

Vasant Valley

January, 2010

T O D A Y

SCHOOL WATCH

PREFECT APPOINTMENTS

Junior School

Head Girl – Ishita Malhotra
Head Boy – Varun Vasisth
Red House Captain – Devika Vir
Yellow House Captain – Aryaman Nirvan
Green House Captain - Ananya Jain
Blue House Captain – Ashna Sethi
Sports Captain – Trisha Bansal
Sports Vice Captain – Reet Chopra

Senior School

Head Girl – Sanjana Malhotra
Head Boy – Shoib Kohli
Red House Captain – Sahira Mann
Red House Prefect – Rohan Nayar
Yellow House Captain – Supriya Subudhi
Yellow House Prefect – Harsh Jain
Green House Captain – Karanjeet Das
Green House Prefect – Rachit Duggal
Blue House Captain – Tara Sen
Blue House Prefect – Bharat Kaushish
Editor – Ayesha Malik
Games Captain – Aditya Lal
Games Vice Captain – Uma Narang
Head of Academic Council - Tanvi Tandan,
Nikhil Pandhi
Head of Art Council - Sumer Dhir, Malika Sikand
Head of Essentials Council – Prashasti Sharma,
Vaasvi Goyal
Head of Outreach and Environment Council -
Prarthana Gupta, Bharat Guram
Head of External Council – Rhiday Bhandari,
Saniya Dinodia
Head of Library Council – Rea Bhalla
Head of School Council - Rachita Oberoi,
Sumer Kandhari
Head of Sports Council – Mallika Arya

Speed Math-1 January 2010

Class 6 - Jahnvi Toshniwal
Class 9 - Abhivveer Arjun
Class 10 - Vandita Khanna
Class 12 - Shikhar Nayak, Rohan Nayar and
Sumer Kandhari

WE ARE THE WORLD

While the rest of the world was still high in spirits for the New Year, a small country in the Caribbean was in for a sudden and very painful awakening. On January 12 2010, Haiti was struck by a devastating earthquake measuring an unbelievable 7.0 on the Richter Scale. The chaos that followed left more than 200,000 dead, 1.5 million homeless, 2 million injured and still counting. But statistics are the coldest of all assessments regarding this disaster. There are still infants turning up from under upturned cars, still miraculous survival stories of people who remained alive by drinking of Coke, grieving parents, siblings, spouses, children searching for their loved ones despite the callous announcement of the point of no return being crossed. Literally.

And yet the world looks on. In horror, yes, but mostly in a detached pity. After all, an earthquake half a world away, a couple of hundred thousand casualties and a newly crippled country have no bearing on the rising prices of sugar in OUR country, so why should we give anything beyond a cursory click of our tongues in sympathy? Surprisingly, it is those who we consider shallow and spoilt that are trying to teach us this very lesson. Michael Jackson reaches out from beyond the grave with pointed renditions of 'We Are The World' playing on radio stations and TV channels. Madonna, Bono, Taylor Swift – they're taking time out of their busy schedules for Help Haiti concerts. Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt are donating an astounding \$1 million in aid. These are the same people who we (the ones who are just so much better) criticize for living lavish lives while the world slowly turns to rot around them.

But today it is not us who have leant a helping hand, it is they. And though some of them may have really atrocious songs, they have still been successful in nudging us in the right direction. The world is shrinking and no event or country is completely isolated. If not for the compassion that is lurking somewhere deep inside of us, at least for the possible repercussions on the Indian economy, I urge you to do as much as you can for those in Haiti. It may be as simple as clicking on a link on the internet or making a relief site your homepage – the larger the number of hits, the more sponsors donate as relief. Donate your old, clothes to the Red Cross – you know you're never going to wear that ugly tracksuit that was cool in the '80s again. And in the words of the dead and gone but always generous Michael Jackson, 'let's start giving.'

Ayesha Malik

VIEWS FROM THE VALLEY

A DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

We live in the capital of the second most populous nation of the world. It is a city both encumbered and upheld by its history and this is perhaps what is most interesting about it. New Delhi. The capital of India or, as William Dalrymple named it, 'the City of Djinns'. Legend has it that any invader who makes Delhi the epicenter of his empire shall meet his fate here. In keeping with this, the city has been rebuilt 9 times under different rulers.

Indian urbane, especially 'Delhiites', are not one community or society with a common heritage, but a heterogeneous amalgam of people. Each of us develops our own cocoon and believes that it includes the large, mad world of this city, but really it doesn't. Delhi presents us with several contradictions of class, community and culture. In many ways, this makes the city exciting. However, the most striking contradiction to me is the massive disparity between the rich and the poor.

The rich live in large houses with chauffer driven cars while the poor live in slums struggling for basic needs like water and food. Not even a posh area like South Delhi is spared. Right behind Vasant Valley there is a large collection of huts that form a typical slum. On my way to school I always see limbless beggars or children with emaciated bodies pleading for money. If I happen to be late, I even see the daily water truck, swamped by people-young and old- trying desperately to secure a bucket of water to drink and bathe from. Every time I see it, I feel disturbed to the core.

We all take our lives for granted. We know that tonight is going to be the same as any other night. We're going to go home, eat dinner and go to bed. If we get hurt we go to the doctor. If we are hungry we eat, if we aren't we waste. Our biggest concerns are our friends and whether our crushes noticed our new hairstyles. Can you imagine living a childhood where your biggest concern is when you're going to eat next? Or whether your parents are going to beat you if you return home without any money? Can you imagine living in a one room house without electricity or a roof? Can you?

I hope that one day we will be able to change this reality and live without this contradiction, but till then I shall relish in the tug at my heart when I see them, thankful that I haven't succumbed to the apathy that affects so many.

- Namrata Narula 9-C

CONFESSIONS OF A SHOPAHOLIC

Some people get that feeling when they see cars. Some get it when they see a cake shop exuding a buttery aroma. Some get it when they see reams of paper and a pen. Some get it when they dance. But I get it when I shop. The colourful monogrammed bags, designer labels, carefully stacked items, the fruity scent and shiny, clean shops can lure anyone in. Gucci, Prada, Supre, Miss-Sixty, Forever-21, Mango, Dior...

However in recent times this has been classified as a disorder. Oniomania from the Greek *onios* (for sale) and *mania* (insanity) is the medical term for compulsive shopping or compulsive credit card usage. Over the past twenty years, this problem has multiplied more rapidly than yeast on a mottled piece of bread. Almost nine percent of the Indian population are full-fledged compulsive buyers. This is experienced as an irresistible, intrusive, senseless, or frequent buying of items that are not needed or cannot be afforded, thus causing the person to fall into debt.

When faced with pressure, emotional highs or lows they feel a reward is due. Thus shopperholics go out and splurge. This enables them to bury their thoughts and worries into that Gucci clutch or run away from their worries in their Manolos. But once they've left the environment where the purchase occurred, the feeling of a personal reward has already gone. To compensate, the addict goes shopping again and again and again! At times the person feels ashamed of their addiction and destroys and conceals newly purchased goods, but this is rare.

This disorder manifests itself at a very small age. It is probably caused due to rejection from parents or peers. Thus shopping becomes like a crutch to them, a friend who stands by them through thick and thin. In today's consumer culture, the swipe of a credit card and wards of 'monopoly'-like notes have encouraged the creation of artificial needs.

This has caused crushing consumer debt, theft or defalcation of money and defaulting of loans. The resulting stress can lead to physical health problems, marital problems, ruined relationships, and in some cases, suicide.

It's for you to realize that all the Jimmy Choos in the world cannot 'chew' away all your worries... You will remain hungry and never satisfied. This disorder is like a complex sticky web. It is for us to be aware and not lose ourselves in this maze. Shop till you drop but right now it's time to STOP!

TARA SEN 12-A

मेरा प्रिय पशु

मेरा सबसे प्रिय पशु मोर है। मुझे यह इसलिए पसंद है क्योंकि इसके रंग विरंगे पंख मुझे बहुत पसंद आते हैं। इसे वर्षा ऋतु बहुत पसंद है और तब वह अपने रंग विरंगे पंख फैलाकर नाचता है। मोर को सब पशुओं में सबसे सुंदर माना जाता है। मोर ने जब घमंड से अपने आप को सबसे बड़ा व सुंदर कहा तो भगवान ने उसे काले और गंदे पैर दे दिए। अब भी मोर अपने पैरों को देखता है तो वह रोने लगता है। सिर्फ यह ही एक पशु है जिसम नर मादा से ज़्यादा सुंदर होता है। मैंने इसे कई बार पार्क व छत के ऊपर देखा है। अब बस मेरी एक ही कामना है कि मैं मोर को अपने पंख फैलाकर नाचते हुए देखूँ।

संजरी कलंती

INDO-PAK CRICKET TIES NOW A THING OF THE PAST?

In the player auction for the 3rd season of the DLF IPL, held on the 19th of January, no Pakistani cricketers were selected by any of the 8 franchisees.

The decision not to pick any Pakistani cricketers for the 3rd season of the IPL which is back in India this year has shocked many, fans and cricketers alike. Several ex-cricketers like Javed Miandad, Imran Khan and Kapil Dev have spoken out in indignation. The decision is even more surprising as the Pakistan cricket team has been doing really well as of late. Many thought that the Pakistani players would be highly sought after and the franchisees would be ready to pay extraordinarily high prices for the extremely talented Pakistani players. Instead, none of the franchisees chose to buy any Pakistani players.

Pakistani all-rounder Shahid Afridi's manager, Umran Khan told the media after the IPL-3 player auction that IPL franchisees were advised not to bid for Pakistani players as they would not be issued with visas. The Indian Government has responded by saying that visas or politics had no role to play for Pakistani cricketers not winning IPL contracts. The ministry of external affairs said that such apprehensions were misplaced.

The ministry of external affairs also said that the participation or absence of Pakistani cricketers in a 'commercial event' of the nature of the IPL is a matter outside the purview of the government. It termed the allegations as "unfortunate" and asked Pakistan to introspect on the reasons for the current strain on relations between India and Pakistan that have adversely impacted peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

Pakistan's Interior Minister Rehman Malik also charged the Indian Government with malaise intent on the IPL issue, and has threatened to cut off sporting ties with India. Also, Pakistani cable operators have decided not to air any of the IPL-3 matches in Pakistan to protest the insulting treatment dished out to the Pakistani cricketers in the player auction.

In my mind Indo-Pak cricket ties will never be the same again. I am sure the Pakistani cricketers have been humiliated and embarrassed by this "IPL snub." They have full right to consider themselves equal to, if not better than, other players from countries like Australia, South Africa and Sri Lanka who are participating in IPL-3. The Pakistani cricket team was growing from strength to strength and the players were really looking forward to the 3rd edition of the DLF IPL later this year. This has been a big blow to the Pakistani players whose talent is unquestionable which makes the decision to leave them out of the IPL even more mysterious.

But the question remains, what was the reason for denying Pakistani cricketers IPL-3 contracts? Who is to blame for this? At the moment none of us know the answer to these questions but let us hope we do soon.

Ishan Sardesai 10 C

15 जनवरी का भूर्य ग्रहन

15 जनवरी 2010 के दिन ग्यारह मिनट और आठ सेकंड के लिए भारतीय समयानुसार 11 बजे 03 मिनट पर अफ्रीका, हिन्द महासागर, मालदीव, श्री लंका और दक्षिण पूर्व एशिया के सभी आसियानों ने इस सदी की सबसे लम्बी अणुध्वजा उलगाकार, याने की ऐन्थूलर भूर्य ग्रहन अपनी चश्मो से सुरक्षित आन्खो से देखा।

इस से पहले उलगाकार भूर्य ग्रहन 22 नवम्बर 1749 को दिखाई पडा था और इसके बाद 21 जून 2020 को दिखाई पडेगा। उलगाकार भूर्य ग्रहन तब लगता है जब चन्द्रमा सामान्य स्थिति की तुलना में पृथ्वी से दूर हो जाता है। इसका परिणाम यह होता है कि चन्द्रमा का आकार इतना नहीं दिखता कि वह पूरी तरह भूर्य को ढक पाए। उलगाकार भूर्य ग्रहन में चन्द्रमा के आहरी किनारे पर भूर्य मुद्रिका, याने की उलय की तरह काफी चमकदार नजर आता है।



I AM PROUD TO BE AN INDIAN

I am proud to be an Indian because our country has unity and diversity and is known for its tolerance towards all religions. India is the biggest Democracy in the world. I am also proud that we have a lady president- Mrs. Pratibha Patil. Also it was an Indian, Arya Bhatta who gave 'Zero' to the world.

Amiya Kumar III- A

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THE TIRANGA FOOD FESTIVAL

Saffron, White and Green- the only colours we were allowed to use. The



Tiranga Food Festival was on! We celebrated it on the 22nd of

January for the Republic Day was around the corner. Two slices of bread, saffron and green chutney is all



we got at first to bring out our creativity. Then the tricolor barfi mix saw itself turn into a peacock, a map of India among other things. Grated

and chopped carrots, spinach and radish came in handy to make our



Tricolour. It was extremely exciting as we got to eat all that for breakfast and that gave us extra time to play!

Devika Vir and Ashna Sethi V- A

LOHRI CELEBRATION



We celebrated Lohri on the 15th of January. We enjoyed eating popcorn, chiky and rewari. We



enjoyed watching the fire and dancing around it to the beat of the dhol.

Nehmat Mann, Naaz Gill and Mehika Sikand II- C

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GRADUATING FROM CLASS TO CLASS

Graduating can be tough Senior classes are quite rough! A changing teacher isn't nice I've already done it more than twice.

Then the moment I came in through the door I felt I belonged to class four New teachers, new friends new beginnings, new trends! Many things are new now But I know its going to be fine, somehow!

Yashoda Jayal IV - C

मेरा प्रिय पक्षी - मोर

हमारी चिड़ियों की रानी,
लाती झीलों से पानी
दिए उसने अंडे चार,
सारे निकले बीमार।
रोई बहुत चिड़िया रानी,
बेचारी किस्मत की मारी।
फिर जब उनके पंख निकले,
वह तो उड़ते उड़ते चले गए।
पता नहीं कैसे बड़े हुए बच्चे,
उनके पर तो थे कच्चे।
अगर आप को पता हो,
तो बताइगा जरूर,
कि कैसे उड़े बच्चे?

अदिति सलूजा व प्राणवी आहूजा कक्षा पाँच

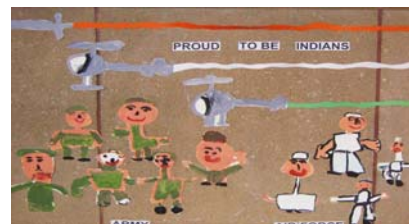
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खरगोश के - होश

मेरा एक है खरगोश
उड़ जाते उसके होश,
जब मैं उसे बुलाऊँ
तब वह करता है भाऊँ - भाऊँ।।
सुनकर ये मैं हैरान
वदल गई उसकी पहचान,
जब मैं उसे उठाऊँ
तब वह करता म्याऊँ - म्याऊँ।।

मेरा है एक खरगोश
जिसके उड़ जाते है कभी - कभी होश
पर वह है मेरा प्यारा खरगोश।

इशिता चड्ढा व त्रिशा बंसल कक्षा पाँच



IN AND AROUND SCHOOL

3 IDIOTS - NOT JUST A FINANCIAL SUCCESS

"Three Idiots has swept the box office with its success."

We have seen these lines repeatedly in the newspapers and on television headlines. Strangely enough the financial success of '3 Idiots' has been glorified much more than its impact on the Indian public. From parents to children to teachers, even the whole education system, '3 Idiots' has left a mark on all. It's not only a money matter.

Some films tend to lecture about morals, making a trip to the cinema hall feel like another day in school. Other films which are pure romantic comedies hope that the viewers notice their so called hidden "values". Very rarely do we get to see movies like this one which give us a sweet taste of both these types of films.

The typical Indian parent thinks that grades are everything. Their child getting into IIT is equivalent to the parents themselves reaching the peak of Mt Everest. '3 Idiots' shows us that a child's dream in life is not to see his parents as mountain climbers but to see him or herself climbing up that mountain the way he wants to. He will reach that peak one day, but because of his OWN mountaineering abilities and not his parents. It is time for those stressed out parents to relax. No child is a failure.

Students on the other hand hopefully have learnt that committing suicide is not the answer. You cannot escape from your worries by hanging yourself. So what if you did badly in one exam? That does not mean that you are never going to get anywhere in life. You will do better the next time. Here is my interpretation of the film - the next time you are studying for a review, don't study like a robot that is only learning the Nazi ideologies to pass in a History review. Instead, love what you are studying even though it may involve radical thinking.

The character of Boman Irani aka Virus shows us how vital it is that teachers start finding other phrases than "its time to pull up your socks" and "your grades are slipping, its time to buck up" or the most common one "you should be like ABC". Such comments demoralize us "idiots" further and could make us doubt our own abilities. Teachers could play an active role in assuring us that we CAN accomplish our tasks and that "All is well".

Akhila Khanna

संघर्ष ही जीवन है

संघर्ष का दूसरा नाम है: जीवन। ये एक प्रकार से पर्यायवाची हैं व एक दूसरे के पूर्वक भी। जिसने जीवन के सूत्र को समझ लिया, जीना तो उसी का है। भयंकर से भयंकर और विपरीत परिस्थितियों पर विजय पाने का एक ही रास्ता है: पूरे आत्मविश्वास के साथ बाधा विरोधों से जुझ जाना व संघर्ष करना: जो संघर्ष से बचकर चले, वह कायर है। संसार सागर की ऊँची उफानती लहरों को जिसने चुनौती देना सीखा है, सुफलता की अनुपम मणियाँ उसी ने बटोरी है। जो डरके किनारे बैठ गया वह तो जीवन का दौंव ही हार गया। कबीर ने इस भाव को इस तरह कहा है: जिन खोजा तिन पाइया, गहरे पानी पैठ। यह गहरे पानी पैठकर खोजना क्या है? यही संघर्ष अथवा चुनौती को स्वीकारना है, कर्म की आँच में तपना है। यही गीता का अमर संदेश है कि कर्म करना ही मनुष्य का अधिकार है धर्म भी। जीवनपथ पर चाहे सफलता मिले या विफलता, संघर्ष करने का संकल्प शिथिल नहीं पड़ना चाहिए। एक कवि के शब्दों में:

जब नाव जल में छोड़ दी, तूफान में ही मोड़ दी।
दे दी चुनौती सिंधु को, तो पार क्या, मझधार क्या।।

: शिविका स्याल

HAPPY FEET

The majestic yellow – necked emperor penguin, the largest species of penguin, spends its entire life resting on snow or swimming in frigid water. A penguin's dense feathers provide it insulation and protection from the cold, but how does it withstand the cold on its feet, when us humans can't even bear cool marble floor on ours?

Penguin's feet are remarkable creations. They are set back much further than on other birds so that the penguins can maintain their upright stance, but this conformation's main attribute is to help them swim. When swimming, a penguin's foot trails behind acting as a rudder and a brake.

During their hatching season, the mother and father alternately dive into the ocean in search of food. When the penguin finds food, it brings it back to its mate, sits on the chick, and watches its mate leave to find more food. The penguin goes from swimming in icy water to standing on snow that is, needless to say, below freezing temperature. Encyclopedia Britannica estimates that the cooling power of the seawater to which they are exposed is equivalent to a temperature of -4 degrees Fahrenheit, along with a wind of about 70 miles per hour. Taking into account the speed of 10 -20 miles per hour that penguins typically swim at, they are exposed to rather uncomfortable conditions. So how do their feet withstand this?

A layer of air trapped under its feathers protects the penguin's skin – only the feet are in direct contact with the water. Penguin's feet have been studied at exactly freezing temperature and it has been found that they indeed get very cold. If their feet stayed at a warmer temperature than the surrounding snow, they would lose body heat through convection or conduction. This low temperature is maintained by the penguin's unique circulatory system. As arteries carry warm blood toward the toes, veins running alongside carry cold blood back in the opposite direction. In effect, the two blood streams exchange heat so that the circulation level can remain low enough to conserve body heat and just high enough to prevent tissue damage and frostbite.

Penguin's feet also have very few muscles. Instead, their feet possess a vast network of tendons, which do not become as painful as muscles when cold. But, of course, we can never be a hundred percent sure that penguins don't experience even a little foot pain, as unlike humans, penguins never complain.

- Sanjana Malhotra 12 A

GREEN

More seductive than the seductress's lips
 Or the swaying movement of her hips
 The reason she accompanies the sailor off his ship
 The little green note between his fingertips
 You can see the greed, transparent in his eyes
 He gambles over and over for that unholy prize
 Will he be the king of diamonds or the king of sighs?
 For the little green note he sneaks and spies.
 She spots him walking on the street
 With a smile on his face and a jump in his feet
 She drags him into the ally, later leaves him white as a sheet
 Triumphant, with the little green note her night's meal is
 concrete
 And then some, they work all day and night
 In their faith, their mantra they continuously recite
 If we do good, we will be treated right
 Yet the little green bill stays out of sight.
 Green makes the world go round
 Turning an churning without a sound
 Some may have earned and some may have found
 But none can take it 6 feet into the ground
 So frivolous and crass are money matters
 It turns even the sanest of the sane into hatters
 Leaves so many good souls bruised and battered
 The thin get thinner and the fat get fatter.
 Green is the colour of the earth, of life and of being
 But what is this we have been seeing?
 A little green bill has everyone fleeing
 To steal, to murder, to gamble a living?

Vanya Vaishnavi Singh

BUSTED

Alaap Gandhi – “I dugged my nose”
*We wish you'd poke around with your brain a little –
 it may still be alive.*

Alaap Gandhi – “Give me a call me.”
With that grammar, I'd really rather not.

Tara Sen – “My blood is bleeding.”
And our heads are hurting because of your words.

Raghav Raizada – “Ma'am now we will do it the ques-
 tion first.”
If she can understand what you're saying, that is.

Alaap Gandhi – “Let me saw it.”
Only if your eyes are sharp.

Naushera Debu- “Oh My Guys this gods is so lame.”
Forgive him, for he knows not what he says.

AVATAR MOVIE REVIEW

Avatar is an imaginative film with an interesting plot. In this special effects powerhouse, not only does director James Cameron provide immense entertainment but also a powerful message about human greed and the way we are willing to destroy anything for money. The movie is set in the year 2154 and is about crippled human, Jake, who is selected for the Avatar program by default, where he has to go to the jungle on the planet Pandora in order to help the humans extract an ore which will sell for 20 million dollars a kilo on earth. On Pandora there are life forms such as the Naa'vi, a humanoid race that are about 10 feet tall and have sparkly blue skin, big eyes and tails. The humans have genetically bred human-Naa'vi hybrids known as Avatars. Jake's Avatar is able to walk, hunt and fly with the Naa'vi but falls in love with one of them. Now he has to choose between his own race and the race of the people he's come to love.

The special effects are amazing and the action keeps you on the edge of your seat throughout the 161 minutes of the movie. The movie was completely different from anything else I have seen before. The ability to see Pandora's natives for who they are is the movie's moral touchstone. The company's shock troops, who have not seen the Na'Vi up close, view them as nothing more than an impediment to the extraction of ore. When the inevitable battle begins, one employee refers to them as roaches. The two human characters who live among the Na'Vi undergo conversions and come to realize the importance of respecting them and their way of life. It is a film you shouldn't miss. If there's one man who knows how to spend 250 million dollars well its James Cameron!

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