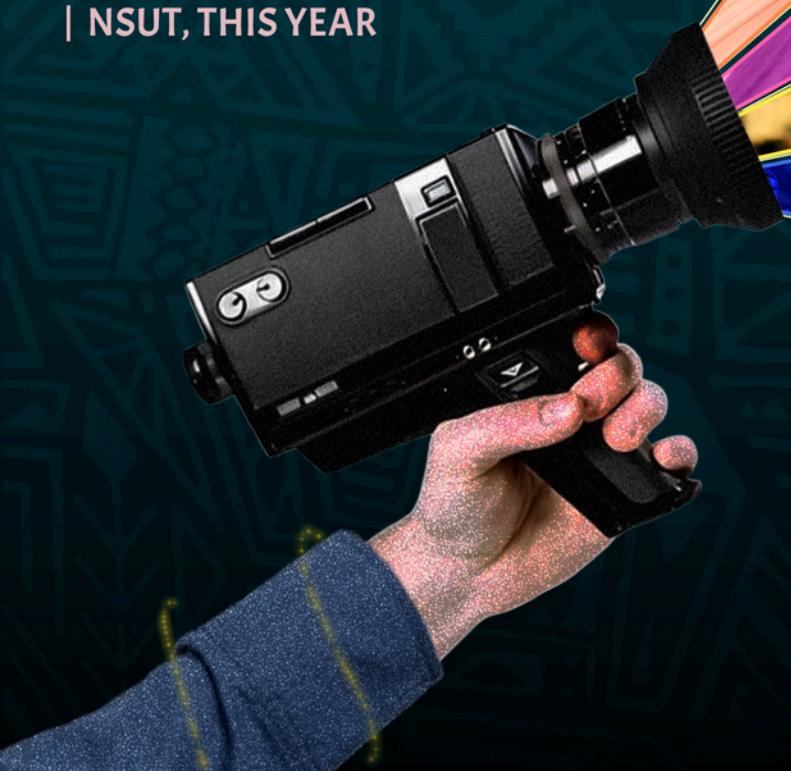


THE ALLIANCE PRESENTS EDITION 43.0 | JANUARY '26

RECAP EDITION

2025

- | FROM THE BOOKISH PILE
- | AN ODE TO ENTERTAINMENT
- | CHRONICALLY ONLINE CHECKLIST
- | THINKING, BUT MAKE IT ARTIFICIAL
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- | BEYOND THE SCOREBOARD
- | NSUT, THIS YEAR



COVER DESIGN BY SAUMYA LEHRI

THE BOOKER PRIZE 2025

David Szalay's *Flesh* clinches the 2025 Booker Prize, making him the first Hungarian-British author to take home the honor. The novel follows a man stumbling through life as unpredictable events pile up, along with plenty of anger, sex, and unapologetic toxic masculinity. While judges were convinced, readers were divided, and outrage quickly followed. Many felt the prize should've gone to Kiran Desai's *The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny*, her long-awaited return exploring Indian immigrant lives, becoming the Booker's most debated "what could've been."



THE HUNGER GAMES RETURN

Suzanne Collins is back! Because Panem apparently still isn't done traumatizing us. Her second Hunger Games prequel travels **24 years** before *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*, landing squarely in the brutal spectacle of the 50th Hunger Games. Expect power plays, propaganda, and chilling reminders of how totalitarianism thrives (subtle, right?). And yes, Hollywood is already circling: a film adaptation hits cinemas on **November 20, 2026**.

CONSUMERISM IS NOT FAR

Rising book prices, a noticeable dip in non-fiction sales, and a surge in *BookTok*-fuelled genre fiction have shaped a mixed picture for the global publishing industry this year. While higher costs have nudged revenues upward in some regions, reader interest has clearly shifted toward escapist, algorithm-friendly fiction. The result? An uneven interim performance is proof that in 2025, virality can boost genres, but it can't quite stabilize the entire market.

SHARING MADE EASY

Interactive storytelling platforms like *Shorthand* and *Twine* are having a moment, blurring the line between reader and participant. Enter *Substack*: an app where readers can access blogs, newsletters, videos, and podcasts straight from creators and email them directly. Yes, that means you can message your favorite author and beg for spoilers (please don't). Its biggest draw? An ad-free experience, widely loved and quietly suspicious. How long that lasts is anyone's guess, but that's for another day.

READING BY LABELS

Alchemised is a masterclass in mixed messaging: marketed as a romance, delivered as a blood-soaked tour of war, gore, and existential misery. If you came for longing glances and emotional slow burns, you stayed mostly out of shock as the book veered hard into battlefield brutality and grim survival. Love exists, technically, but it's buried under trauma, carnage, and confusion. Call it genre-bending if you're generous; call it whiplash if you're honest.

READING GOALS AND FEAR OF LINGERING

The Goodreads Challenge gamified the literary experience, transforming a private sanctuary of thought into a public-facing metric. While it undoubtedly nudged many to pick up books more frequently, it often prioritized quantity over resonance. Instead of dwelling in the ambiguity of a difficult chapter, readers often felt a subconscious pressure to "log" the progress. In retrospect, did the challenge make us read more or did it teach us to read faster and to avoid introspecting ideas for longer than the pages are open?

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

FAKE SKATING

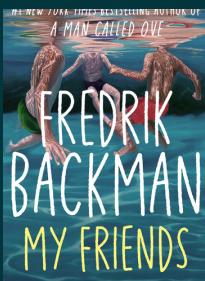
LYNN PAINTER



A sweet, easygoing romance about reconnecting with someone from the past. Painter excels at awkward tension and emotional sincerity, delivering a predictable but comforting story that leans into nostalgia, growth, and the appeal of second chances without unnecessary drama attached. Lynn Painter never goes wrong with romance.

MY FRIENDS

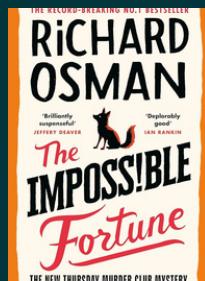
FREDRIK BACKMAN



A warm, emotionally generous novel about friendship, grief, and the moments that quietly shape a life. Backman finds beauty in ordinary connections, blending humor and sadness to create a story that comforts, aches, and feels deeply human with gentle grace.

THE IMPOSSIBLE FORTUNE

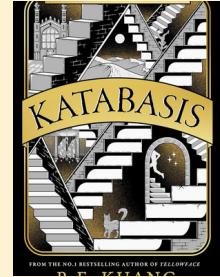
RICHARD OSMAN



A cozy, clever mystery where character chemistry matters more than shock. Osman balances an engaging puzzle with warmth and wit, proving once again that friendship, humor, and familiarity can be just as satisfying as high-stakes suspense for devoted series readers.

KATABASIS

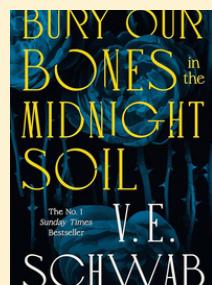
R.F. KUANG



Known for being super academically oriented, the book is a daring descent into Hell that doubles as an academic power struggle. Kuang blends myth, philosophy, and satire to interrogate ambition and hierarchy, delivering an intense, idea-driven narrative that challenges readers, provokes discomfort, and prioritizes intellect over emotional ease alone.

BURN OUR BONES IN THE MIDNIGHT SOIL

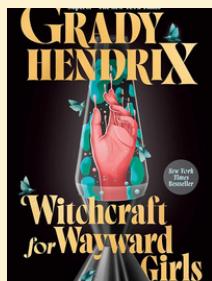
V.E. SCHWAB



A slow-burning, atmospheric novel that spans centuries, following women bound by immortality and longing. Schwab prioritizes mood, memory, and identity over plot, crafting a haunting, lyrical experience that rewards patience and lingers long after the final page in quiet echoes.

WITCHCRAFT FOR WAYWARD GIRLS

GRADY HENDRIX



Hendrix channels rage, fear, and empowerment through supernatural terror, creating a disturbing yet cathartic narrative that confronts control, autonomy, and the cost of silence with brutal honesty. A must-read for all the horror fans.

AN ODE TO

ENTERTAINMENT

WRITTEN BY : PUNEET SAINI

DESIGNED BY : HARSHITA NARANG

A RISE IN ARTISTIC CINEMA

While Hollywood kept recycling its comfort-IP for safe profits, animation quietly staged a global takeover. *Ne Zha 2* and *Demon Slayer* smashed the idea that blockbuster success has to be Western, while *Zootopia 2*, *Lilo & Stitch*, and yes, *The Minecraft Movie*, leaned into cozy "hangout" vibes wrapped in high-concept worlds. The takeaway? Audiences want spectacle but also familiarity, warmth, and stories that travel well across cultures.

AKSHAYE KHANNA:
AURA, ACTIVATED

For a hot second, everyone thought Akshaye Khanna's name was Rehman Dakait - and honestly, fair. In *Dhurandhar*, he doesn't act so much as he rules the screen, casually aura-farming in a black suit while Arabic rap plays in the background. Even Ranveer Singh's full-throttle performance couldn't dent it. Earlier this year, he was unrecognisable as Aurangzeb in *Chhaava*. Range? Restraint? Respect? He's finally getting all three.

SPELLBOUND BY
HOMEBOUND

Martin Scorsese once said, "the most personal is the most creative" - and *Homebound* proves him right. Neeraj Ghaywan's quietly devastating film, produced by Scorsese himself, doesn't scream for attention; it earns it. Rooted in lived experience, it speaks to those who've felt unseen, alienated, or lesser in their own country. Its success grew slowly, organically; no viral gimmicks, just word of mouth and wet eyes.



SPEAK OF THE BA***DS

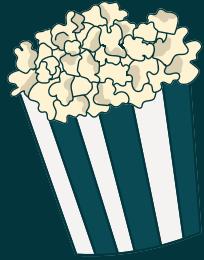
After a long streak of genuinely exhausting Bollywood misfires, *The Ba***ds of Bollywood* felt like a shock to the system. Aryan Khan's directorial debut arrived with peak nepotism credentials and still worked. Why? Because it was self-aware, sharply written, and refreshingly unafraid to mock the PR circus it lives in. Cameos, inside jokes, Karan Johar playing himself - it all felt like an expensive industry roast. Masterpiece? Maybe not. But it reminded us Bollywood can still laugh at itself, and that felt necessary.

ONE LAST DANCE
WITH YOUR FAVOURITES

2025 was the year of goodbyes (not a personal attack on your attention span). This year marked a series of farewells to some of our favourite shows, from *You* and *Squid Game* to *The Summer I Turned Pretty* and, at last, the long-awaited final instalments of *Stranger Things*. Joe Goldberg ran out of luck, *Squid Game* closed its brutal chapter, *Cousins Beach* along with our annoying yet beloved love triangle said farewell, and the *Upside Down* loomed one last time. Goodbyes do hurt but they are necessary, for what comes next might just be forever.

FILMS WORTH THE HYPE

WRITTEN BY: PUNEET SAINI
DESIGNED BY: BHAVYA WALIA



MATERIALISTS

Celine Song returns to quietly wreck us again; this time with love, money, and modern loneliness tangled together. It's sharp, observant, and emotionally precise - the kind of film that looks calm but leaves you spiraling hours later about relationships, ambitions, and who really pays the price for "having it all."

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON

A live-action remake nobody asked for, yet one everyone was cautiously optimistic about. While nostalgia pulled most of the weight, the film captured enough of the original's heart to send grown adults back into denial over crying about dragons.



SUPERMAN

Another reboot, yes - but this one wants hope back. Less gritty brooding, more sincerity and moral clarity. The big question: can Superman feel relevant without being ironic? If it works, it could reset the entire superhero fatigue conversation.

BALLERINA

A brutal, elegant expansion of the John Wick universe. Grace meets violence as vengeance is delivered en pointe. Stylish, relentless, and powered by rage - a gripping watch that fuses controlled fury with tightly executed choreography.



FRANKENSTEIN

A gothic revival that leans into horror, humanity, and obsession rather than spectacle. This isn't about the monster - it's about the creator, the guilt, and the consequences. Dark, moody, and finally treating the story with the weight it deserves.

CHAINSAW MAN- THE MOVIE: REZE ARC

Pain, chaos, and emotional damage - now on the big screen. This arc hurts in very specific ways, blending romance, violence, and heartbreak with ruthless efficiency. If you know, you know. If you don't, emotionally prepare.



NOW YOU SEE ME, NOW YOU DON'T

The magicians are back, the logic is still missing, and honestly - that's the charm. Bigger tricks, louder twists, and vibes over realism. This isn't about answers; it's about being convincingly misled for two highly entertaining hours.

★ CHRONICALLY ONLINE CHECKLIST ★

WRITTEN BY: NILESH

DESIGNED BY: SARTHAK DEORA

6-7: NOT A WORD, STILL WORD OF THE YEAR

This year was full of new slang, but perhaps the most peculiar one you heard around was 6-7. Originating from the hook of Skrilla's song 'Doot Doot,' the phrase caught widespread attention despite not being understood by everyone. The ambiguous slang left the older generations much confused, with Shashi Tharoor having to step in. Unfair to actual words, the phrase was announced to be dicti-onary.com's Word Of The Year



VIRAL "ODDITIES": SCARY BECOMES CUTE?

From being a cute, harmless plush doll to being burned by people soon after, the story of Labubus is no fairy-tale. Designed by Hong Kong artist Kasing Lung, Labubus are elf-like creatures with big ears and a wide grin, often collected as bag charms. Originally intended to be playful and mischievous creatures, their 'ugly-cute' design sparked debates over their appearance, with some even suggesting that they are 'cursed'.



THE COLDPLAY "KISS CAM" SCANDAL

BIRTH OF A MEME

Despite Coldplay's magnificent performance in Massachusetts, it was the Kiss Cam Couple who stole all the limelight this time. The CEO and the HR Manager of Astronomer, an NY based data firm, were caught sharing a moment in the concert's Kiss Cam. Initially dismissed as a shy couple, the internet was quick to reveal the affair, and what followed next entertained the entire internet for weeks. What stuck with the people more though, was the reminder that not all team meetings need to be public.

NOTHING BEATS A JET2 HOLIDAY

What began as a Jet2 advertisement quickly became the internet's favorite soundtrack for holidays that very much **did not** beat a Jet2 holiday. Paired with Jess Glynne's "Hold My Hand," the audio took over social media, soundtracking travel disasters with relentless cheer. Missed flights, hotel rooms that looked nothing like the pictures, and vacation bloopers played out under the same upbeat clip—proving that the happier the music, the worse the holiday usually was.



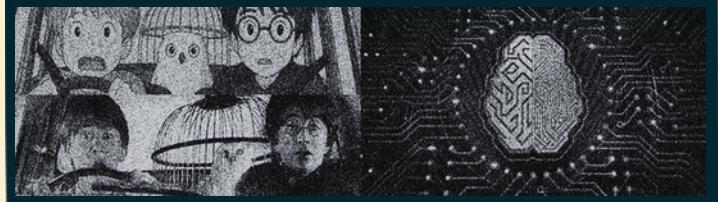
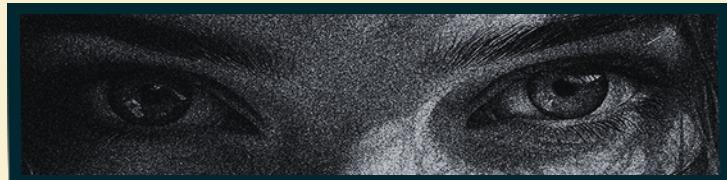
DID IT CLOCK TO YOU?

The "it's not clocking to you" meme is what the internet reaches for when the point has arrived, announced itself, and still hasn't landed. Popularised on TikTok and X during the Justin Bieber discourse, it's often used in pop-culture debates when fans point out patterns in fame, burnout, or media treatment and others still miss the point entirely. Equal parts side-eye and surrender, the phrase signals exhaustion: the realization that if it hasn't clocked by now, explaining it further is a lost cause.

THINKING, BUT MAKE IT ARTIFICIAL

2025: THE YEAR AI ATE EVERYTHING

Now, we come to the *Teknologia* section of the newsletter. Flying cars they promised. Instead, we got AI, more AI & even more AI: MVP at every conference, every product launch, and in every single post on Millennial LinkedIn. India is one of the fastest AI-adopting countries in the world. Both the government and private entities are eager to revolutionize the Indian AI landscape. Every big AI company started giving their pro versions away for free in India. First came Perplexity, then in January arrived the MVP of all free LLMs, DeepSeek R1. ChatGPT launched its India-specific plan, ChatGPT Go, and then casually handed out a year-long free trial of that too. By December, virtually all major LLM models were free for Indian students. Gone are the days of Will Smith eating spaghetti. Image and video generation models saw giant leaps in quality, realism, and coherence.



CREATIVITY IN THE AGE OF THE MACHINE

It's been a rough year for people in the creative space; technology is somehow creating and destroying art simultaneously. We all witnessed the Studio Ghibli trend, where everyone turned their rather unremarkable selfies into anime-aesthetic portraits. Ironically, Miyazaki himself has said that AI art is "*an insult to life itself*". Apparently, 45% of surveyed book authors are now using generative AI to write and research their works. This has led to the rise of so-called "Hybrid Authors." Unsurprisingly, the number of fiction novels with generic narratives and eerily similar plots is exponentially increasing across online marketplaces. It's understandably frustrating for conventional authors and artists to see AI hustlers using their work without consent, to produce and monetize generative AI slop. The ethics committees are tired, the artists are tired, and authors are frustrated.

SHINY GADGETS, FAKE DEMOS, AND THE HUMAN BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Not all was gloom and doom in the tech landscape this year, though. Consumer electronics delivered some shiny new distractions: the razor-thin iPhone Air, the Samsung Trifold, and the rise of silicon-carbon batteries. Thanks to this new battery tech, it's now possible to doom-scroll brain-rot AI reels for 15 hours instead of 10.

Lastly, we arrive at the ever-growing horror of AGI approaching. But as we inch closer, we're also seeing more uncanny nightmare-fuel consumer tech. Remember the Humane Pin? Yeah, neither do I. This year's spotlight was on the Neo humanoid robot. No job is safe now. Except it turns out the robot was a complete facade. In classic Y-Combinator-AI-B2B-SaaS meme fashion, the "breakthrough" autonomy was just a guy in a VR headset controlling it remotely from a basement in San Francisco.

It couldn't function without external input. Which, strangely, feels like the only honest metaphor for tech in 2025. Behind the demos, the investments, the jargon, is an ever-present flesh-and-blood guy doing the thinking, operating the strings, and sweeping up the mess. AI didn't replace us this year, it just mirrored us, awkwardly and sometimes brilliantly.

So no, we didn't get flying cars. We got autocomplete for life, a few shiny gadgets, and a growing suspicion that the future is arriving faster than our ability to ask whether it should. Until next year, when the same hype cycles repeat, we get slightly better models, and hopefully fewer guys in basements pretending to be robots.

THE HEIST OF THE DECADE

In episode 546 of 'do it for the plot', we have thieves wearing high visibility safety vests, hiding their faces with balaclavas and motorcycle helmets, giving great ideas for last minute Halloween costumes. These fashion icons are responsible for robbing 8 pieces of the French Crown Jewels from the 'Galerie d'Apollon' of the Louvre in Paris. The jewels, valued at approximately €88 million, were robbed in a duration of 8 minutes in which the thieves spent only four minutes in the building. Shocking, any normal person would take eight minutes just to get in. It was later found that they made use of a furniture lift, cut through the window of a second floor balcony, took the jewelry and made their getaway on scooters. So far, eight suspects have been arrested however the location of the jewels remains unknown. The robbery quickly gained popularity on social media under the name "Louvre Heist", with people asking very important questions about the robbery including but not limited to, "How hot, exactly, were the thieves?".

NOT SO CURRENT AFFAIRS

WRITTEN BY: DHEVA DHAARANI DESIGNED BY: BHAVYA WALIA



POLITICIANS BECOMING INFLUENCERS?

Zohran Mamdani becomes the internet's most beloved influencer. Oops, sorry we meant New York City's brand new mayor. His historic win is credited to his PR team that clearly worked overtime. You too would have come across his Reels and his TikToks. Those thirty second videos managed to be trendy, fast moving and hyper-relatable, sufficient to engage our diminishing attention span. Mamdani had over 100,000 volunteers knocking on doors across New York City, a pinnacle of how far the public would go to get a leader elected whose campaign made them feel the most seen. Mamdani did not feel like a distant leader for the people, they were able to relate to him. He could be seen on the same subway any New Yorker would take to work, eating at the same fast food joints anyone might stop by for a quick bite and facing the same rent crisis that was plaguing the entire city. Mamdani's win was a beacon of hope to the entire world but most importantly to the marginalized communities, from the queer community to the immigrant community of New York, it was a promise to the people who built the city that their voice mattered, that they belonged.

GEN-Z TAKES THE STREETS

Years of quiet suffering gave way in September 2025, when Nepal's youth made it clear that further suppression would only spark an uprising. A nationwide ban on numerous social media platforms was imposed across Nepal. Further, families of Nepal's political elite openly flaunted lavish lifestyles built on taxpayers' money, while the working class found themselves trapped in low-paying jobs or compelled to migrate in search of a better life. These ostentatious displays of wealth right before the ban added fuel to the fire of pent up frustration towards the corrupt government. As a result, protests broke out in various parts of the country with the destruction of several government buildings. This however had devastating consequences including numerous casualties. The protests came to an end following the resignation of the former prime minister K.P. Sharma Oli and appointment of Sushila Karki as interim Prime Minister making her the first female prime minister of Nepal (about time). She was elected through Discord, a social media platform for text, voice and video chat popular among the gaming community, that was banned not too long ago but ironically ended up playing the role of an EVM.



THE INTERNET HAD THOUGHTS

WRITTEN BY SHAILA PANDYA

DESIGNED BY ARYAN

THE SKY IS NO LONGER THE LIMIT

Katy Perry decided the pop charts weren't high enough. She boarded a Blue Origin rocket for a brief trip into orbit, joining the exclusive list of celebrities who have traveled to space. As the capsule floated in zero gravity, she sang *What a Wonderful World*. The internet, however, did not float along with her. Some people called the moment beautiful and empowering. The rocket came back down, but the debate about ethics and billionaire culture didn't.

FROM RUMOURS TO RINGS

In August 2025, Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce traded friendship bracelets for an engagement ring, instantly breaking the internet. The announcement fused two intense fandoms into one chaotic timeline. As the music world braces for a potential wedding album and the NFL prays the date avoids playoffs, one thing's clear - karma really is a guy on the Chiefs.

THE FAIREST OF THEM ALL?

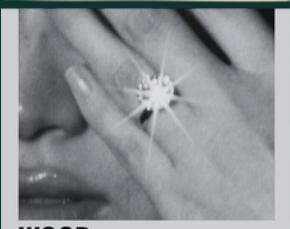
When Rachel Zegler was cast as Snow White, the digital world did not just disagree, it exploded into social media outrage. As she put herself into the iconic yellow skirt, a relentless barrage of criticism followed. She faced constant comments about her heritage and her blunt critiques of the 1937 original film. Disney went looking for a happy ending, but they accidentally bit into a PR poison apple.

FROM "GREAT GENES" TO MILKSHAKES

The denim aisle became a cultural war zone in 2025 as Gap and American Eagle battled for relevance—and your closet. It kicked off when American Eagle cast Sydney Sweeney with the cheeky line "Sydney Sweeney has great jeans," sending the internet into a spiral over whether it was wordplay or a genetics discourse. Gap countered by bringing all the boys to the yard, dropping a high-energy dance film featuring KATSEYE dancing to Kelis's *Milkshake*. Celebrity shock versus nostalgic choreography—choose your fighter.

THE EMMY YOUTH TAKEOVER

At just 16, Owen Cooper turned the Emmy Awards into his personal graduation party. The breakout star of *Adolescence* did not just attend the ceremony, he hijacked it! Watching a teenager outpace the most seasoned veterans of Hollywood was the plot twist of the year. Between his starstruck red-carpet energy and a humble speech that was reminiscent of the fact that he was just a kid with a massive dream. The absolute highlight was the fact that he actually had to file a formal school leave request just to pick up his golden statue. Owen proved that you do not need a driver's license to steer the cultural conversation.



WOOD 2025

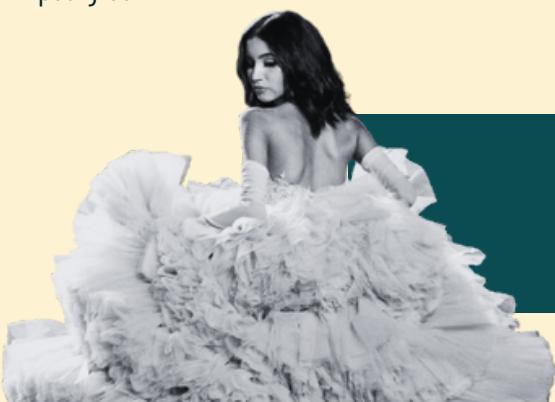
TAYLOR SWIFT
THE LIFE OF A SHOWGIRL
REPUBLIC RECORDSgirls, i don't need to catch the bouquet, mm
to know a hard rock is on the way

STYLE

NANCY TYAGI

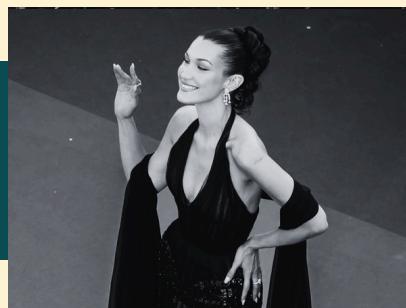
THE MAIN CHARACTER OF THE RUNWAY

From DIY designs to international applause, Nancy Tyagi has turned home-stitched dresses into high fashion. Her appearance at the Cannes Film Festival, dressed in a self-crafted gown that she designed and stitched from scratch, became a viral fashion moment, being a clear breakthrough in Nancy's career and establishing her presence on a global platform. In a world obsessed with big labels, Tyagi got the opportunity to style the Grammy winning pop star Tyla during her recent visit to India. Nancy conceptualized a clean, modern silhouette that still carried the emotional essence of Indian heritage. This moment showed that originality and creativity can open doors in fashion just as effectively as pedigree.



STOLEN AESTHETICS

Turns out the West loves Indian craft- just not enough to credit it. A dupatta, for instance, somehow becomes a "Scandinavian scarf" once it crosses the borders. Ironically, even the Scandinavians are not aware of the existence of these scarves. Earlier this year, during Prada's fashion week in Milan, models were seen wearing traditional Kolhapuri sandals which were apparently rebranded as "shuffled antiqued leather mules with buckled strap and fringe". Layers of adjectives are used to describe a product while the true custodians of the craft remain unacknowledged. And by the time it hits the runway, a centuries-old story has been neatly folded into a footnote.



MET GALA

MORE THAN JUST FASHION - 2025

This year's Met Gala theme, Superfine: Tailoring Black Style, stood out as one of the most politically and culturally grounded themes in recent memory. The theme drew from Black Dandyism, a movement rooted in 18th- and 19th-century Black communities where tailoring became an act of resistance, dignity, and self-definition. Enter Diljit Dosanjh, who reimagined dandyism through an Indian lens, arriving in an ivory-and-gold sherwani embroidered with a map of Punjab and Gurmukhi script. However, the irony was hard to miss as despite the theme's celebration of self-expression, Diljit was reportedly denied the historic Cartier Patiala necklace, settling instead for a custom alternative. A powerful look, paired with a quiet reminder that even inclusive spaces continue to have boundaries.

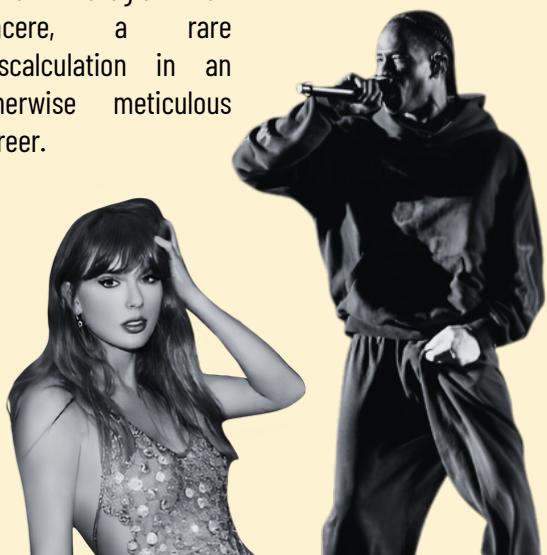


QUIET POLITICS OF CASUAL WEAR

Gen Z has recently embraced quarter zips as a "classier" alternative to the Nike tech jackets marketed as "street life" or "roadmen aesthetic". What began as a shift in fashion preference quickly evolved into a discourse around race and class. Quarter zips have been associated with wealthy men holding white collar jobs in finance and the Nike tech is seen as sportswear and at times linked to hood culture in a rather demeaning way. This contrast highlights how something as simple as a clothing choice can be pulled into a wider political and social debate. What should have remained a matter of comfort and choice, unfortunately, became a marker of identity.

THE ERA THAT DIDN'T STICK

Taylor Swift's *The Life of a Show Girl* became one of 2025's loudest pop conversations - and not always by choice. The much-discussed "Cancelled" track sparked debate about its sharp and problematic lyrics regarding cancel culture. While the concept intrigued, the execution relied heavily on spectacle and Swift's cultural dominance, making the project feel more strategic than sincere, a rare miscalculation in an otherwise meticulous career.



LOCAL HOSTS GLOBAL

If 2025 proved anything, it's that India is no longer a "maybe" stop on world tours. Coldplay sold out Mumbai and Ahmedabad, Travis Scott brought *Circus Maxima* chaos to Indian arenas, and Ed Sheeran casually turned a street into a concert. From screaming to "Fein" to dancing through Tyla's set, audiences showed up loud, ready, and obsessed.

THE SOUNDTRACK

DESIGNED BY : HARSHITA

WRITTEN BY : VARUN JAIN

ANOTHER YEAR WITHOUT FRANK OCEAN

2025 came and went, and Frank Ocean remained exactly where he likes to be: silent. Nearly a decade after his last album, fans clung to rumours while the industry kept spinning without him. In a year packed with releases and announcements—Jojii included—Frank's absence felt louder than ever. At this point, the wait is part of the lore.



END-OF-YEAR INTERNET FATIGUE

Spotify Wrapped once felt like a cultural event; now it feels like a yearly chore. The surprise is gone, the formats barely change, and everyone already knows their top artist by November. Predictable slides, recycled jokes, and timelines flooded with the same neon gradients and copy-paste fonts. Every platform and creator now has a "Wrapped" of its own, all dressed in the same design language. In trying to be bigger, Wrapped became exhausting and oddly forgettable.



NO TRANSLATION NEEDED : MUSIC THAT TRAVELED BEYOND WORDS



Music truly has no language. A song can cross three borders before its first translation is officially available on YouTube. 2025 was truly the year when diversity shined through the country's soundtrack. Sid Sriram made language feel secondary through his soulful Tamil songs. Punjabi pop stopped asking for Bollywood's permission, as Karan Aujla proved stadiums don't need Hindi to scream along. At the same time, people vibed to Korean R&B tracks they couldn't translate and sang along to choruses they couldn't pronounce. Artists such as Colde and Crush sat in playlists next to the soulful music of Anuv Jain. Originality and swag peaked as India had its very own international MC, Hanumankind — bringing passion before dictionary, his fierce lyrics and unapologetic honesty took the world by storm, bringing the global limelight on the future musical prospects of India.

BEYOND THE SCOREBOARD

WRITTEN BY: TANMAY KUMAR

MCLAREN'S RUN ENDS **MAX'S** TU TU TU TU **MAX** STREAK

You look up at the TV ... Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Max Verstappen flying past the finish line in the final grand prix of the season. However, it still wasn't enough to hand the Dutch driver his fifth title. Only Charles could have swung the championship in favour of Max but he had his own hands or maybe the seat, full of water. The championship unsurprisingly went to Lando, who finished third and earned his first F1 driver's championship by a mere two points.



2025 - THE END OF CURSES?

A WIN FOR WOMEN

The Indian women cricket team brought home their first ICC Women's World Cup title. Shafali Verma's commanding knock of 87 and Deepti Sharma's sensational 5-wicket spell crippled the South African middle order; hence, despite Laura Wolvaardt's century, the victory came to the host country, with Smriti Mandhana earning Player of the Tournament. The Women's Premier League also entered its third season, with the Mumbai Indians winning their second title. This year, blended international glory with domestic excitement for Women's cricket, proving its surge within the Indian audience.

DESIGNED BY: SARTHAK DEORA

ALCARAZ'S

5
HOUR
5
LONG EPIC

With so many sports delivering monumental finals, tennis certainly couldn't be left behind. Carlos Alcaraz made history by defeating Jannik Sinner in the longest French Open men's singles final ever. Trailing in the beginning, the Spaniard showcased a brilliant comeback in a gruelling 5-hour 29-minute match. Alcaraz, with this final, earned his fifth Grand Slam and also etched his name into tennis history.

The year has been terrible for age-old sports curses. Be it cricket or football, the unthinkable kept happening. RCB, whose fanbase had been chanting 'Ee Sala Cup Namde' for quite a while now, finally took the trophy home after 18 years. A similar miracle happened for PSG, whose triumph came post-Messi with the signing of Luis Enrique. They won their first UCL championship and completed a historic treble. At last, Harry Kane finally lifted a major trophy by winning the Bundesliga. Likewise, his ex-team 'Spurs' also ended their 17-year trophy drought by winning the Europa League. Maybe all they needed to break the curse was to be separated from each other?

NSUT

THIS YEAR

WRITTEN BY: AKANKSHA SACHDEVA DESIGNED BY: SAUMYA LEHRI

MAGGI & CAFFEINE TO THE RESCUE

After years of wishful thinking and long walks to the Student Centre, NSUT finally delivered a small but mighty upgrade: Safal and a Nescafé outlet on campus. Whether it was a cold drink after lectures or a hot coffee before an early class, these everyday comforts quietly improved campus life. It wasn't just about food, it was about the campus feeling more student-friendly, especially when stress levels peaked during exams.

ONE LESS ROLL CALL TO FEAR

In a move that felt like an unexpected bonus round, attendance requirements for Yoga and Sports were relaxed this year. For many students, this came as a genuine relief—one less deadline to track, one less stressor to manage. What added to the ease was the fact that the MSE carried no attendance criteria at all, and the ESE requirement was reduced to 60%. Mixed reactions aside, the change lightened academic pressure as the year wound down, proving that sometimes flexibility is exactly what students need.



FESTS, FEVER, AND FULL GROUNDS

PRO NIGHTS AND PEAK VIBES WITH MOKSHA

Moksha '25 transformed NSUT into a campus full of music, movement, and non-stop energy. With performances by Salim-Sulaiman and Darshan Raval, the fest drew massive crowds and even bigger cheers. Beyond pro nights, student-led competitions like Mudra, Auctions and Rouge, gave homegrown talent the spotlight. Add food stalls, spontaneous hangouts, and endless photo ops, and Moksha once again proved why it's one of North India's most awaited college festivals.

CULTURE IN CAMPUS WITH RESONANZ

Resonanz '25 brought the entire campus together in the most familiar way. As NSUT's intra-college fest, it thrived on participation—street plays, music battles, literary events, and drama showcases filled the days. Artists like Akhil Sachdeva and Rocknaama energized the evenings, but the real highlight was community. Freshers met seniors, societies shined, and culture felt less like spectacle and more like shared enthusiasm.

INNOVISION SAID: TECH, BUT MAKE IT FUN

Innovision '25 marked a milestone as NSUT's flagship tech fest became a standalone event for the first time. It blended coding, robotics, case studies, and panel discussions into a packed techno-managerial weekend. The Music Night, featuring Shiva Chowdhary, added a festive edge, proving innovation doesn't have to be dull. Innovision successfully merged intellect with excitement, making tech feel both accessible and fun.

As we end the year, a warm gratitude to the entire The Alliance team, whose moments and dedication live on in this recap.



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