



NEWS & VIEWS

Estd. 1964



“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.”- Charles Dickens

Dear Readers,

As we sit down to write our inaugural editorial, we can hear the sounds of multiple singers doing their *riyaaz*, a folk dancer counting down with a spirited “1, 2, 3, go!” and a Disney song playing in another corner. Trapped in this melodious pandemonium, it feels impossible to focus on the task at hand, with the fear of falling short being undeniably daunting.

As *News & Views* turns 60 under our stewardship, we feel the heavy weight of its legacy enclosed within these yellowed pages. In such a time, where we can turn to no one but ourselves, conflicting emotions arise, where against all rationale, we hope to avoid missteps. But as we have come to discover, things never go as planned, like when Aarisha accidentally deleted the entire issue, or when the both of us (*as hardened seniors*) were too embarrassed to go into the junior mess to conduct the Welham Polls.

Between practising all day, studying all night for upcoming exams and somehow stealing away time for debate practise, amidst late-night rants and existential musings, we often wonder: *is it all worth it?* But the truth is that despite our constant complaints and aches, the Inter-House Music and Dance Competition is the pinnacle of our Welham experience, as the entire school pours their heart and soul into the event. We are overwhelmed by the vastness of culture surrounding us, from the timeless music of ABBA to the delicate movements of Bharatnatyam. We lose ourselves in the music, cheering for every Welhamite on stage (and those behind it) until our throats grow hoarse.

As we try to find a precarious balance between honouring a cherished legacy and leaving our distinct mark on it, we have come to realise an immutable truth: sometimes it is okay to make a mistake or two. No matter how hard we try, nothing will ever be perfect. All we can hope for is that you, dear readers, can find the smallest glimpse of yourselves reflected in our words, realising that in this bustling chaos, you too can find your own version of peace and happiness.



With jazz hands and all,
Aarisha Jain and Vanshi Agrawal
 Editors-in-Chief

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The Simpsons Seers



It is often said that truth is stranger than fiction, but in the case of *The Simpsons*, the two are often the same. For the uninitiated, *The Simpsons* is an animated American sitcom following the antics of the dysfunctional yet beloved Simpson family - Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa, and Maggie - in the fictional town of Springfield.

Beyond making audiences of all ages laugh with its irreverent humour, clever wordplay and crass jokes, *The Simpsons* has become a platform for intelligent social and political commentary, fearlessly tackling issues from environmentalism to politics. However, no one can deny that the show's most remarkable legacy is its seemingly prophetic ability to predict future events, having been credited with foreseeing several real-world occurrences, earning it a reputation as a modern-day oracle.

In a remarkable instance, the 200th episode "*Bart to the Future*" humorously portrayed Lisa Simpson as President, mentioning a budget crisis inherited from "*President Trump*." Ironically, this satire turned into reality 16 years later with Trump's presidency. Similarly, a 1995 episode predicted the rise of smartwatches long before they became mainstream accessories. Another uncanny coincidence occurred when Homer, along with a man he thought to be his biological father, embarked on an underwater adventure, a storyline which bore a striking resemblance to a real-life event in June 2023, where a submersible, like Homer's, went missing during an exploration of the ruins of the Titanic. *The Simpsons'* prophecies ventured into the world of sports when its take on the World Cup showcased Homer's unexpected foray into refereeing, driven by FIFA's corruption-induced shortage of officials. Despite temptations, Homer opted for fair play, resulting in Germany's victory, echoing real-life events as Germany did win the tournament that year.

As *The Simpsons* continues its impressive run across thirty-four seasons and seven hundred and fifty episodes, it has become a cultural touchstone, adapting to the changing television and societal landscape. It has stayed relevant by addressing contemporary issues while maintaining its core humour. And while the secret behind *The Simpsons'* prophecies remains unclear, their accuracy has both intrigued and unnerved fans and critics alike, welcoming generations of viewers into an eerily accurate and ever-expanding future.

Rudrani Rajyalakshmi
Class 10

Albums:

- 🎵 Eagles by Eagles (1972)
- 🎵 Arrival by ABBA (1976)
- 🎵 Globalization by Pitbull (2014)
- 🎵 Tell Me That It's Over by Wallows (2022)
- 🎵 Animal Kingdom by Cavetown (2019)

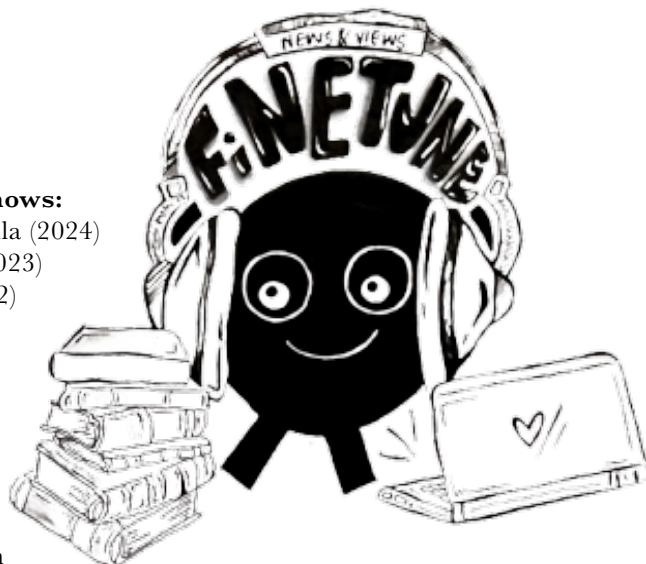


Movies and TV Shows:

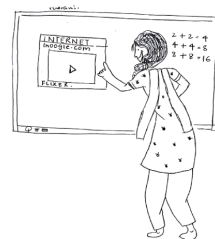
- 🎬 Amar Singh Chamkila (2024)
- 🎬 American Fiction (2023)
- 🎬 The Swimmers (2022)
- 🎬 Monk (2009)
- 🎬 Guilty Minds (2022)

Books:

- 📖 21 Lessons for the 21st Century by Yuval Noah Harari
- 📖 The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- 📖 Catch 22 by Joseph Heller
- 📖 I Who Have Never Known Men by Jacqueline Harpman
- 📖 When We Were Sisters by Fatimah Asghar



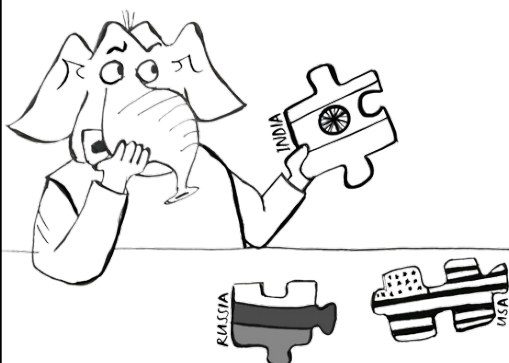
A Non-Western Perspective



In the three-dimensional game of chess that is today's geopolitics, India is rising rapidly through the ranks to become a pivotal player, but not as an anti-Western force, as many would like to believe. Instead, India stands as a proponent of a non-aligned stance, which has continued to shape India's foreign policy trajectory since Independence, with adaptations to contemporary realities.

India's strategic autonomy in the unfolding new world order can be better understood in the context of East-West inter-dependence. Rather than being confined to the binary of confrontation or co-operation with the West, it actively seeks a pragmatic stance wherein it can carve out a path which allows it to achieve shared goals and mutual benefits without compromising its sovereignty or interests by constructing an equidistant relationship between itself and its superpower allies. India's unique position within forums such as the QUAD (a Western alliance against Chinese territorial ambition in the South China Sea) as well as BRICS (an alternate centre of power including developing countries) gives it leverage to play both sides of the fence, and maybe even disintegrate the East-West divide.

The benefit of India's neutrality can be perfectly exemplified by India's stance in the Ukraine-Russia conflict, with India's relationship with its 'dependable and time-tested' friend manifesting in no harsh and direct condemnation of Russia's actions. This symbiotic relationship, though upsetting many, has bode well for India as it allows India certain perks like Russia vetoing several anti-India resolutions in the Security Council and the availability of Russian oil to India at discounted prices, while the rest of the world clamours to find alternate exporters.



This is not to say that India should cut off its engagement with the West; rather, it means that India is now in a privileged position to leverage geopolitics for its national development. In the pursuit of self-interest, India has initiated developing relations with nations that lie beyond the traditional East-West dichotomy. The challenge for India's leadership lies in responsibly navigating the delicate balance between non-alignment and antagonism towards the West. By leveraging geopolitics effectively, India can emerge as a winner in the ongoing chess match of global politics.

Anukriti Dhandhanika
Class 12

WHAT'S IN	WHAT'S OUT
•• Miss Singapore	☠ Miss Welham
•• APs	☠ Everything else
•• Pandey San	☠ Oji San (<i>why? why?</i>)
•• Vaanya Thapliyal	☠ Tourist Attractions
•• Long Assemblies	☠ First Period
•• Welham Leaks	☠ Welham Girls' Dehradun

A Love Affair with Cinema

My love affair with cinema began when I was just 41 days old, swaddled snugly under a mountain of blankets and earmuffs. More than a newborn baby, I actually resembled a tiny birthday gift as I entered, for the first time, the hallowed halls of a cinema house. Now, eighteen years later, going to the cinema remains as much of a sacred ritual to me as it was that first time, and all the times that followed thereafter.



My admiration and connection with cinema runs deeper, however, than mere nostalgia. They are ingrained in the very fabric of my being. The Cinema has witnessed my first steps as I hobbled towards my father on the stairs of a dimly lit hall, my tears, and the joy I am unable to contain when watching stories of people I don't know, who have unknowingly taught me so much about the disastrous ride of life. I am a product of a cinematic heritage shaped by a mother who never passes up an opportunity to race to the theatre to experience something new and a father whose post-movie analysis on the ride back home rivals the detailed video essays I adore today.

Movies and stories have become my favourite form of escapism - a refuge from reality where I can contentedly immerse myself in the magic unfolding on the silver screen. Cinema has unwittingly given me a family, if only for a few moments, in strangers who are bound to me through a shared narrative.

In writing just of my foundational years at the cinema, I feel that I may not be telling the whole truth. As much as I dread to admit it, I do not spend nearly as much time there as I did before. The genuine comfort gifted to my generation of being able to watch anything, anytime, anywhere has lured me away from the event of *going to the movies*. Even so, I cannot deny that there is a certain charm in the cinema that cannot be replaced by comfort; a collective anticipation and emotion that cannot be replicated at home. It is an experience that I share with friends, or more often, my family, and that leads the discussions during our ritual evening *chai-coffee*.

In writing this letter, I have made a discovery about myself that had somehow managed to escape my notice until now. In the dimly lit halls of the cinema, sinking into plush red armchairs, armed with a tub of buttery popcorn and a large tumbler of Coke is where I am truly happy - is where I am truly at home. So, for however long people tell stories, for however long people travel to go watch a movie and even for a little bit after, I'll be found in the cinema hall, a disciple of the silver screen, continuing my love affair with the seventh art.



Aarisha Jain
Class 12

News & Views wishes all debaters, quizzers, artists and video editors participating in Smarika' 24 best of luck!

May the odds be ever in your favour.



Displayed below are portraits of Balasaraswati, one of the five devadasis who played a pivotal role in revitalising the Indian classical dance form of Bharatnatyam, reviving it after a period of suppression under Brahmanical patriarchy. Steeped in antiquity and infused with stories from Indian folklore, the classical dances of India are renowned for their intricate movements, ethereal melodies, and graceful storytelling. The eight classical dances are quintessentially Indian, with every aspect, from the jewellery to the choreography, deeply rooted in our history. While the Indian masses are also embracing these art forms, there may be more to this resurgence than meets the eye.

For years, Indian classical dance has been overshadowed by contemporary styles dominating mainstream media. However, a dynamic shift has occurred recently in what is considered 'art' by the majority. Institutions such as NMACC are now welcoming various Indian classical artists, prompting questions about whether this resurgence is driven by genuine passion or merely fleeting trends. In recent times, under the guise of "returning to our roots," the authenticity of Indian classical art has been somewhat compromised in the pursuit of representation. Consider the sudden surge of the elite class showing appreciation for classical art, but only when it suits them.

Look at modern adaptations of Indian classical music and dance: hour-long performances condensed into a few minutes, and Bollywood dances altered to incorporate a few Kathak moves. Is our drive for reform and development undermining the authenticity of our culture? The issue lies not with reforms themselves but with the inauthentic gesture of tokenism, which results in only a superficial attempt at reform. This tokenism perpetuates an inaccurate portrayal of what should be represented, thus diluting the essence of the art.

So, how can we transcend the pretence of tokenism and truly value traditional art in all its authenticity? Perhaps the answer lies in events like this year's Inter-house Music and Dance. As each dancer strains their feet, each singer exhausts their voice, and each instrumentalist bruises their fingers, we witness the true spirit of these classical arts and the dedication necessary to preserve their authenticity.



Balasaraswati

Gauri Nanda
Class 11

JUNIOR Samboree

The Summary of a Typical Bollywood Movie

Bollywood movies epitomize cinematic exaggeration across all genres: from defying the laws of Physics in *Bahubali* to the family melodrama in *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham*, enough to make even Shakespeare cry.

However, the film dynamics in Indian cinema are often just recycled from one movie to the next. Take, for example, the basic romance plot: a girl enters clad in ethnic kurtas and a mesmerising dupatta that brushes softly against a boy's face. Time stops, they make eye contact, and then starts the iconic music video which lasts longer than the actual plot. From a busy road, they get teleported (*thanks to film logic*) to the top of a snow-clad mountain, where the girl dances in her saree seemingly unaffected by the weather ("*the cold never bothered me anyway*"). Suddenly, background dancers make their entrance with perfectly co-ordinated moves.



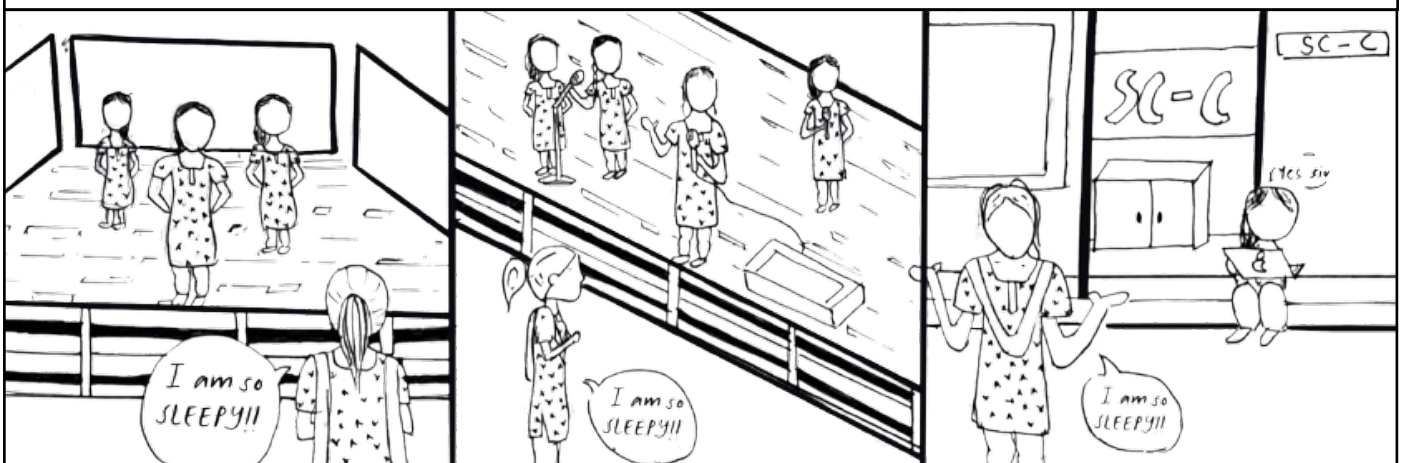
The real highlight, however, is the action. Our hero beats up a hundred people all by himself and slams the villain right through the wall (*Earning two bad marks-Welham ishtyle*). Next comes my personal favourite when this lovestruck *Chhota Bheem* gets kicked, breaks a window, falls down two whole floors, lands on shards of broken glass and gets up with nothing but a tiny cut across his cheek. Not to mention the villain who spontaneously shoots fifty bullets at *Shaktiman*, who dodges them almost as if he were a trained gymnast, except for the last bullet which he catches in his palm like a ping-pong ball (*no offense is directed to the table tennis players and respected Editors-in-chief*).



Bollywood is an essential part of all our lives and while the sentiment is heartwarming, it often makes your eyes bleed and your soul beg to run out of the cinema hall. If you do end up running out, be careful not to bump into a bald Shahrukh Khan dancing to *Chaleya*.

Nidhi Kedia
Class 8

YELLOW GUMBOOTS



that one sleepy welhamite...

A Villain Origin Story

Aunt Agatha, an enigmatic figure in Welham lore, is a woman of unparalleled wit, adding humour to the mundane in 'News & Views.' Every time the latest issues are handed out, theories about her mysterious origins fly across the classrooms, with some claiming that she is a retired philosophy professor, some insisting that she was once a stand-up comedian and still others believing that she is just a curious stalker interested in the school's private affairs. One story, however, that many haven't heard before is the idea of Agatha as a Welhamite, who gained notoriety when her sharp retorts to foolish inquiries made her the most sought-after advisor on absurd matters.

Legend has it that one day, while perched atop the frangipani tree, Agatha heard a peculiar rumble coming from somewhere near the Peacock Throne. She steadily made her way past the yoga students on the Prayer Platform, and upon reaching her destination, slowly sat down, and listened carefully to a voice talking to her, 'Dig the ground here.'

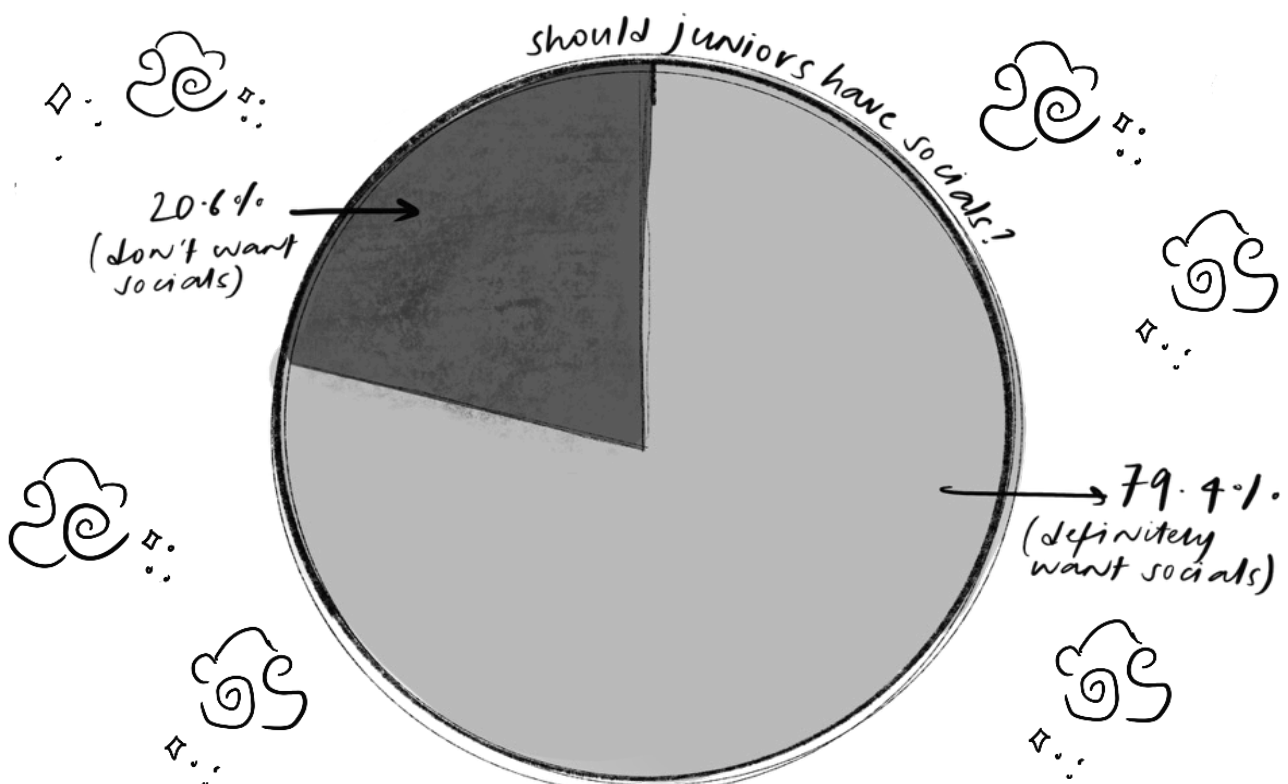


Excitement pulsed through Agatha's entire body (*curiosity killed the cat, right?*) as she uncovered a blinding light, which shot out dark threads of unconsciousness that dragged her under. She tried to scream, but it felt as if she was traveling between different universes.

Agatha woke up in flat yellow pages, full of humor columns and incredibly stupid questions. She quickly took a liking to these pages, reigning over them with an iron fist and making multiple Editors-in-Chief cry with her quick-witted remarks and taunting answers. It is now her home, a place ruled by mischief and wit, forever welcoming (*not really*) all sorts of queries, because sometimes, *questions really can be stupid*.

Tamaira Sapra and Aadya Bajaj
Class 8

Welham Polls



The Story of an Hour (or Two)



The SC socials (and the PreSC socials, but who cares?) didn't quite satisfy the demands of being 'an exhilarating experience' in the words of Ms. Sukanya, but did manage to tame some rumbling stomachs (whether from hunger or teenage angst, who knows?).

The night was kicked off with a band performance, which was not half bad (if we switched off the mics). On the one side of the jungle, a sense of teenage heartbreak was observed as 'Tere Liye' played in the background. Legend has it that a Welhamite was seen dozing off every time she was asked 'Is this seat taken?' Our sources tell us that a certain Captain was seen cosying up to 'He Who CANNOT Be Named' due to the numerous (and rather appalling) misnomers bestowed upon him. A certain Oriole SC, who used to detest her daily dose of morning coco since junior school was seen developing a keen interest for the same. Vaanya Thapliyal, the sole SC to be name-dropped in the article, stole the show as she spontaneously burst into a melodious (*not really*) verse of *Jalsa 2.0*, leaving the boys bewildered beyond comprehension.

Numerous Welhamites also reported encountering a five feet tall verbal hurricane, pointing out how it talked at them, rather than to them. But not to worry, the boys in multicolored kurtas and Bata floaters were faced with our secret weapon, the leader of the infamous 'Gujju gang', who successfully managed to scare away half the boys who dared to come within a six feet radius of her. Another member of the very same gang finally found the one she could see eye to eye with (*almost there*).



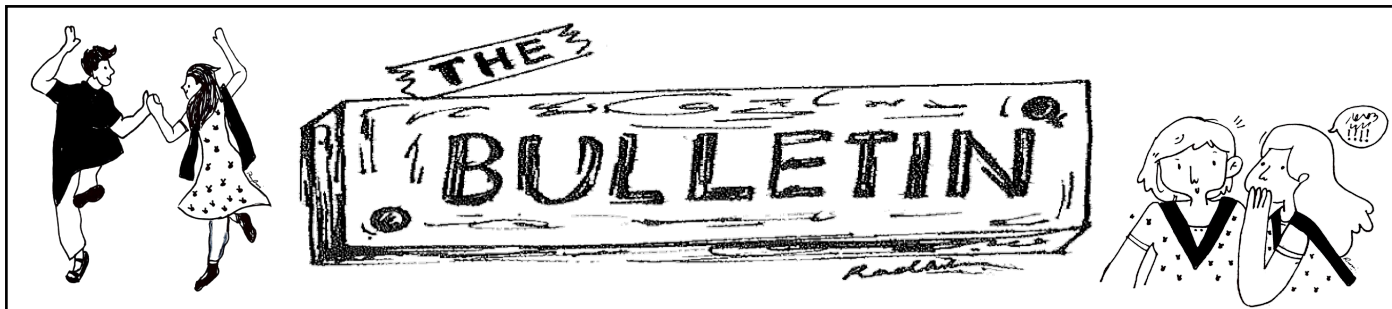
Tremors were felt again as the cohort of SCs encountered the boys coming back from 'the other side', resembling the scene of an exchange of hostages. But even amidst this chaos, the SC socials left us with one undeniable truth: even in the whirlwind of teenage drama, chicken popcorn always steals the show.

XOXO,
Gossip Girl

INTO THE WELHAM VERSE



- 🕸 Alls enjoying their time at senior school.
- 🕸 Inter-House participants smiling off stage.
- 🕸 AIs enjoying test-free Sundays.
- 🕸 Pigeons maintaining Assembly decorum.
- 🕸 Welhamites not pestering Bearer-jis for chana.
- 🕸 Naija speaking in class.
- 🕸 Mr. Dora officially being our in-school jyotish.
(*For the sake of Vaanya's future, we hope this does not come true.*)
- 🕸 Hospital prescribing anything other than Dolo.
- 🕸 ELSOC playing 'Ek machli pani mein' during meetings.
(*ek student proposal, paani mein...*)
- 🕸 Joshi fans being put up in dorms before people start fainting.
- 🕸 WGSYS actually happening. (*Failing at the art of diplomacy, are we?*)



6th February: Huun-Huur-Tu, a world-renowned music group from the Republic of Tuva, performed at Welham Girls' School. Kudos to them for their unforgettable stage presence!

10th February: The school hosted a vocal music workshop by Ms. Bharati Chatterjee, former vocal music teacher at Welham Girls' School. *Thank you, Ma'am!*

16th February: Students of class IX continue their interactions with specially-abled students of the Bajaj Institute for Learning.

19th February: A group of girls from classes VI to IX participated in bird watching on campus as part of GBBC. We look forward to spotting more hoopoes and flycatchers on campus!

13th – 17th March: The students make the most of their Mid-term Excursions as they take part in several activities like trekking, hiking and river crossing.

17th – 20th March: Six students of class XII attended a Wildlife Conservation Round Square Conference in Panna, Madhya Pradesh hosted by Daly College and Baavan.

23rd March: A group of thirty-six students from class XII visited Japan for a cultural and educational trip. The excursion was truly a most memorable one!

26th March – 9th April: The STRIKE team held self-defence workshops for all batches. All of Dalanwala buzzed with cries of "Stay away!" and "Jai Hind!"

28th March: Mr. Owen Mueywn Hughes, Director of Global Students Affair, World Leading Schools Association, addressed class XII on '*The Skill of Negotiation*'.

31st March – 14th April: Two students from the Downe House, United Kingdom spent two weeks at Welham Girls' School as part of the student exchange program between the two schools. We loved having you here and hope you enjoyed your stay with us!

1st April: Jheel Rathore bagged the first position in the Squash Competition hosted by IIT Roorkee. *Well done, Jheel!*

2nd – 13th April: Six students from Welham Girls' School attended the Round Square International African Regional Conference, 2024 hosted by the Starehe Boys' Centre and School in Kenya. It was an enriching experience for them!

4th – 6th April: Three students from the English Debating Society participated in the RIMC Debate. The teams qualified for the finals and received individual accolades. Vanshi Agrawal and Prarthana Goenka received the award for Best Speaker in the preliminary round and the qualifying round, respectively. *Congratulations!*

7th April: Fifty-two students at Welham participated in the 'Run for Cancer Awareness' event hosted by the Doon School. *Way to go!*

13th – 14th April: Twenty-one students from Welham Girls' School participated in the Dehradun District Karate Championship. The team brought home eight Gold, five Silvers and fourteen Bronze medals across three categories. *Bravo!*

13th – 14th April: Fourteen students from Welham Girls' School participated in the first edition of the Asian School MUN. The WGS delegation received eight Best Delegate awards, two High Commendations and two Special Mentions! *Way to go diplomats!*

14th – 17th April: 10 students from Welham Girls' School participated in the 18th edition of the Mayo Girls' School MUN. Prarthana Goenka received Highest Commendation, Tamanna Baid received a Special Mention and both Twisha Chowdhary and Riddhi Agarwal received a Verbal Mention in their respective committees. *Congratulations!*

18th – 19th April: The Welham Girls' Quiz Team bagged the second position at the Daly College Inter School Quiz. *Well done!*



Through the Grapevine

Planted outside Badi Ma'am's office, I stay put as the summer mornings replace the crisp winters of this quaint hill station. My morning is greeted by bajri crunching under the rubber soles of sports shoes as frantic creatures rush up the subway stairs, praying not to be penalized for being late to their morning sports. An hour or two after this, these Welhamites (I think that is what they call them) walk past, complaining about how they wanted smileys for breakfast again (ungrateful, if you ask me).

The office of Badi Ma'am is a perpetual hub of activity, never free from visitors. Tear-stained cheeks and anxious nail-biting have become familiar sights. Some await the approval of their proposals, while others anticipate the pronouncement of their punishments. I have never seen such silly children asking for better "midterm" breaks, half days or something called socials (that has definitely got something to do with horses).

My favourite part of the day is when "the captain body" (short and angry girls), led by the aggressive debater, barges into the office asking for a "lap-top", something that seems to hold too much importance in the life of a troubled "Welhamite".






Now would you look at that, a rather tiny addition to the never ending crowd, fresh out of the oven, a BII. Sometimes it cries and begs for leaves and asks Ma'am to make them meet its parents, other times it shows up (rather overconfident) to flaunt its brand new, sharpened pencils, thinking that would earn it brownie points.

No matter how vexing they may be, I take pride in witnessing these creatures transform over the years. They enter as tiny saplings, or rather tadpoles, with swollen red eyes and hands tightly clasped in their parents', and they leave as trees with ubiquitous branches, running around campus in their blazers adorned with multiple badges. In the quiet of the corridors, I bear witness to the spectrum of emotions, from tears of despair to peals of laughter. Yet, as a mere observer, I remain rooted, yearning for a connection, longing to intertwine my existence with theirs, to sway in the breeze of their shared experiences.








Kashika Jain and Jiya Singh
Class 12

Roses

-  A ribbon-tied bunch of fresh roses for all the new members of the Welham family. We hope you have a long and fruitful tenure with us!
-  Gardens of freshly watered, multi coloured roses exuding love from every Welhamite to the almighty spirits for providing us with that long weekend which finally allowed many of us to catch up on our sleep!
-  One bright red rose to all PreSCs and SCs (*because they did not receive any*) for being great hosts and guests during Socials.
-  Careful handpicked, fragrant pink roses for all the teachers and students working tirelessly to make the Inter-House Music and Dance an astounding success.
-  A single dewy rose to Ms. Anupma Gupta for always filling the stomachs of ravenous Welhamites (*except for the time when Vada Pav and Thai Curry were both removed from the Thursday menu... many hearts were broken*).

Raspberries

-  Buckets of fungus infested gooey raspberries to Ms. Manjeet Kaur and Ms. Chavi Gupta for abandoning their Houses and leaving many tear-stained cheeks behind.
-  Cartons filled with squishy and rotten raspberries (*STAY AWAY!!*), to the Sports Department for the early morning self defence sessions which deprived Welhamites of their Sundays.
-  Subways jammed with pulverised and gooey raspberries to the petrifying one-eyed cat that has crossed paths with every unaware senior on campus.
-  Garbage bags filled with raspberries on fire to the school administration for always picking the days the sun shines the brightest to conduct fire drills.
-  Truckloads of stinking, putrid and stale raspberries (*which definitely will not be coming late!*) to all senior Matrons for making everyone wait in the sultry heat for their 'latpots'.

A Tale of Two Cities

Every year, in the oppressive heat of April, there emerges a prominent rift within the Welham student community. On one side are the overworked, perpetually exhausted Inter-House participants. On the other side of the chasm we see the frolicking, well rested, Non-Inter-House participants, or rather, the 'unemployed', whose very existence tends to frustrate the average Bharatnatyam dancer or Trio singer. In the midst of this animosity, the News & Views Editorial Board, true to its role as the arbitrator, believes that it is important to delve into the psychology of this minority community.



N&V: How much sleep is too much sleep?

Unemployed Welhamite: Too much sleep would be if I slept the whole day. I still have to show up for classes, prep (and sometimes sports), so I don't really get enough sleep at all. And honestly, Inter-House practices happen all the time so I need to train my ears to block out the 1000 Inter-House songs that are blasting across senior dorms before I can actually go to sleep. So really, there is no sleep. *#iamstrugglingtoo*.

N&V: How talentless do you feel at the moment?

Unemployed Welhamite: Just because I am not a part of Inter-House does not mean that I am talentless. (I was in the Founders' Day Battle Dance!) In fact, my skills in Tang-making are greatly appreciated by all my batchmates. So what if I am not great at music, dance, sports or academics? I have got my strengths in the field of *(indecipherable)*.

N&V: How is lights and sound duty going?

Unemployed Welhamite: It is tougher than people realize. Your hands have to move together, remember all the sequences and stand for the entirety of the performance. It is a dance in itself. I am pretty sure that we won last year only because my skill in this field is unparalleled. I am of the belief that I contribute to the Inter-House as much as Arushree Kashyap does!

N&V: If there is any critique you would like to impart to your fellow Housemates on their respective performances, what would it be?

Unemployed Welhamite: You need to chill a little. The world does not revolve around you and your formations and *taals*. Stop hating us for the miseries of your life. You cry all the time in the dorm and then compensate by smiling *wyyyy* too much on stage.



However, not eating ice-cream is an important practice you should follow throughout the year because it adds to my extra shares, so keep it up. I would also like to say that when you finally adorn your chunnis with the condescending 'voice rest' badges, the whole school celebrates because we finally do not have to listen to your endless rants. And *NO!* We cannot collect and submit your laptop every single day. And - (This particular answer resulted in a 30-minute screaming session which we decided to filter out for the sake of decorum).

Note from the Editors: After careful consideration, we have come to the consensus that we must refrain from revealing the identity of this interviewee due to safety concerns. We are sure that this angry, young woman holds a lot of respect for the Inter House participants but we would advise her to sleep with one eye open, at least till the next issue of the News & Views comes out.

News & Views wishes all Inter-House participants all the very best and extends its heartfelt gratitude to all the teachers who have helped make Inter-House Music and Dance Competition a success!

The Hardest Good-bye



Mr. VPS Parmar
1968-2024

Did you know that you can go over Niagara Falls in a barrel and survive, or that cats have an in-built mechanism that makes them always land on their feet? We did not until our remarkable Mr. Parmar told us with that twinkle in his eye. The very same twinkle that made us fall in love with Physics.

Mr. Vinod Pal Singh Parmar was not just a teacher; he was the best part of school life, a mentor who looked at life through the unique lens of Physics. His presence in our lives was nothing short of extraordinary. He had a way of making even the most mundane moments special and as we look back on the memories we shared with him, we cannot help but feel an overwhelming sense of loss.

We remember how every Welhamite wished to have a friendship like Mr. Parmar and Mr. Kapilesh. We also remember the day he took to the stage to speak about gender equality and awareness. In a world where such topics are often silenced, Mr. Parmar, with the warmest of intentions, simply expressed his support to everyone out there.

His passion for teaching was infectious, and it made us love learning the subject even more. Then there were his out-of-the-world teaching methods, like the time he turned two AIs into a living diagram, making the subject of Physics come alive in ways we never thought possible. His love for Physics shone through in his diagrams on Corel IDraw or his zeal to learn quantum chromodynamics late at night throughout our vacations.

Beyond his teaching, Mr. Parmar was a kind and happy soul. His multi-coloured shirts never failed to amuse us, and his classes were often disrupted by peals of laughter because of his witty quips and remarks, and of course, the iconic '*silly child*'. He had a way of making everyone feel seen and heard. With him, we felt at home.

Sir's influence extended far beyond the confines of the classroom. He was a true intellectual who knew about the latest developments not just in Physics but also in the geopolitical scenario. When it came to discussions, there was always so much to learn from him, and his knack for presenting ideas made us rethink our assumptions. His classes were journeys of discovery, challenging us to look beyond the textbook and consider the vastness of science, introducing us to entirely new perspectives.

Every time we step into the laboratory, an overwhelming sense of loss washes over us. Yet, it is with the deepest pride that we claim to be '*Mr. Parmar's students*', honoured to have known him and privileged to have been taught by him. Sir, the letters from all the Welhamites safely tucked away in the corner of the physics lab will always keep your spirit alive, because Welham would not be what it is for us without you. Your golden-lined legacy shall forever be carried on with the same passion and love.

Syna Gupta and Kaavyaa Jignesh Patel
Class 12

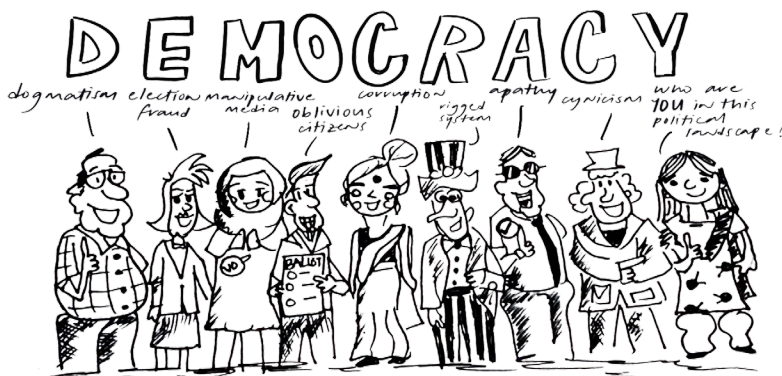
The 2024 Election Fever

With more than 76 countries going to the polls this year, the 2024 elections are shaping up to be a battleground for right-wing populism, possibly eroding democratic agendas. As the world enters the biggest election year in history, there is an unprecedented challenge for countries and their people to vote to maintain their political liberty and powers.



In the United States, the upcoming election holds immense sway over international relations. The electorate expresses dissatisfaction with the two candidates. Concerns regarding President Biden's age and foreign policy decisions, particularly regarding Israel and Gaza, cast doubts on his presidency. Meanwhile, Trump's disregard for diversity, climate activism, the United Nations, and his ongoing legal battles raise questions about his leadership of the Republican party. Despite polls leaning towards Trump's return, the outcome is unpredictable with eight months remaining, as the world awaits the verdict of his ongoing trials. The implications of Trump's potential re-election could be a global trade war, while Biden's victory could alter American foreign and economic policies, undermining American interests.

In India, the question "If not Modi, then who?" reverberates nationwide, especially among staunch BJP supporters. PM Modi's anticipated third term promises stability, while the I.N.D.I.A. coalition pledges to "stop India's slide to autocracy". While the BJP government's tenure has seen India's rise on the global stage and economic growth, it faces accusations of marginalizing minority interests, eroding secularism, and misusing political agencies against opposition parties. As India undertakes its largest democratic exercise, voters face a choice between upholding democratic principles versus prioritizing national growth.



Across the barbed border in Pakistan, political upheaval ensues as the nation struggles to break free from military control. Former PM Imran Khan's attempts to influence votes from prison have tarnished Pakistan's democratic image. The unexpected ruling alliance of historically antagonistic parties, driven by mutual animosity rather than shared agendas, threatens the country's stability.

On January 13, 2024, Taiwan held elections for its presidency and 113-seat legislature. The run-up to the election drew global attention because of the growing tensions in the Taiwan Strait, with it being a key flashpoint in the tussle for power between Beijing and Washington in this region. With the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) candidate William Lai being crowned the victor and the official cross-strait dialogue suspended, there is deep concern about China's growing use of "gray zone" tactics and the rising possibility of actual hostilities.

In Russia, President Putin enters his third decade in power, securing a sweeping victory in state-controlled elections devoid of credible opposition. Dissent is stifled following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, with opposition figures jailed or assassinated. The death of Alexei Navalny, a prominent critic of Putin, highlights the grim state of dissent in Russia. Elections in annexed parts of Ukraine are condemned by President Zelensky as violations of international law, further exacerbating tensions.

Elsewhere, key political successions are already brewing. With Mexico, South Africa, Indonesia, the European Union, potentially the United Kingdom and many others facing elections this year, the whole of humanity reels in unspoken doubt. With 4.2 billion adults having the chance to vote, 2024 has the potential to fracture the very essence of global democracy, which hangs in the balance. Saying the world could shift on its axis this year is an understatement and the uncertainty surrounding these political transitions has left many feeling apprehensive about the future.

Prarthana Goenka and Gayatri Bhatia
Class 10

SPOTTED

- ☛ SCs caught lacking in Japan.
- ☛ Vedanshi Deorah sleeping in all the worst possible places. (*One of them being her bed.*)
- ☛ Ms. Ritika embracing her inner jungle girlie in Kenya.
- ☛ Fly-Hoopoe AIIs walking into inspection with lipstick and space buns.
- ☛ SCs from four Houses (*sorry Orioles*) trying to recreate Romeo Juliet under the night sky.
- ☛ Dr. Neera Kapoor looking for her stolen lolipops on the field trip.
- ☛ Aarisha busting bounds to go vote. (*#agya-karinagarik*)
- ☛ Frantic Welhamites trying to log out of mail, Teams (*and other platforms*) during the fire drills.
- ☛ Nandini chugging 'chashni' at the dinner table. (*when there are not enough extras.*)
- ☛ Manya Nagpal having a meeting with the Bulbul PreSC cult to do 'dorm planning'. (*When we say 'go back to your roots', we do not mean becoming a BII.*)
- ☛ The Oriole band almost getting run over by the school ambulance while being chased by Guard-ji. (*The real 'super troupers'*)

- ☛ Prisha Nahar to Risha: OMG you're from Nepal, that's so chic. So you speak Napoleon? (*No wonder Napoleon surrendered in the Battle of Waterloo; the language barrier was simply too much...*)
- ☛ Riddhi: The self-defence levels advance as you first tackle one attacker, then two, then three and then you become Bruce Lee! (*... STAY AWAY??!*)
- ☛ 'Pehla Pyaar' playing in the BII midterm bus. Random BII: What is this bhajan? (*#tujhme rab dikhta hai*)
- ☛ Aarisha (during maths class): Is sin doori/cos doori equal to tandoori? (*We can almost see the Maths Department shake their heads in despair and disappointment.*)
- ☛ Pragati: What is white money?
Kashish: Legally earned money.
Pragati: Oh, I thought it was just white in colour. (*Freakonomics Vol.2*)



BIRD BRAIN

- ☒ Zoya was caught bunking sports.
Aarisha was found going for long drives online.
Ms. Chavi Gupta was seen with the 10th IHMD schedule of the day.
- ☒ Syna and Sukhmeet microwaved their biology books.
The Sports Board was completed on time. (*The real question is: how many times?!*)
Woodpecker BIIs were caught asking Kaavyaa how to sneak in tuck.
- ☒ Juniors were caught studying in the hopes that they encounter Vidya in their books.
N&V Ed Board creates gossip to make issues more interesting.
Mr. Dora giving PreSCs a free block in exchange for students doing 30 squats.
- ☒ Baba sir passed up an opportunity to headline Coachella because of IHMD.
Junior school store rooms are haunted by Kabbar Ka Biju.
Ananya Agarwal rejected NLS Bangalore because they serve too much dosa.
- ☒ All captains were awarded bad marks collectively. (*Who's the fool now?!*)
PreSCs worked harder for their class boards than they did for their actual Boards.
Juniors enrolled in Film Appreciation Society with *Fighter* being their all-time favourite movie.

2 TRUTHS 1 LIE



The Wooden Luck of Touchwood

Our faith in superstition spans generations - an unquestioning belief in luck over logic, ritual over reasoning - passed down from parents to their kids. As young children, we have all been exposed to multiple such illogical but nonetheless revered superstitions. However, the most fascinating by far, is humanity's attempt at playing charades with fate - through the simple gesture of touchwood.



Picture this: you are engaged in a conversation, boasting about how your house is definitely going to win Inter House Music and Dance, or how you are going to ace your next Maths test. Suddenly, a thought slithers into your mind - what if you have jinxed it? That is when the magic of “touchwood” kicks in. Without missing a beat, you reach out, frantically searching for the nearest wooden surface to knock on, as if, by the sheer power of tactile contact with timber, you can evade any lurking jinxes and keep the cosmic balance intact.

The origin of this peculiar ritual of “touchwood” remains a mystery. Some ancient civilizations believed that spirits inhabited trees, and touching them could invoke protection or blessings. Another popular theory is hidden in ancient pagan lore, where people sought protection from evil that inhabited natural objects like trees. The act of touching wood was believed to ward off malevolent forces and absorb evil energies that might want to prevent one's hopes and dreams from coming true. Over time, this belief evolved and touching the magic wood became synonymous with seeking a little luck or protection from the whims of fate, gaining widespread popularity in different corners of the world.

This only goes to show that it is the lingering thought of “what if” that enslaves us, the minuscule possibility that it might just be true. After all, where's the harm in knocking on some wood? So, the next time you find yourself in a precarious situation - whether you are caught sneaking in tuck or just need a little luck two minutes before receiving your report card - remember to knock on the nearest wooden surface and under your breath, utter those magical words: "touchwood."

Kreeti Dhanuka
Class 10

GLOBETROTTER

- 🌐 Buckingham Palace has announced that His Royal Highness King Charles has been diagnosed with cancer. *(All our prayers (and generational wealth) are with the royal family.)*
- 🌐 BJP proclaims “400 par” seats for the 2024 Lok Sabha. *(Ache din kiske liye aane waale hai?)*
- 🌐 U.S. lawmakers move closer to enacting a countrywide ban on TikTok. *(When you hate Gen-Z so much that you risk leaving half the population unemployed.)*
- 🌐 Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal has been arrested for an apparent case of money laundering. *(This must be the first time a Delhi-ite with political ties has actually been sent to jail.)*
- 🌐 Royal Challengers Bangalore wins their first “The Women's Premier League” title in their second year. *(Cut to the RCB men's team crying in the locker room.)*
- 🌐 Security has been increased at Salman Khan's residence due to gunshots. *(Tiger 4: Revenge of the Blackbucks.)*
- 🌐 ‘Moana 2’ and ‘Wicked’ are set to release on the same date later in November this year. *(The Barbenheimer of Gen-Alpha.)*
- 🌐 A Tesla robot suffered a major malfunction and ended up attacking an engineer at the manufacturing factory in Austin, Texas. *(Akshay Kumar has found his next big hit. #Chitti 3.0)*



Q. How many days can I bunk sports before they remove my name from the register?

Dear mentally-and-physically-lethargic Welhamite, It lies well within my sphere of knowledge to know that you are not the first to be wondering about the answer to this question (and you definitely will not be the last). It is a tricky one but the Editorial Board at the News & Views can always share some pearls of wisdom that they have acquired over their years of sportlessness. Introspect deeply, and then proceed to ask yourself, do you even care if your name gets removed from the register? I suggest you take advantage of the Inter-House practices that are going on right now but start formulating your excuses for after the 27th of April. Furthermore, if you have enough self-respect to not be sportless, I suggest you spend your time trying out different sports. That way, after your name gets struck off from one register, you can just have it written down on the next. There are many fish in the sea who would be willing to relieve you after a month or so, and with our institute providing you with ten sports, you have yourself covered for almost a year!

Q. Why can't BIIIs digest Thai Curry?

Dear betrayed-and-heartbroken Welhamite, While it pains me to see the new generation of Welhamites not making Thai Curry the object of their desires, I do see a moiety of reason in their choice. It might bewilder you to know that outside this flourishing institute of ours, people do not become ruffians at the sight of orange curry in a bowl. From my seat at the Nasreen, I see a tribe of Welhamites charging towards the mess at full speed every Thursday, screaming, 'First!', which leads me to wonder that perhaps BIIIs can stomach the curry, but are too shocked by your displays of affection to eat. Antagonising screams of 'Aaloo!', with cutlery being banged on tables can be quite disturbing for the normal lot of us (which, to be honest, are scarce). My advice to you would be to try inspecting the matter through a different lens, one where they are not the problem, but you are.

Signing Off,
Always forever (never) yours,
Aunt Agatha

