasion was further enriched by the presence of the NCC Unit of SXUK. While delivering his speech, Father Xavier Jeyaraj, S.J. highlighted India's

emergence as the world's fourth-largest economy. He urged the audience to reflect critically on whether, amid economic growth, the ideals enshrined in the Indian Constitution are being adequately upheld. Emphasising issues of social justice, equality, and inclusive development, Father Jeyaraj encouraged students and faculty alike to engage more actively as responsible citizens committed to the constitutional values of democracy and fraternity. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Mr. Mario Martion Louis, Campus Minister and Communication and Protocol Officer of SXUK marking the occasion as a meaningful reminder of both national achievement and collective responsibility.

Where Kolkata turns pages again

Utathya Raha (MA Sem 2)

Kolkata: The city is once again becoming a hub for people, ideas, and tales thanks to the Kolkata International Book Fair 2026. The fair, which is held at Salt Lake's Central Park Mela Ground, debuted last week and continues to attract thousands of people each day.

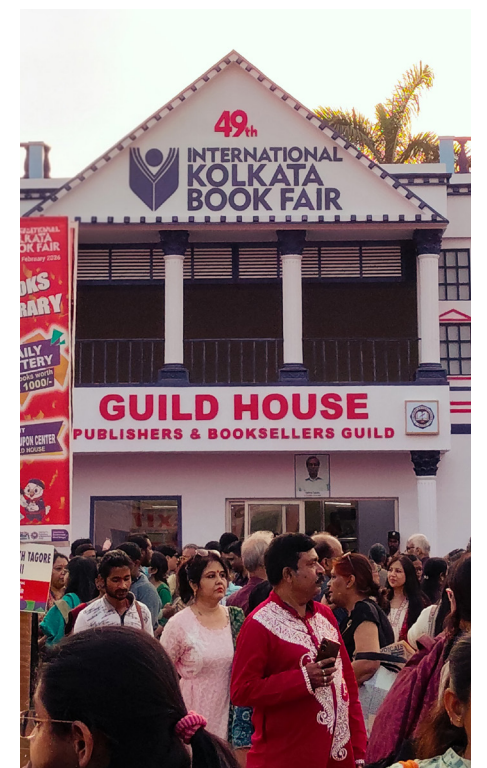
Indian and international publishers have erected vibrant booths with books in a variety of categories, including children's fiction, graphic novels, literature, and history. Translations are given special attention at this year's event, providing readers with access to voices from many languages and cultures.

The fair is more than just a marketplace because writers, poets, and academics are hosting talks, readings, and book launches. These discussions are the focal point of the event for a lot of guests. One college student looking through used books remarked, "You come here for books, but you leave with new thoughts."

In the evening, families walk down the lanes with kids holding picture books and parents searching for old favorites. The celebratory atmosphere is enhanced by food vendors and cultural events.

The fair serves as a reminder of Kolkata's status as a "city of readers,"

where turning the page is still a joyful experience, in a time when screens predominate. Visitors depart the Kolkata Book Fair with fuller hearts and heavier bags. Authors and publishers said goodbye to days of spirited discussions, discoveries, and anecdotes. However, the fair's spirit endures, reverberating in libraries, homes, and among all readers eagerly anticipating the next edition.



49th International Kolkata Book Fair

LIFE AT SXUK

Xaviesta 2026: Turning campus energy into career-ready minds

Ansh Talwar (MA Sem 2)

Kolkata: The campus of St. Xavier's University came alive on January 9 and 10 as Xaviesta 4.0, the annual management fest of Xavier Business School, unfolded with a blend of academic rigor and cultural celebration. The two-day event drew students from across institutions, transforming the university into a hub of activity and learning. The grand inauguration was led by Mr. Anirban Banerjee, CEO of Eveready Industries India Ltd., who formally flagged off the proceedings.

Over the two days, students organized a variety of activities, ranging from management-oriented competitions to sports contests and stage events, ensuring broad participation and engagement. They played a key role in planning and executing, demonstrating leadership, teamwork, and organizational skills. The campus buzzed with energy as participants collaborated, competed, and shared ideas. The evenings marked a shift from an intense competitive environment to cultural vibrancy. The fest brought the entire university to its feet, with time-bound performances by bands such as TRAP and Bolly Sufi drawing enthusiastic crowds and bringing



SXUK celebrates Xaviesta 2026

(Source: SXUK Website)

the celebrations to a spirited close. Their soulful renditions were widely appreciated by the students.

Xaviesta 4.0 not only showcased student talent but also reflected the holistic vision of Xavier Business School in nurturing leadership, collaboration, and experiential learning. Speaking about the significance of Xaviesta, Dr. Sitanshu Khatua, Dean of Xavier Business School, said the fest functions as a practical extension of classroom learning, offering students hands-on exposure to leadership, teamwork, communication, and decision-making.

He described it as a "live classroom beyond the campus," where students manage real responsibilities, adapt to constraints, collaborate effectively, and gain confidence, while also strengthening the institution's presence within the wider B-school network.

From the organizers' perspective, Sahid Raza, Convenor of Xaviesta 4.0, called the fest the "pulse" of Xavier Business School, marking the shift from knowledge consumers to value creators. He noted that organizing Xaviesta was similar to running a startup, testing management

frameworks under pressure through corporate sponsorships, large-scale digital outreach, and the coordination of multiple events and volunteers. It became a defining exercise in leadership, operations and ownership. In essence,

Xaviesta truly reflects the spirit of Xavier Business School, where students transformed ideas into action, navigating challenges and learning vital skills along the way. It created memories to cherish, strengthened bonds, and sets a benchmark for future batches, leaving a legacy that will carry forward until the next Xaviesta.

XAVTALK 2026 sparks student dialogue on digital life



XAVTALK 2026

(Source: SXUK Website)

Pragya Biswas (MA Sem 2)

Kolkata: The Department of Mass Communication at St. Xavier's University, Kolkata organised "XAVTALK", an inter-departmental student discussion forum centred on the theme "Youth in the Digital Age: Media, Influence, and Dependency." The event brought together students from across departments to exchange ideas on how digital media shapes everyday life, identity, and decision-making among young people.

The programme opened with an address by the Vice-Chancellor, Rev. Dr. J. Felix Raj, S.J., who spoke about the growing dependence of youth on digital platforms for validation,

information, and social connection. While acknowledging the opportunities digital media offers for learning and global exposure, he warned against unchecked usage, stressing that media addiction can affect mental health, attention spans, and real-life interactions. He encouraged students to practise conscious media consumption and highlighted the importance of media literacy and digital humanities. Round One of the competitions saw student participants from various Arts and Social Studies departments presenting varied perspectives on the topic. Drawing from concepts such as hyperreality, the attention economy, algorithms, and digital capitalism,

speakers argued that youth today do not merely consume media but exist within it. Several participants highlighted concerns around misinformation, propaganda, echo chambers, and declining critical thinking, while others pointed to the positive impact of digital media in creating economic opportunities, promoting health awareness, enabling digital payments, and giving visibility to marginalised communities.

The Q&A session allowed the participants to challenge one another on issues of digital and information literacy, political communication, rural-urban access, and the ethical role of governments and technology companies. The discussion reflected a shared understanding of the paradox youth face being aware of media influence while remaining deeply dependent on it.

Judges- Dr. Manali Bhattacharya, Dept. of Mass Communication, Dr. Subhanil Choudhury, Dept. of Economics, and Dr. Antara Ghatak, Dept. of English commended the students for their research, confidence, and range of arguments. While praising the empowerment digital media provides, the judges also emphasised the need for information literacy, responsible sharing, and awareness of health

concerns linked to excessive screen time.

The winner of XAVTALK'26, Arik Mallick, from the Department of Social Work, spoke about the significance of the platform, particularly for minor departments. "Earlier, it used to be departmental, but now that it's inter-departmental, it gives students from a diverse pool an opportunity to shine. This was the first time the Department of Social Work got such a platform to showcase its talent, and I think that's really great," he said.

Faculty Convener Dr. Somak Sen, described XAVTALK as a flagship initiative of the Department of Mass Communication. "We started XAVTALK in 2019 and have conducted it every year, even during the lockdown in online mode. The idea is to empower students to speak on current, media-related, political and social issues. Our students have done commendable research on the pros and cons of the topic, and we believe such platforms will continue to shape informed media professionals in the future," he noted.

With strong student participation and thoughtful dialogue, XAVTALK 2026 reaffirmed the value of student-led conversations in navigating the complexities of the digital age.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Mar-a-Lago's War: Trump, Maduro, and the Battle for Sovereignty



Smoke rises from explosions in Caracas, Venezuela, early on Saturday.

(Source: Google)

Sneha Barua (MA Sem 2)

Kolkata: In a dramatic escalation that has upended global geopolitics, the United States of America launched a massive military operation on January 3, 2026, resulting in the bombing of Venezuelan infrastructure and the abduction of President Nicolás Maduro. From his Mar-a-Lago residence, the U.S. President Donald Trump hailed the mission as a historic

display of American military prowess. The insurgency involved over 150 aircrafts and elite units, including the Delta Force. Reports indicate the mission was the culmination of months of preparation, which included the construction of full-scale mock-ups of Maduro's compound and clandestine intelligence gathering by CIA teams on the ground. While U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi stated that Maduro would face trial in American courts

for alleged cartel activity, Maduro has consistently maintained that these charges are a "war on drugs" smokescreen designed to seize Venezuela's vast oil reserves.

The roots of this conflict stretch back to the early 20th century—when the two nations once shared deep economic ties, the relationship disintegrated under the presidency of Hugo Chávez, who nationalized the oil industry and ousted American giants like ExxonMobil.

This ideological rift, coupled with years of economic mismanagement and crushing sanctions set the stage for the current crisis.

The international response has been sharply divided. While some have applauded the move, the New York Times labelled the attack "illegal and unwise," with legal experts suggesting violation against the UN Charter. Within Venezuela, the Supreme Court has appointed Vice President Delcy Rodríguez as acting president, calling for a national mobilization against what they term "imperialist aggression."

The fallout extends far beyond the Western Hemisphere. For India, the crisis is particularly acute; as the third-largest buyer of Venezuelan oil in 2025, the sudden instability threatens its energy security. Meanwhile, China remains the primary stakeholder in the region's petroleum output.

This operation signals a pivot in U.S. foreign policy toward "nomos"—a worldview popularized by Carl Schmitt that prioritizes national sovereignty and the "friend vs. foe" distinction over traditional international law and liberal cooperation. This shift suggests a new era of revisionist global politics that could permanently alter the landscape of international relations.

Iran under boil; Internal disturbance at its worst



Protests grip Iranian streets, halting traffic amid rising tensions.

(Source: Google)

Sreemanti Samaddar (MA Sem 2)

Kolkata: Iran faces one of its worst periods of instability in recent history, as it continues to be plagued by mass protests, growing economic hardship and a decisive government response. Protests that began in late 2025 against soaring inflation, unemployment and the collapse of the country's currency have turned into a broader movement challenging Iran's political leadership. What started as sporadic protests by traders and workers dissatisfied with soaring prices has since spread to

major cities and regional cities. Current protesters include students, retirees, factory workers and professionals, many of whom are expressing anger not only at economic mismanagement but also at years of political regulation and corruption.

The value of the Iranian rial has plummeted, making it impossible for many families to buy basic necessities. International sanctions, declining oil revenues and domestic policy failures have deepened the crisis, forcing the government to urgently stabilize the

economy. For many Iranians, years of declining living standards have undermined confidence in official promises of reform, fueling a sense of hopelessness and fueling protests despite the risks. Authorities responded by setting up a strong security presence across the country. Riot police and other security forces used tear gas, batons, and in some cases live ammunition to disperse crowds. Thousands of people were reportedly arrested and access to the Internet and social media was periodically restricted to limit communication and the dissemination of images of the protests. Human rights groups say the death toll is difficult to verify but could be high, while the government insists the situation is under control and accuses foreign powers of encouraging the unrest. Iranian leaders, including senior officials, have called the protests a threat to national security, emphasizing the role of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in maintaining order. At the same time, analysts are seeing growing signs of tension within the system as economic pressure and public discontent converge in ways not seen in years.

The unrest has drawn international attention and concern. Western

governments have condemned the crackdown and warned of further consequences if violence continues, while some countries have advised their citizens to leave Iran. Regional observers are monitoring the situation closely, recognizing that Iran's prolonged instability could have far-reaching implications for the Middle East. As protests continue and the economic situation remains fragile, Iran is at a critical juncture, with uncertainty over the government's ability to restore stability without addressing the deep grievances fueling public anger. Looking ahead, the trajectory of Iran's crisis will depend on whether the state prioritises coercion over meaningful economic and political reform.

A continued reliance on force may suppress protests in the short term but risks deepening public alienation and institutional strain. Without addressing inflation, unemployment, and governance failures, the unrest is likely to resurface, posing long-term challenges to regime legitimacy and internal stability.

In the absence of credible reforms, social unrest may become a recurring feature rather than an exceptional moment.

SPORTS

Red half roars louder: United claim 2–0 Derby win

Priyadarshan Roy (MA Sem 2)

Kolkata: In a derby that will live long in the memory of United supporters, Manchester United delivered a commanding performance to beat Manchester City 2-0 at Old Trafford on Saturday, upending their cross-town rivals and giving interim head coach Michael Carrick the perfect start to his reign. The Theatre of Dreams buzzed with energy throughout the afternoon as the home side, buoyed by a fervent crowd of more than 74,000, stamped their authority on the Premier League encounter. The first half was tense and cagey, with City controlling possession but struggling to fashion clear chances, while United probed with pace and purpose. Early drama came when United defender Diogo Dalot escaped a red card for a reckless challenge, a moment that set the tone for the fierce intensity of the fixture. Harry Maguire came agonizingly close to giving United the lead when his header rattled the crossbar, and City goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma pulled off several sharp saves to keep the scores level at the break.

The breakthrough arrived just after the hour mark. In a swift counter-attacking move, Bryan Mbeumo calmly slotted

the ball beyond Donnarumma in the 65th minute, sending the Old Trafford faithful into raptures and sparking



Derby day belongs to United

jubilant scenes around the ground. As City sought a way back, United continued to press with conviction. Their persistence paid off in the 76th minute when Patrick Dorgu doubled the lead, cushioning a precise cross

into the net and giving United a buffer that ultimately proved decisive. The visitors, despite enjoying a greater

share of possession, were unable to find a cutting edge, their attacks repeatedly stifled by a determined United defence and midfield.

For City, the defeat marked the end of a 13-match unbeaten run and extended

their winless run in league play — a stark contrast to their usual standards. Pep Guardiola's side managed few clear opportunities and looked blunt in the final third. Meanwhile, United's victory lifted spirits among fans and neutrals alike, offering a glimpse of renewed belief and resilience under Carrick's leadership.

The result not only secured bragging rights in Manchester but also bolstered United's standing in the Premier League table, with the team temporarily moving into a stronger position in the race for European qualification.

After the match, Michael Carrick was visibly proud of his players and praised both their discipline and belief. "This wasn't just about tactics, it was about character," he said. "The boys showed courage, patience and togetherness against one of the best teams in the world. In a derby like this, you need heart as much as quality, and today they gave everything.

Old Trafford felt alive again, and that energy lifted us." Carrick added that the result was only a step forward: "It's a great win, but it's not the destination. It's a foundation. We build from here." From the camp, Pep Guardiola accepted that his side were second best.

Carlos Alcaraz beats Germany's Yannick Hanfmann

Sreyash Basak (MA Sem 2)

Kolkata: Kolkata: Spain's Carlos Alcaraz withstood a barrage of big hitting from a familiar foe in Yannick Hanfmann, in the Australian Open 2nd Round on Wednesday, January 21st 2026. After a comfortable win in the opening round, top seed Alcaraz was

given a run for his money by Germany's world number 102 Hanfmann, on a sunbathed Rod Laver Arena, but he eventually rose to the challenge and moved on 7-6(4) 6-3 6-2.

"I knew he was going to play great," Alcaraz, 22, said. "I knew his level. We came through the Challengers together. I've played with him. It was tougher



Calm under fire: Alcaraz seals victory in style (Source : Google)

than I thought at the beginning, and I didn't feel the ball that well."

Alcaraz, trailing 3-1, managed to get back on level terms but missed several chances to break Hanfmann's grand serve again.

The six-time champion finished a physically taxing first set in 78 minutes by jumping in the tiebreaker. In the second set, he continued to play with more vigor and spirit. Despite Hanfmann receiving medical attention prior to the start of the third set, Alcaraz remained unflinching, winning a double break and ending the match on serve.

The Spaniard said, "It was coming like a bomb," in reference to Hanfmann's strength. "Serves, forehand, and backhand. I had to be ready for those." "I'm really happy that I got through a difficult first set... and I played at a really good level at the end of the match and got through," he said.

The triumph demonstrated why Carlos Alcaraz is frequently commended for both his tenacity and his ability to make shots. The Spaniard was pushed to the limit early on, but he repositioned himself on the court, took in the pace, and started to convert defense into attack with amazing clarity. The contest's momentum shifted decisively in his favor once he achieved that

balance.

The match will go down in Yannick Hanfmann's memory because of the level he produced in patches, especially during the first few exchanges when his powerful groundstrokes repeatedly rushed the favorite. The medical timeout only served to emphasize how taxing the duel had been, as the physical toll of maintaining that intensity against one of the tour's top competitors became increasingly apparent.

In the meantime, Alcaraz walked off the court to thunderous cheers, reserving his strength for the tournament's upcoming obstacles. If this performance demonstrated anything, it is that he has the poise to solve problems in real time, a quality that sets him apart from most of the field even when put to the test by raw power and lengthy rallies.

His ability to reset after pressure moments was evident in the way he tightened his service games late on. His choice of shots was becoming more authoritative, with each swing displaying more conviction than the one before it. Even in the closing moments, he maintained firm control by striking a balance between patience and unexpected outbursts of aggression.

ART & CULTURE

Avatar: Fire and Ash – A somber and expansive evolution of Pandora



Avatar 3: Pandora burns. Destiny rises.

(Source: Google Images)

Procheta Bhattacharjee (BA Sem 4)

Kolkata: James Cameron's Avatar: Fire and Ash represents a drastic shift in tone within the Avatar franchise, shifting the narrative toward a darker, more reflective realm. Leaving behind the lyrical aquatic serenity of The Way of Water, this instalment immerses the audience in a harsher, fire-dominated region of Pandora, where survival is shaped by struggle, perseverance, and moral ambiguity, departing from the poetic aquatic tranquillity of The Way of Water.

The movie broadens the natural and cultural reach of Pandora by introducing a volcanic biome characterised by ash-filled skies and burnt landscapes. In this context, a new Na'vi clan appears whose ideology stands in stark contrast to the planet's customary spiritual peace. Their relationship with nature is characterised by control rather than coexistence, which deepens the theme and supports the notion that Pandora is a place of both beauty and savagery. Cameron's technical precision remains exemplary, with visual effects that

render destruction with an unsettling elegance.

Narratively, Fire and Ash places strong emphasis on emotional repercussions. Jake Sully and Neytiri are portrayed not merely as leaders or protectors but as individuals burdened by cumulative loss. Neytiri, in particular, becomes the pivotal emotional anchor of the film. Her grief-driven transformation introduces an enthralling tension between justice and vengeance, challenging the moral binaries that characterised earlier chapters. This evolution lends the story

a greater psychological complexity and maturity.

The pacing is measured and intentional, allowing the film to explore cultural conflict and internal struggle with restraint. Rather than relying on constant spectacle, Cameron constructs tension gradually, ensuring that moments of action are impactful and narratively justified. When conflict arises, it carries tangible emotional weight, reinforcing the film's central concern with the lasting impacts of violence.

While the film continues to engage with familiar themes such as colonial aggression, environmental exploitation, and resistance, it distinguishes itself through its tonal gravity. Avatar: Fire and Ash is less concerned with awe alone and more invested in ethical reflection, signalling a franchise that is increasingly confident in its narrative ambition.

To sum up, Avatar: Fire and Ash is a visually striking and philosophically complex addition to the series. It offers an engaging and mature chapter in Cameron's long-form cinematic ambition, expanding the world of Pandora while addressing the cost of resistance and survival.

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Couplets and Shayari

TALE OF TIME

Time has written countless tales—
some faded, some learned to stay.
A lifetime spent in others' stories,
we remained a footnote on the
page.

O Time, if mercy still exists in
you,
will you not compose a story—
just once—
with me at its heart?

- Shatadru Pal (MA Sem 2)

And Life Flowed Away

Life never waits
for us to catch our breath.
It keeps moving—
sometimes gently,
and sometimes, in utmost pain.

We think we stood still.
Yet, we left something behind.
"Not every journey is a choice,
yet every step is a change."
-And that is what, the movement
of life, speaks and says.

- Shatadru Pal (MA Sem 2)

Ebb and Flow

Time has written countless tales—
some faded, some learned to stay.
A lifetime spent in others' stories,
we remained a footnote on the
page.

O Time, if mercy still exists in you,
will you not compose a story—
just once—
with me at its heart?

- Shatadru Pal (MA Sem 2)

Ek Gunnaam Wajood

Mai wo hoon jis pe log khaas gaur
nahi karte
Maansik rog jaisa jiska ilaaj nahi karte
Sabse peeche, ankaha, ansuna
Main patjhad ki mausam mein girey
pattein jaisa hoon
Jiske tutkar gurr jaane se bhi koi
dhyaan nahi deta

- Arisha Azhar (MA Sem 2)

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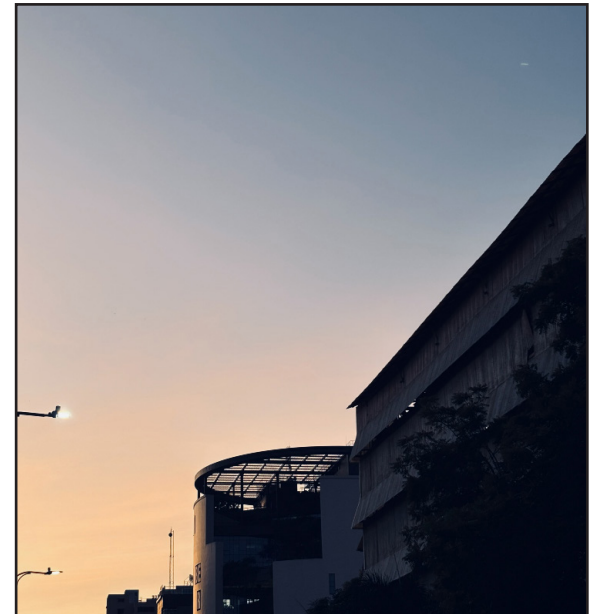
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