

# Vasant Valley TODAY

## GREY IS THE NEW BLACK

A cloud of despair hangs as dark and depressing as the actual skyline. Is the worst over for Delhi? When NASA satellites are able to trail the smog above our city, one would think so. After all, deterioration in the quality of air has led to such an alarming level of pollution that being able to breathe now seems like a luxury. For the people in anticipation of the winter catalogue, don't be too surprised if you see a few anti-pollution masks in there.

With the situation escalating, emergency measures are being taken by all to keep themselves safe against the venom we are in direct and alarming contact with, but unless and until drastic steps are not taken towards the prevention of this grievously prevalent issue, us citizens of Delhi will be caught in a vicious cycle.

“Adverse weather, combined with crop burning in Punjab and Haryana, and existing and uncontrolled pollution because of emissions from vehicles, factories, garbage in our cities.” Says environmentalist Sunita Narayan, putting emphasis on the many factors that have contributed to the detrimental state Delhi's air is currently in. From the winter season settling in and causing the pollutants in the air to remain stagnant to the large-scale construction that is taking place in our national capital region, the air quality only seems to be dipping further and will continue to do so over the years until the right measures are taken place but judging by the chest-congesting haze that greets us first thing in the morning, critical measures are still failing to be taken. From heart diseases to lung cancer, measures like shutting down schools for a brief while and installing air purifiers are not enough to keep these toxins away from our bodies.

Since both private and public factors are causative for Delhi's unsustainable air quality, it is self-evident that the people and the government must work together and constructively to put an end to this crisis. Currently none of them - despite trying - are obtaining results, and the reason for their failure seems to be a myopic approach to a problem that needs long term management. The government repeatedly implements short term policies to counter the effects of pollution after they happen, yet fails to prevent such events from happening in the first place. Road-rationing plans like the Odd-Even scheme need to be enforced year-round, instead of as temporary solutions. Construction work cannot be held up just in November, it needs to be constantly regulated and restricted. Industries need to be assessed for emission levels on an annual basis, not just when people begin to die. Environmental consciousness must become a way of life, not a response to crisis.

***‘The people and the government MUST work together to put an end to the crisis.’***

The people are not much better either. Instead of wearing masks, installing air-purifiers and cocooning ourselves in our homes, we need to work consciously to ensure that the air quality improves everywhere. If that means using public transport, reducing our electrical usage, paying a little more to run our cars on cleaner fuels, and putting ourselves through a little discomfort – so be it.

The Delhi Government and the Supreme court have tried time and again to come up with a sustainable environmental policy for the national capital. In the late 1990s, the Supreme court ordered public transport in Delhi to be converted to CNG (Compressed Natural Gas), which included buses, taxis and auto rickshaws. Following this the Delhi Government passed a profusion of other measures to cut vehicular emissions. These included weeding out older vehicles from the roads, enforcing regular pollution checks, and introducing un-leaded petrol and low Sulphur diesel. While this reduced the levels of Sulphur-based pollutants like Sulphur dioxide gas, the increase in the number of cars on Delhi roads meant a steady increase in particulate matter in the air - the build-up of which led to the event that came to be known as ‘The Great Smog of Delhi’ for the first time in November 2016.

*Soham Kacker and Harnoor Singh*



## मौसम का जादू

गरमी का मौसम आया  
चारों ओर परेशानी लाया  
आसमान पर सूरज छाया  
गरमी ने अपना जाल फैलाया

पेड़ों की क्रिस्मत जागी  
लोगों की भीड़ इनकी ओर भागी  
पेड़ों की ठडी छाया  
गरमी में सबको भाई

वर्षा आई झूम के  
बादल बरसे घूम के  
गरमी भागे दूर से  
मस्ती आए झूम के

पेड़ों में हरियाली आई  
धरती पर है घास छाई  
बच्चों के मन उमंग भरे  
सारे मेनढक गाना गाए

बारिश है बाढ़ भी लायी  
आने जाने में आई कठिनाई  
गाँव गाँव जल में डूबे  
यही है वर्षा की बुराई

कृष्णव चोपड़ा ८

## HISTORY

I wonder what it may be?  
For it has dulled the rose which once bloom,  
Conquered the building that once stood tall,  
Drowned the Titanic which once sailed  
Silenced the overflowing waterfall  
What it is, it bothers me,  
And it seems as though its broken me,  
When its broken her,  
What that curse is,  
Who that monster is,  
In my wildest thoughts, I know not.

She's been robbed off her cherry smiles,  
In her cheeks the rosy blush that lies,  
The smell of her assorted scents,  
Those eyes that make my heart melt,  
It all seems to fade away,  
With the dandelion flowers  
With which we once played.

My heart aches to see her dance,  
The cheery-bliss her laughter brings,  
The way she wore her gowns in the winds,  
Her face blanketed with her luscious locks.  
Like raindrops drip tears;  
Like a stagnant puddle those eyes are filled,  
Mute she is;  
Her voice;  
Once melody to my ears.

I search for her in the maze  
In which she is trapped.  
I dive in the sea  
In which she may have drowned,  
My throat fills up with rising bile;  
I know she will survive,  
Not a mountain too big to climb,  
No task which she cannot achieve;  
There will come a time where,  
She will rise;she will succeed.

I hope she soon returns to me,  
I will be waiting,  
To witness,all that,  
Which has now become a distant memory,  
A past;a photograph;a history.  
*Arsheya Gaur, 8*



बारिश

बदल गरजे, बिजली कड़की,  
रिमझिम बरस रहा पानी।

पानी में छप छपाना,  
गर्म चाय और पकौड़े खाना।

ये सब है सावन की देन,

कागज़ के जहाज़ बनाना,  
फिर पानी में उनको बहाना।

ये सब हैं मस्ती के पल,

पर ट्रैफिक में हर रोज फँसना,  
कीचड़ में पैर फिसलना

घर में बैठ होना बेचैन,  
रिमझिम बारिश की हैं देन।  
सिद्धार्थ शर्मा, 6



## INGENIOUS INNOVATIONS!

The author has used a number of sources to help her write this article

## 1. Ice Stupas

Sonam Wangchuk has created an artificial ice-stupa, to make water easily accessible to people in the harsh climate of Ladakh. It works like an ice-stupa and can store approximately 16000 cubic litres of water. This invention has made lives easier for numerous people who had to travel a great distance to get a basic necessity like water.



## 2. Doodler-the world's first 3D printing pen

The Doodler melts plastic and then rapidly cools it, enabling us to draw simply in the air. It allows an artist to give a visual structure to his ideas instantaneously. It can be used in the future to revolutionise the process of architectural drawings, education, model making and building prototypes. The only restraint is one's imagination.



## 3. Anti-Gravity Treadmill

The treadmill inflates a chamber within which a moon-like gravity is created. One must don a pair of special shorts, zip up this chamber, and he is lifted up as if he was on the moon. This has not only helped several patients recover from their injuries in the knee and spine, but it is even used by NASA for the purpose of training astronauts.



## 4. Stationary that grows into plants

Have you ever wondered what happens to your stationary when you're done using it? What do you do with your stationary when the ink of your gel pen is over, or when your pencil is too small to be used anymore? Well, here's a pen and a pencil which will grow into a tree once you are done using it. It is made up of biodegradable material and has seeds within it. All you need to do is put your stationary in soil, and provide it with care, as you watch a tree sprout in its place. In the near future, you won't just choose which colour the pen's gel is, you will also choose which plant it grows into.



## 5. Edible Water Bottles and Cutlery

Plastic Waste from water bottles is ruining our environment. In such a scenario, it is vital that we reduce this plastic, and a company called Ooho has come up with an alternative form of packaging, using seaweed. Thus it is biodegradable as well as cost-effective.

This packaging can be used to replace plastic packaging of water bottles. Another India based company has created edible cutlery, out of rice, sorghum and wheat. They intend to use this as a replacement for disposable plastic cutlery, as it is a more eco-friendly alternative.



Vedika Bagla, 9

## MOVIE REVIEW: SECRET SUPERSTAR

A surprising and moving film, *The Secret Superstar* is not at all what you would expect it to be. This movie takes place in the small town of Baroda, Gujrat where some people, even in today's day and age have the old 70's mindset. It talks about the journey of confident, young, hot-headed girl, Insiya (Zaira Wasim) who has the dream of becoming a famous singer, and who is willing to sacrifice anything to fulfill it. *Secret Superstar* deals with a pertinent issue which exists in Insiya's conservative household. In fear of her tyrannical father, who only ever shows love to her brother, Insiya pursues her dream by wearing a Burkha and uploading her music videos anonymously on YouTube, against the wishes of her controlling and abusive father.

She quickly becomes a viral sensation with people from over her world wondering about the identity of this mysterious singer. Shakti Kumar (Aamir Khan) an immoral, disliked music director, reaches out to Insiya and offers her a chance to record a song (Nachdi Phira) for him, changing her life forever. Pushing against all obstacles that come her way, Insiya travels alone to Mumbai, records her song which gets nominated and which helps her win the 'Best Female Singer award'. At the end of the movie, her mother, giving in to Insiya's pleading, divorces her father. Aamir Khan's role brings a certain humorous effect to the otherwise serious movie.



A message brought out through this movie by Insiya is that sometimes the destination should be decided before the route and everything else will get figured out. Most importantly the movie taught us all to dream, because if you don't wake up with something to look forward to, what is the point of waking up at all??

Reana Soni, 9

## सपनों को साकार करो

हम लोगो को ये दर्दनाक तरह से पता है कि हमारे समाज में हम लोगो को ये अच्छी तरह से पता है कि हमारे समाज में लिंगभेद की जड़ें बहुत गहरी हैं। समाज में महिलाओं के प्रति इज्जत से बर्ताव कम ही देखने को मिलता है। समाज के कुछ हिस्सों में तो लड़कियों को कोख में ही मार दिया जाता है। कहीं - कहीं तो औरतों को बुनियादी सुविधाएँ भी नहीं मिलती हैं जैसे शौचालय, अच्छा खाना और पानी।

'सीक्रेट सुपरस्टार', आमिर खान की नयी फिल्म, इस मुद्दे को सम्बोधित करती है। एक जवान लड़की के द्वारा यह फिल्म लिंगभेद और महिलाओं के प्रति अनौचित्य व्यवहार के बारे में समाज से प्रश्न उठाती है। इसु, एक जवान मुस्लिम लड़की, की आवाज बहुत सुरीली है, और वो दुनिया की सबसे महान गायिका बनने का सपना देखती है। लेकिन उसके पिता, जोकि दकियानूसी ख्यालातों के हैं, नहीं चाहते हैं कि उनकी लड़की अपने सपने का पीछा करे, क्योंकि उनके दिमाग में लड़की की जगह घर और पति की देखभाल करने में ही है। इसु के पिता अपनी पत्नी को भी इज्जत नहीं देते हैं। इसु अपनी प्रतिभा और अपने परिवार एवं मित्रों के समर्थन के द्वारा यूट्यूब पर 'सीक्रेट सुपरस्टार' के नाम से मशहूर हो जाती है।



जैसा इस फिल्म में दिखाया गया है, इज्जत सीखना घर से शुरू होता है, माता और पिता दोनों की यह ज़िम्मेदारी है कि वो अपने बच्चों को सबकी इज्जत करना सिखाएँ, चाहे वो लड़का हो या लड़की।

साहिल अरमान कुमार , ११



## GAME OF ROBES

Who would have thought there would be a connection between the multi-award winning and hugely successful television show, *Game of Thrones* and good ol' Lajpat Nagar? Presenting Manjot Rana, homespun businessman and third generation owner of Rangarsons. Not only did he land a role in creating costumes for *GOT* but has many other feathers in his turban that include production for *Gladiator* and even *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*.

Can you imagine the rich and detailed fur and leather costumes worn by the royals and warriors in the dark and gory sets of *GOT* being crafted in the humble by-lanes of rural India that include Rajasthan and even places in Gujarat. Approached by Richard Roberts and even British production designer Gemma Jackson, Mr. Rana's been working on the sets of *GOT* for the past eight years. After having to race against time to meet the production deadlines, he has provided memorable and bewitching ensemble and successfully enhanced the world famous TV show.

It is no secret that Indian weavers are by far one of the most splendid. They hail from across the subcontinent. From Kashmir to Banaras to Kerala. The styles are unique, and flavorful giving life to the threads. Beautiful 'kaarigari' is a part of the Indian culture and heritage. As global connections are forged to see the stitches of hard labour flash across our screens is a matter of immense pride. So next time you have your eyes glued to the show, remember that the legions of the Night Watch were dressed up by legions of tailors, craftsmen and embellishers across India.

Harnoor Singh, 10

### Composting

Composting makes our plants green  
 Composting makes the soil rich and clean  
 Composting helps us grow more trees  
 Composting helps us be pollution free.  
 Composting is a solution for everything  
 Let's not fill the landfill with anything  
 Water harvesting helps us too  
 It's not good to waste coal, oil or natural gas  
 Instead use biomass and biogas  
 Recycle at home and at school  
 Let's follow some ground rules  
 Reduce, Reuse, Recycle are the words we  
 know

Let us be careful so that we can live and grow.

**Rehaan Dehia, Nysa Bedi and Yuki Miyashita III C**

### Sustainable Living

Energy we use you everyday  
 But let's use you in a responsible way  
 Let's use carpool  
 And walk or cycle to school  
 Let's use wind or solar power  
 And not bathe under a shower  
 Let's reduce our trash  
 And do composting in a flash  
 Let's help our city to be clean  
 And make our planet more green

**Maya Rose Chopra, Aisha Mohiuddin,  
 Samaira Bhalla and Maheeka Saraf III - C**



जब मैं प्रतियोगिता में प्रथम आई मेरे घर में प्रसन्नता की लहर दौड़ गई।  
 इनिका गौड़ चार - बी



हमारे देश के नौजवान अपने प्राणों की बाजी लगाकर हमारी रक्षा करते हैं।  
 युगांक 4 - बी

### Dear PINE,

Since you are a very close and entertaining friend I would like to share a few points with you detailing the dangers that surround us. The humans are ruining our life. They are fully capable of chopping us down and using our goods for their survival. Recently, I have heard from other trees that in Himachal, people cut lakhs of trees to get wider roads. Secondly, travellers that are overcome with lassitude think we are a washroom stop and urinate on us that leaves a malodour behind. This is a very bad habit the humans have learnt.

Thirdly, these humans have put up wires everywhere. These wires meander through my leaves and continue their journey to another tree. These wires are not ordinary. These are electrical wires and can be dangerous as I can catch fire. Once there were many berries growing on my branches. Several parrots came to feast on them but they all got burnt along with a patch of leaves. I felt pity for the berries and the parrots. The same happened to you right ... PINE?

Now I have a problem regarding the winds. When fierce winds take place then a tree might stumble if it is weak. It has never happened to me before but one day it might. Even now roaring winds make me tilt sideways. The fear of people nailing posters in me has always vexed me. It is painful, too. One last thought that has perturbed me is the family picnic. Whenever a family comes for a picnic and sits in my shade I am so delighted to see them laugh and crack jokes together until they contaminate my place, leaving chips scattered here and there and packets and bottles. These are my woes. I may have been selfish about sharing them with you but then what are friends for. Yours with concern

Berry Blossom ( your friend )

**Ayesha Chandra Thakur V - B**

### My Shoe Has A story To Tell - The Story Behind My First Pair Of Sneakers

I am Marta. I am a pair of pink, orange and black sneakers. I was manufactured in New York, and taken to a shop called "Paragon Sports". There, I met a girl named Rose, whose old sneakers, (my grandfather) had just gotten small for her. I could tell that she was really upset, but it turns out that the reason for that was because her older brother Sam was troubling her. As soon as she laid her hands on me, my eyes lit up. As I had predicted, she bought me. We travelled to Canada with her dog Duncan, her mother and Sam.

In Canada, there was not a moment when Rose took me off, not even when she was sleeping!! We had great adventures together. I still cannot forget the day when she won a hockey scholarship. I looked up at her and thought that she was the most talented, kindhearted and caring person in the whole universe, but the only thing I did not like about her was the way she treated her brother Sam. I liked Sam and Rose, but the problem was they used to fight like cats and dogs and it drove me nuts. One evening, when Rose came back from school, she was taking me off and she realized that she had a blister on her toe. All shoes go in the dumpster some day, but not me. I became a hand-me-down to her spoilt cousin Anne, who did not treat me half as well as she did, but it was better than going in the trash. I wonder who I'll go to when I get small for Anne?

**Taarah Chandiok V - A**

## आज की दुनिया

भारतीय चुनाव आयोग ने गुजरात और हिमाचल प्रदेश में नवम्बर और दिसम्बर में चुनाव को घोषित किया है।

स्पेन के कातालूनीया प्रदेश ने स्वतंत्रता घोषित की, स्पेन के केंद्रीय सरकार ने नियंत्रण को अपने हाथों में ले लिया।

१७ वर्ल्ड कप में इंग्लैंड ने स्पेन को ५-२ हराया।

शी जिनफिंग दुबारा चीन के राष्ट्रपति के पद के लिए चुने गए। उनके कुछ विचार चीन के संविधान में भी शामिल किये गए।



## CATALONIAN REFERENDUM

Catalonia is one of the seventeen autonomous regions in Spain, and accounts for nearly one-fifth of Spain's output. Home to approximately 7.5 million people, Catalonia has spearheaded Spain's economic development since the Industrial Revolution. On October 1st, 2017, despite fierce opposition from the central government, the Spanish region of Catalonia held a referendum for independence.

A public survey conducted by the Catalan government suggested 41% of the people were in favor of the referendum while 49% were opposed to independence, with a number of pro-Catalans boycotting the referendum on the grounds that it was illegal. The Spanish Constitutional court ordered a suspension of the referendum the day after it was announced, claiming it would breach the country's constitution, which states the country is indivisible. The vote was held even after being suspended by the Constitutional Court.

Spain's 2008 economic crisis had hit Catalonia hard, leaving it with unemployment percentage which was 19% higher than the average, and despite being one of the wealthiest regions in Spain, the people were dissatisfied with the central government. Under the military government of Francisco Franco, Catalan culture was suppressed and symbols of Catalan identity like the castles, or human towers, were prohibited. According to Sergi Mainer, a lecturer in Catalan culture, Catalan language was also restricted. 'With Fraco, Catalan was banned publicly, publishing was controlled under censorship and after the coming of democracy, the only language which was spoken was Castilian. There was repression everywhere in Spain, but extra repression was felt in Catalonia.'

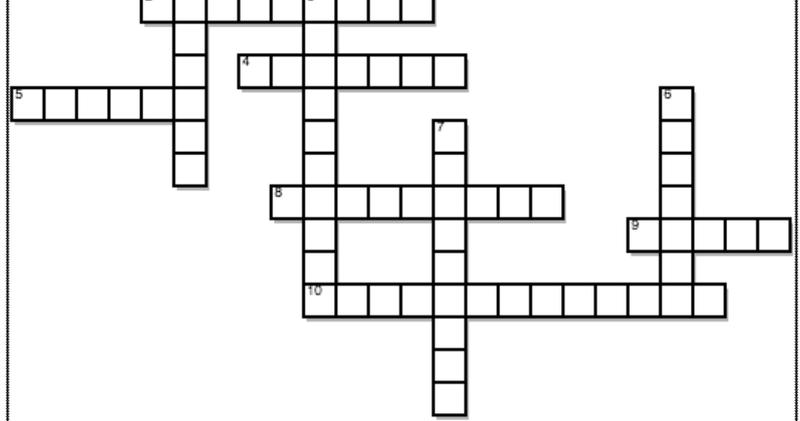
Catalans believe that Catalonia would be viable as an independent country and would be equivalent to a midsize European nation. They admit that there would be short-term economic costs as the two sides adjusted, but it's a sacrifice they were willing to make. The violence during the voting, in which policemen attacked people near the voting booth, convinced many Catalans that the national police was becoming a repressive force.

However, Catalonia is a crucial part of the Spanish economy, which enjoys benefits from a wide variety of industries which range from manufacturing to agriculture to construction and the central government is unwilling to part with it. Catalonia leaving Spain would leave a big economic hole for both of them since the installation of a new border and the formation of new laws would have a negative and swift impact on jobs and businesses. Catalonia would also not be a part of the EU anymore, which means Spain would be unable to carry out trade with other members of the EU the way it usually did. The central government has another concern as well- it's worried that if Catalonia is allowed to hold a referendum and separate itself from Spain the way it wants to, other regions would want to do the same and the nation would dissolve.

As José Luis Bonet, the president of the Catalan wine company Freixenet said, 'If we really are headed for a unilateral declaration of independence, there will be a major exit of firms from Catalonia, which will cause grave damage to Catalonia.'

## HAVE A HORRIFYING HALLOWEEN

Prithvi Oak, 9



### ACROSS

2. The Clown in 'It'
4. Dalton gets lost in a purgatory realm called the \_\_\_\_\_ in "Insidious"
5. The Name of the ghost who pops out from the TV screen in "The Ring"
8. A great movie to watch on Halloween- The Nightmare on \_\_\_\_\_
9. She wears a pointy hat!
10. The Fear of Halloween

### DOWN

1. The country that produces the most chocolate
3. These animals howl at the moon
6. The legendary magician who passed away on the day of Halloween
9. She wears a pointy hat!
7. A popular Halloween treat



## WHAT DO YOUR CHOICES SAY ABOUT YOUR PERSONALITY

1. What is your eating pet peeve?
  - a) loud chewers
  - b) talking while eating
  - c) messy eaters
  - d) noisy straw sippers
2. What food item can you not live without?
  - a) cheese
  - b) Nutella
  - c) pizza
  - d) bread
3. What is your favourite footwear?
  - a) sneakers
  - b) heels
  - c) boots
  - d) flip flops
4. What is your favourite pastime?
  - a) watching YouTube videos
  - b) shopping
  - c) scrolling through social media
  - d) studying
5. What is your favourite genre of music?
  - a) pop
  - b) country
  - c) rap
  - d) nothing. I do not listen to music

If you got:

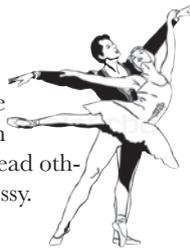


### Mostly As:

You are a fun person and people enjoy being around you. You love a good adventure and are forever wanting to do something new and different. You strive to help others and make a change.

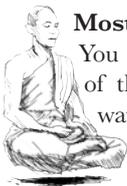
### Mostly Bs:

You are sophisticated, elegant and the epitome of poise. You are a perfectionist but stubborn at times. You like to be in control and always lead others. People might find you overbearing and bossy.



### Mostly Cs:

You are a relaxed person and tend to go with the flow of things. You have a witty sense of humour and always stand up for your friends. You dislike having rigid schedules and timetables.



### Mostly Ds:

You are an introvert and like to keep to yourself. You do not talk much and have very few friends. People consider you boring and you are a buzz kill. You are scared to discover your wild and funky side due to fear of being judged by others.



Rabiya Gupta, 11

## THE PAINTING

Zoya S. Hassan, 12

The wind struck your body;  
In the lieu of a storm  
Conjured simply of deep azure  
Sunset pinks and royal purples  
That swirled like secrets  
In a lipstick stained wine glass,  
And tipped and raged out of bounds  
Like sorry drunken truths.  
The storm- it let the breeze caress you.  
And your skin broke into goosebumps  
Embroidered like constellations,  
Stitched stars that told me stories  
Of astronauts and spaceships come and gone.  
The rain trickling down your back and legs  
The way paint trickled down a canvas  
Pale and obsolete  
And colored it  
With the dying smell of alcohol  
Sea water and stars.  
The painter titled his masterpiece  
The shadow of his affections.



ANSWERS FOR THE CROSSWORD  
1. Germany, 2. Pennywise 3. Werewolves 4. Further  
5. Samara 6. Houdini 7. Corn Candy  
8. Elm Street 9. Witch 10. Samhainophobia

## राष्ट्रीयता का प्रतीक अपमानित क्यों?

भारत में ताजमहल सदा से गर्व का प्रतीक है, लेकिन कई प्रभावशाली लोग इसे केवल उत्पीड़न के प्रतीक की तरह देखते हैं।

इस महीने की शुरुआत में जब उत्तर प्रदेश (जहाँ ताज महल स्थित है) की राज्य सरकार ने राज्य में देखने के लिए पर्यटक आकर्षण (टूरिस्ट अट्रैक्शन्स) की एक सूची निकाली और ताज महल को शामिल नहीं किया।

अधिक जाँच और सोशल मीडिया पर चर्चा के बाद यह पता लगा कि उत्तर प्रदेश की सरकार ने ऐसा किया क्योंकि वह एक 'मुस्लिम प्रतीक' है।

उत्तर प्रदेश भारतीय जनता पार्टी द्वारा चलाया जाता है, और राज्य के मुख्यमंत्री, योगी आदित्यनाथ राजनीतिक हिंदुत्व के आदर्श हैं। भाजपा के विधायक, संगीत सोम ने यह कहा कि ताज को कोई राज्य निधि नहीं मिलनी चाहिए क्योंकि मुगल सम्राट शाहजहाँ हिंदुओं को नष्ट करना चाहते थे। 'ताजमहल' जो एक राष्ट्रीय प्रतीक के रूप में देखा जाता था, अब धार्मिक संघर्ष और विवाद का लक्ष्य बन गया है।

सनाह कपूर, १०

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