

Vasant Valley

May, 2011

T O D A Y

The Big Fat English Wedding

The following article was written prior to the Royal wedding. A match made 8 years ago in St. Andrews, Scotland, Prince William wed Kate Middleton on the 29th of April in a grand affair described as "a good dry run for the Olympics".



It took seven years, a lot of heartbreaks and much media turmoil for the much sought after bachelor, Prince William to ask for his beloved Kate Middleton to be his (and no, not fairy-tale like) princess (technically, duchess).

On 16th November 2010, it was announced that finally, after many years of speculation, the much hyped royal couple of Catherine Middleton and Prince William (Arthur Philip Louis) were set to marry. A week later, the date for the Royal Wedding was announced for the 29th April of 2011 at the magnificent and bathetic Westminster Abbey.

Now, like all celebrity weddings, this one too, has had more than its fair share of hype. From the wedding day being declared as a bank holiday, to the ceremony being broadcast on national television, every bit of this procession has been kept on the down-low, but ironically smeared all over every tabloid, blasted on every

news channel and featured on every celebrity-gossip website.

The beauty of the entire wedding does not lie in the vintage champagne or the beautiful lilies and orchids canopied over the aisle, but in the outrageous theories and rumours that centre on it. One of the biggest questions that has been troubling every fashion enthusiast, shopaholic and housewife is, "WHO IS DESIGNING KATE MIDDLETON'S WEDDING DRESS?" Some of the names that have been tossed around as having been handed this 'very honourable' responsibility are Bruce Oldfield, Karl Lagerfeld, Sarah Burton, Sophie Cranston, Vera Wang and... wait for it, Alexander McQueen (presumably from the grave as he, to the dismay of all, passed away last year). Numerous reports concerning the Royal Bride's attire have been circulating, and to no certain answer. Why is this a big deal anyway? It's just a wretched dress. The English masses however, beg to differ. "Her dress is not simply her wedding dress but a big flag, symbolising her taste, her commitment (or otherwise) to fashion, her attitude to money at a time when the country is in economic doldrums," said Alexandra Shulman, editor of Vogue. If it really is such a big symbol and stands for whatnot, why can't she just walk down the aisle wrapped in the Union Jack?

To display their patriotism, Londoners have printed innumerable forms of merchandise flaunting the Royal Couple's faces. Be it fridge magnets, coffee mugs, stickers or t-shirts, William and Kate are literally a household name. Now be it an omen, or just a comical mistake, William's pleasant, very much in love face was replaced by his feisty younger brother Harry's face on a mug. So William weds Kate? Not so much. Similarly, in Japan, a framed picture of Kate and William appeared cracked after the earthquake. This again, was seen as a bad omen. I however don't see the logic behind that abominable accusation, wasn't the earthquake a 9 on the Richter scale? Forget photo-frames, that beast could have cracked skulls.

I simply don't see why we can't leave the pair alone. They're very much in love, and they're tying the knot, like any other average couple does. What's the big deal? Will their wedding vows be essentially different? Will their honeymoon be in another galaxy? Or will their wedding be politically significant or prominent? No. It will not. Then why can't we just wish them a happy married life and move on?

Forget about the cracked photo frames and sublime wedding dresses, this time, it's all about the love.

Sharanya Thakur, 10



SCHOOL WATCH

Events

Ms. Kapila Venu, a renowned performer of the Kudiattam form of dance from Kerala performed at school on World Dance Day, the 29th of April. Vasant Valley students participated in a Digital Video Conference organized by the Earth Day Network (Washington DC) on the 21st of April. They interacted with students from Doha (Qatar), Casablanca (Morocco) and Hawaii (USA) on the theme 'Water'.

Aadya Singhania has been selected to represent Delhi in the Under 12 age group for the 21st Nationals of Rhythmic Gymnastics Competitions which are to be held in Jhoshpur, Rajasthan from 4th to 8th May 2011.

Awards

The VVS Mini Soccer Team won the final of The Amann Kachroo Soccer Tournament against Sanskriti School by 3-nil. Ashith Koshla and Aman Nayar won the Player of the Tournament and Best Goalkeeper award respectively.

Peden Wangchuk and Aasheer Bhat of Class 8 won gold medals at the Computer Festival organized by Very Special Arts, India on the 8th of April.

The results of the Junior School Chess Tournament 2011 are -

1st: Mahin Bharadwaj (5)

2nd: Madhav Puri (3)

Earth Day Video Conference



On the 21st of April, some students of class 10, 11 and 12 attended a video conference on water pollution organized by Earth Day Networks, to celebrate Earth Day the following day. Students from Morocco, Qatar and USA along with those chosen from Vasant Valley were given the opportunity to interact with each other with the help of video camera equipment at the Cisco

Systems office in each of our countries. Many of the students felt as if it was almost like speaking to the students in the other countries face to face! We asked them questions regarding the water supply and conditions in their own countries and contributions that they have made to conserve and protect the environment. Each student shared his or her success story, and all of us were very aware of and intrigued by the situation addressing pollution in the Indian rivers, namely the Ganga and the Yamuna. The students from the other countries were curious to know about many social issues as well. For example, they asked us if women in India had to walk for many miles just to get clean, potable water and shared with us that a similar situation was arising in their country as well. They asked us if the rivers were used for religious practices, a question that impressed all of us. We asked the students in Doha, Qatar, how their demands for fresh water are met. Qatar, being a desert, does not have any freshwater sources and depends on desalination to meet their demands! Desalination is a very expensive method of removing the salt from ocean water to make it fit for drinking. The USA is the world's largest consumer of bottled water in the world, so we asked them why it is so, and what reforms they can bring about to conserve water and plastic. We also learned about the water situation in Morocco from the students in Casablanca. In fact, they use underground pipes to store and transport water. Since we were talking about such intense issues, we interacted with the students about each of their cultures. This really seemed to break the ice and give rise to a light, humorous discussion. We asked all three countries not only about their street food (which seemed delicious!) but also if they used any natural remedies for their skin care and hair care. No one could stop laughing, and we all really enjoyed the discussion. This experience helped us understand not only the need for water conservation all over the world, but also helped appreciate one another's culture. We now look forward to further opportunities like this that will expose us to a more global learning.

Akhila Khanna, Faaiza Seyid and Tulsi Sharma, 11

Batch of 2013

There are some of the lucky students of our batch, who upon entering the 11th grade have their futures mapped out in front of them. They know exactly what they want to become because of their interests in certain subject streams or because of their affinity for a particular career. From commerce to sciences, a particular section of our class knows exactly what they want to study in the future. The rest of us are pretty clueless or, if I may say so, confused.

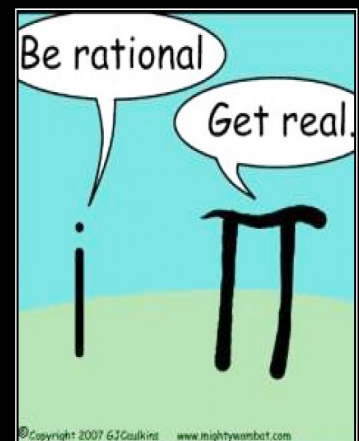
On entering the 11th grade, we are interrogated time and time again about our subject choices. People love to judge us based on what we want to study. "But what career will you make out of this?" is one of the most common questions asked. It is actually quite difficult for many of us to decide where we see ourselves in 10 years after having just given our class 10 finals. What many people don't realize is that this world is huge and is changing constantly. It is absolutely okay, to not have a definite career (like a doctor, or an engineer or even something radical like a video game designer) in mind right now. I think it is still too early to decide. There are numerous fields in this world today which may be our calling in life, except that we may not be aware of them as yet. A career choice does not have to be so well defined at the moment. As 11th graders, I guess all that we need to do is study what we like, work hard and I am pretty sure that we will all find our niche when the time is right!

Akhila Khanna, 11

The Perfect Equation

Math is a lot like life. Numbers are a lot like people. They can be negative or positive, you can put them together to form the perfect equation or subtract them when they get annoying. In a sense, every relationship is like a linear equation in two variables where 'x' is the needed value. While solving an equation of this kind more than anything you focus on the variables because the variables are the people, the coefficients are just circumstances. Every relationship reaches a stage where the value of x is dependent on y. At this stage, x changes itself constantly to fit in with y. Every value we give y changes the value of x which makes me wonder why x allows itself to be bullied into being whatever y and/or the equation expects it to be. If the value of y is positive, then the value of x is greater. However, should y turn out to be negative not only does x diminish in value, it can even turn negative itself. Not everyone's y is equal to zero and let's face it, why would anyone want to be in a relationship with a person who has no defining characteristics and in fact neutralizes anyone he or she comes across? Why is x a variable? Why does its value depend on the value of another individual? Solving an equation is so much easier than dealing with life; numbers are a lot more reliable than people.

Namrata Narula, 10



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MATH JOKES

If you get them, you probably don't have friends.

What Happened To Class Act?

Class Act was begun so that people from each section could display their talents and entertain the rest of the school. But what was started as a lesson to perform has become a chore, something that we have to do rather than something we really look forward to. And for the audience it has become a lesson for us to sit around and have a chat with our friends. This is because anyone who has been in senior school for longer than a couple of months knows almost everything that's going to take place. There might be the odd flash of brilliance but really how often do we see those? This is a list of performances that will be performed 99.9% of the time and because of their monotony, we've just stopped paying attention –

- 1. **Solo or Duet Song** – No matter which class performs, this is sure to be present in the show. Usually the song is sung by girls accompanied by someone playing the guitar in the background, and it'll be either a slow song or the new hit pop song.
- 2. **Play or Skit** – This is ALWAYS put on by the boys of the class who are usually forced to do this by the girls of their class or by their teachers. It may feature the odd girl or two but that's just because there weren't enough boys or there was a role no guy wanted to play.
- 3. **Indian Classical Piece** – A *raag* or classical instrument. This is because SOMEONE in each class takes lessons in either one of these and everyone knows it. So they are asked by the teachers or others in their class to perform.
- 4. **Group Dance** – Every class has that group of girls that just LOVE to dance and are more than eager to dance their hearts out on stage with everyone who is willing to join them. Of course the boys dance occasionally but the dance is usually a gag or a means to get a couple of laughs from the audience.
- 5. **Group Song** – Come rain, extreme heat, drought or even snow this IS going to be performed for class act usually as the final piece. Frankly, the only reason this could be avoided is if there's too little time. Normally the group song is just a filler something to take up 4-5 minutes so that class act takes up the allotted time.

Class Act is a fun lesson, one where we should be able to let go of our inhibitions and perform, if not for the school, then at least for ourselves and need not be what it has become. We need to reclaim Class Act and make it, once again, a lesson the entire school can enjoy.

Amar Singh Dhingra, 12



Farewell Class Act: Puts the 'class' in Class Act

World Dance Day

The resonating sound of the percussion instruments was echoing in my ears. Her expressive eyes were recounting a vivid incident, transferring us to a different time period. Her hands were moving firmly, yet gracefully with every word. Spic Macay does it again. On the occasion of World Dance Day on 29th April, Vasant Valley School got the opportunity to interact with renowned Kudiyyattam artist, Su. Kapila Venu.

Kudiyyattam focuses on Sanskrit theatre, attempts of which have been made, I can say proudly, twice in our school. It originated in Kerala and is the only remnant of Sanskrit dramatization in India. The significance of this art is *depiction with description*. A forest can be meticulously described with trees, leaves, rivers, birds and animals. It can go on and on and on.

The first fleeting thought was obviously how a few percussion players were able to catch every single individual's attention, something which is close to impossible in our school. With a pinch of excitement to know about this atypical art form and a dash of curiosity as we were acquainted with quite a few hand gestures, Ms. Venu began by narrating a mythological story of Krishna and Putna. It so happened that Putna, a demon, had been commanded by Kamsa to ruthlessly kill all the young children in the village to rule out the chances of his nephew still being alive. She submissively poisoned all the naïve young ones impassively until she reached the house where Lord Krishna dwelled. There wasn't a more beautiful, serene baby she had ever come across. His eyes glistened, and a sort of aura surrounding him seemed supernatural. Reluctantly, she decided to obey Kamsa's orders and poisoned him as well. However, Krishna kept drinking her milk and slowly sucked her life out as well. It was such a beautiful, eye opening story, yet seemed so simple when she recited it.

All in all, some of us at VVS do learn some form of dance, while many of us don't. But walking back to class at the end of the presentation, we had gained at least a bit of knowledge on a different style, connecting with our history, literature, theatre and culture. We started realizing, observing and appreciating how we dreamt with our feet and finally, danced our way out.

Vandita Khanna, 11

A Timeline in Photos: The Mark D'Souza Western Music Competition



2008: Blue House singers accessorized with blue bow ties and satin bows



2009: Green House's Simba is lifted in glory during group song *The Circle of Life*



2010: The St. Valentine mascots of Red House with their hearts literally on their sleeves

Daisy

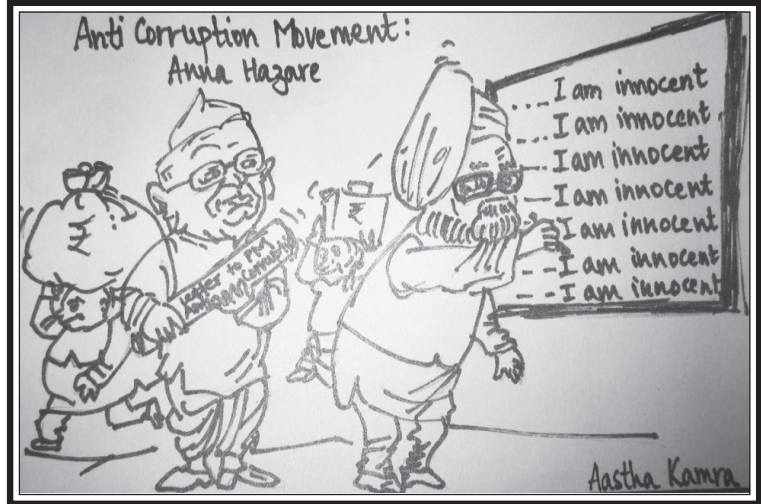
Sitting in Kashmir in my grandma's garden,
Looking at the daisies in a row near the fountain.
They were blooming, their colour as white as snow
They reminded me of a dancing doe.
One by one the butterflies came,
To drink the nectar which was as sweet as cane.
They looked so happy with each other,
About these little things we don't bother!
Wow! This was so amazing...
I didn't want to get up and kept on gazing.
Looking at this, I felt so relaxed and calm,
I stretched out and took them in my palm.
I lay there, the sweet smell I did enjoy,
Nothing would bother me, even a kill joy
The lazy daisies swaying in breeze
I wanted this moment to freeze.
Should I pluck them and take them home?
Destroy their beauty for my mom?
No! Where they are, they are they look their best
I learnt something from the daisy's treasure chest!

Tanvi Duggal, 6

Parsee Zoroastrianism

The Farohar is an important part of the Zoroastrian religion. Literally translated, it means a "forward pulling force." Each of its parts signifies an idea. The Farohar is winged, signifying the upward ascent of the soul. The wing is in three major segments, representing good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. The ring in the centre symbolizes eternity of the universe or the eternal nature of the soul. It is a circle, which has no beginning and no end. The figure inside is that of an old man, representing the wisdom of age. One of the hands points upwards, telling us that there is only one direction we should choose. The other hand holds a small ring, the ring of promise. This signifies that when a Zoroastrian gives a promise, it is like a ring; it cannot be broken. The feathered tail below is also in three parts. It represents repulsion against the wings, namely, bad Thoughts, bad Words, and bad Deeds. It is at the bottom, because such choices weigh us down. Finally the two curly threads from the waist signify the duality of our experiences. Through our good mind we can make the good choices, and from our bad mind we make bad choices.

Simonil Jassawala



धरती कहे पुकार के

धरती कहे पुकार के
अब तो मुझे वचाओ
कार्वन की वढती मार से
कुछ तो करके दिखाओ
धरती कहे पुकार पुकार के
अब तो मुझे वचाओ।
बंद करो विजली बत्ती
जल रही है यह धरती
इतना ज्यादा हो चुका
वातावरण आपा खो चुका
देख लो तुम जापान को
और धरा को पहचान लो।
उठ रहे हैं अब बवंडर
प्रकृति से अब तो डर
धरती को वचाना है
गीत यही अब गाना है
धरती भी कहे पुकार के
अब तो मुझे वचाओ।
अर्श प्रकाश 6 ब

हाय! ये गर्मी की छुट्टियाँ

है गर्मी की छुट्टियाँ करें क्या ?
ये तो है एक बहुत बड़ी समस्या।
हमारा स्कूल तो हो जाता है बंद
पर मम्मी पापा के ऑफिस का
काम न होता मंद।
घर बैठकर बोर हो जाएँगे
वाहर धूप में अगर खेलें
तो झुलस जाएँगे।
दादा-दादी या नाना-नानी
के घर जाकर उन्हें
भी कितना सताएँगे।
सारे दोस्त तो घूमने गए
कोई लंदन तो कोई यू.एस.ए.
कोई बैंगकॉक तो कोई गैंगटॉक
बस हम ही पीछे रह गए।
पूल में होगी इतनी भीड़ भाड़
कि सारा मज़ा भाग जाएगा ताबड़ तोड़।
टीवी और कम्प्यूटर भी
कुछ दिनों के बाद हमारा दिमाग देंगे फोड़।
है गर्मी की छुट्टियाँ करें क्या ?
ये तो है एक बहुत बड़ी समस्या।

संजरी कलंत्री 7 स

Films on Climate Change

Ms. Aanchal Kapur, founder of the NGO KRITI, conducted the Citizens Science Program on the 28th of April for students of Class 11 and Biology students of Class 12. The students watched two films on Climate Change followed by discussions. The Weeping Apple Tree, a film by Vijay Jodha, explained the changes in agricultural patterns due to global warming. It sensitively illustrated the plight of the farmers in the apple growing belt of Himachal Pradesh. The session was quite interesting and made us think about how we could aid the situation. We concluded that we could definitely help by not buying imported apples and encourage our indigenous crops. The second film, A Green Agony by Geeta Singh, explored the unique ecosystem of the Sunderbans. It analysed the impact of global climate change on this biodiversity rich habitat which is not only the home of the Sunderi (mangrove) trees but also the Royal Bengal Tigers.

Tanya Najhawan, 12

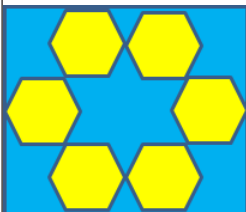
The Cricket World Cup is Ours..

Atmosphere in India was alive and kicking, The ICC World Cup was here and time was ticking. Not only were we playing, we were also the hosts, To gear up to the challenge, was first and foremost. Teams with friends and relatives, came to take part in the series, Being down and out was one of their worries. Now it was a question of playing their best, Hoping High and Mighty will take care of the rest! Each Captain told his men to play a fair and square game, To push themselves beyond their limits, was the dare. Our Men in Blue made our hearts fill up with pride, Go India Go!! The whole nation cried!!! They brought home again the World Cup trophy, Tooth and Nail for victory, fought our team and Dhoni. Now there is a lull but I say stay up-beat, As IPL has started, so this break was short and sweet.

Kabir Singh V- B

VISIT TO HUMAYUN'S TOMB

Our valuable visit to the Humayun's Tomb was a brilliant experience for us. We were lucky that it was on the WORLD HERITAGE DAY which made it more special. Mr. Nath helped us in learning more about the tessellation patterns and the history of Humayun's Tomb. Mr. Nath is an expert historian who takes people on heritage walks. We think that it is a very important job as it teaches us about the different monuments in India. We are doing a tessellation project and this visit will help us in creating some of our own patterns.



Here is a tile created by us using hexagons.
Kabir Singh & Sahil Armaan Kumar -V

What If there was no Coal and Petroleum on the Earth!

Solar energy is an efficient source of fuel as it is:

1. Renewable energy
2. It is available in plenty
3. It does not cost any money
4. It does not create any pollution, as no gasses are emitted when using it.

Scientists are working on methods of converting solar energy to chemical fuel. With this solar fuel it will be possible to use solar energy even at night when there is no sunlight. Devices are already developed to convert solar energy into fuel. It won't be long before solar energy will rule the world!

Kabeer Thockchom V- A

The Little Magic Pot

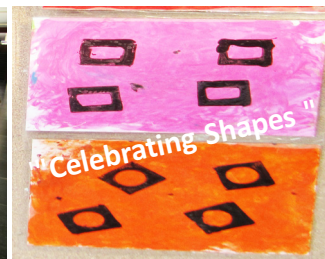
Once upon a time there was a poor girl who lived with her mother. That little girl was very hungry. Then she heard a kind voice. It was a 'pari' with a pot. The pari said, "When you want to eat something just say, cook little pot, cook." So the little girl said, "Cook little pot, cook." And then it started bubbling. She ran to her mother and said, "Look I have got a Magic Pot. So, when you want to eat something just say, cook little pot, cook." Her mother was so happy and got so busy eating that she forgot that she had to also use magic words to stop the pot from cooking. Soon, the house was full of porridge!

Yashohari Dalmia II - A

गर्मी का मौसम

वसंत के बाद गर्मी आती ।
इतनी तेज़ धूप कड़कड़ती
चिड़िया तरण ताल में नहाती
और फिर कितनी चहचहाती ।
सबको दोपहर को नींद आती
कोयल सुबह अपना गीत सुनाती
कूह - कूह कर वारिश को बुलाती
फिर वारिश आती तो गर्मी जाती ।

धुव रल चार - अ



INK SPELL

Once upon a time there lived a brother and a sister. The brother's name was Topsy and the sister's name was Bimbo. One day a storm came and took them away. They were in an unknown land which was called the Ink Land. When they were walking around, they got locked in a room. Suddenly Bimbo and Topsy fell down. Bimbo said, "A spell from the ink." Topsy got scared. Suddenly a door opened and they ran out of the room. There was no gravity outside the room. This time Topsy said, "Spell by the ink again." They saw a hole and fell into it. Soon, they reached an island where nobody ever went so they stayed there. They used to go hunting every morning and search for food. They learnt how to survive on an island, so they could live happily ever after. One day a tiger came hunting, saw them and charged towards them. Topsy and Bimbo escaped from the island using a parachute to fly away. After five days they reached back home and did live happily ever after!

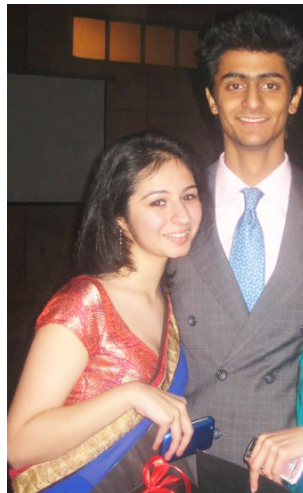
Kartik Vaish III - B

Ask Alumni

Having endured the process of submitting college applications, the stress of waiting for college decisions and the ultimate award of gaining acceptance to some of the highest ranked colleges in the USA, the alumni of the Batch of 2011 speak about their experiences and advice for applying for undergraduate studies abroad.

"Getting into college isn't as daunting a task as it appears to be. Firstly, if you are planning to go abroad you should give your SAT/TOEFL early in the year because studying for these exams later on can make it hard for you to cope with school work, finals and preboards. You should definitely concentrate on CBSE, especially math students. Start applying to your colleges as soon as possible because writing essays and SOPs (statements of purpose) can be extremely challenging. You should also have a meeting with the school counsellor to learn about all your options. Don't forget to get your school transcripts and letters of recommendation ready early or you will have a problem later. Work as hard as possible throughout the year to keep your grade average up as it is an important factor to help you get into college.

Overall, don't get too stressed out about the whole college issue because you can have loads of fun and keep your grades up at the same time as long as you remain consistent."- *Shoaib Kohli* will be attending the **University of Pennsylvania** this fall



"When I first started the application process, I thought it was the easiest thing I'd ever done. I couldn't figure out why everybody had made such a mountain out of a molehill. But halfway through the first page in the Common Application, I realized just how wrong I was. Listing all your achievements is one thing, but wording them just right so that the colleges understand the kind of person you are, is an entirely different ball game. That was the hardest part of the process for me. So I'd advise this year's applicants to think about the aspects of their lives they want to highlight, as well as what kind of light the achievements portray onto their personalities. I'd also advise them to not get lazy about the number of colleges they apply to. I applied to 6, and I wish I'd applied to at least 4 more."- *Ayesha Malik* will be graduating from the **University of California, Berkeley** in 2015

AESMUN 2011



The preparation for the AESMUN was an intense and nail-biting experience of high spirits and anticipation on various hard hitting topics such as illegal human organ trafficking and the imposition of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. What's that? Yes, that was our reaction too, but we got through the research feeling extremely learned afterward.

On the first day we debated one topic and drafted resolutions for the same. In the Human Rights Committee, it was extremely inspiring to see that the delegate of Pakistan was blind yet performed better than any of the others and that the resolution he drafted was passed. The Political Committee was perhaps the most entertaining as two of our very own delegates, Ishan Sardesai and Mallika Pal won the "Most Likely To Be A Couple Award" and the "Best Dressed Award" went to Mallika Pal. The delegate of Japan cracked jokes like "This resolution is like a miniskirt, it makes everyone happy and covers the bare essentials!" So much for diplomacy. The Environmental Committee was the only committee in which a page had been assaulted by a delegate and where majority of the notes passed around the countries revolved around eating and killing oneself due to lack of food, not the affairs we were supposed to be debating at all! The MUN also turned out to be the perfect ground for arguments between countries- the delegates found any excuse to differ and the delegate of Israel even wanted to declare war against Palestine in the middle of the Human Rights Committee! However, her request was patiently declined by the Chair who taught us the basics of MUN vocabulary which we kept mixing up resulting in hilarious outcomes (a point of information, which is used only to ask questions on the issue concerned, was used to take permission to visit the bathroom). We were served a scrumptious dinner of lasagne and chocolate mousse for which the students of Vasant Valley shamelessly went back for seconds and thirds.

The second day, we were off to an early start and debated the second issue. We had gotten accustomed to the MUN "lingo" and smoothly glided through the conference. The MUN was a great experience for all as it encouraged us to speak openly and express our country's views; however the delegates of China and USA were the best of friends and signed all the same resolutions as they were from the same school, not the same situation in real life I should think! Wiser and feeling a bit like amoeba who had imbibed a huge chunk of knowledge via osmosis from all the ideas flying around our heads over the past two days, we left the American Embassy school happy in the knowledge that we had represented our school in the best way possible; to add zest and lively debate to the AES Model United Nations 2011.

Juhi Bahl, 12

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VVIQ

Who is Iqbal Singh?
"Some don in class 12."- Sushain Sadhu
"Cricketer who is deaf."- Brea Dutt
"Muslim born into a Punjabi family."- Vikrant Puri
"He is the vegetable seller across my house."- Navina Singh
"That guy with a single hair on his head."- Sarthak Grover
"A pass out from our school."- Udai Chawla

Iqbal Singh is the present governor of Pondicherry, India. He has landed himself in a fresh controversy after incriminating documents surfaced revealing how he played a role in the allotment of a 28,000 square feet government plot for the construction of a gurdwara in the union territory. He is also in a controversy over alleged links with suspected money launderer Hasan Ali Khan.

