

दास्तान - ए - मोहल्ला

April, 2014



(excerpt from Arun's Presentation on our History Walk to Qutub Minar, Level III English)

Was Qutub Minar the imposition of religion or was it the assimilation of cultures?

I think it was the assimilation of cultures-yes. The Qutub Minar shows off the power of the ruler. It is a symbol of the ruler. That mattered more than religion.

Also, they used Hindu workers to build the Qutub Minar, so it has Hindu styles too.



My Favourite Emperor

Ashoka is my favourite emperor because he had good supporters like the wise Chanakya and Katilya. A book was written by Katilya called *Arthashastra*. Ashoka was the emperor of many cities. Some of them are Pataliputra, Ujjain and Taxila, the gateway of Northwest India. There were many kings 2,300 years ago, but my favorite out of all of them was Ashoka because he was the first ruler who tried to convince people not to harm each other. Ashoka wrote his instructions in Prakrit and Brahmi languages. Once, Ashoka was in Kalinga on a campaign. His soldiers fought with Kalinga's soldiers for a long time. But Ashoka's soldiers were stronger and they won the war. He captured Kalinga and when he saw the condition of the people he felt very ashamed of the damage he had done during the war. Then he took the path of meditation and convinced the people not to fight.

Life of a Teenager

How tough is the life of a teenager

No one really knows

The pressure that is upon us

Grow, grow and grow only...

I want to be popular

I want to be cool

But every time I try

I end up as a fool

Dad wants praise

Mom wants grades

But as time passes by

Their confidence in me seems to fade

I want to be admired for my work and grades

Be loved by everybody

My sweet, kind face

But what should I do?

And from where should I start?

Oh! Someone be my guiding star

It is tough to be a teenager

Life is not fair

I wish I had someone

To ask for love and care!

Jallianwala Bagh Massacre



The people in Amritsar were celebrating their festival Baisakhi. Then suddenly they were attacked at Jallianwala Bagh by the British Indian Army. Some people jumped into the well because there was only one entrance and it was blocked. More than 127 people jumped in the well. The army attacked them with bullets. 1,000 people died and 1,500 were injured. We can still see the bullet marks on the walls. On the first wall there are 27 bullet marks and on the second wall there are 32 bullet marks.

This happened on Sunday 13 April, 1919. Reginald Dyer was in charge of the army.

Being a Teacher



First of all I want to describe the word "teacher". A teacher is someone who teaches the students lots of good things like good behavior, good attitude and of course the most common thing, studies. Sometimes a teacher can be strict and sometimes a teacher can be kind. A teacher works harder for their kids to make them great people in their life.

Now I am going to tell you about my student life. When I was a student I worked hard for my studies and also for my extracurricular activities. I was an average student in the entire field. My teacher also worked hard behind me, to make me a good person. My teacher invested good things in me, and now it is my turn to do the same thing.

Now I am doing my B.Com. Also the Kutumb Foundation gave me opportunity to teach the students and I am doing this. I feel great when I teach the kids in Kutumb Foundation because things which I have learnt from Kutumb I am now spreading among them. Also feel great when the students greet me with flowers, cards and chocolates on Teachers' Day. At the time of Teachers' Day they gave me cards and lots of flowers. I can't tell you how great I was feeling at that time!

Being a teacher is a good thing because we can learn lots of things with teaching but authority comes with great responsibility. If you become a peer teacher then you should know that the future of these kids depends on you. You have to take responsibility of the kids. There should not be a single bit of hesitation between the student and a teacher to put up any type of question. Also, as a teacher you need to give answers to all the students questions. Sometimes we have seen that the teacher is not able to answer some question so the students has to have faith in their teacher that the teacher will clear that question after some time.

Also, a teacher tries his or her best to teach students and always tries to keep the class interesting so the students don't get bored. Sometimes a teacher get embarrassed when the kids not perform like the teacher wants. But this kind of deficiency is normal in this relation. Now at the end of my essay, I want to say that the faith is the master key between the relation of a student and teacher.

-Ashish, Level I Teacher

Vision for the Future: Kutumb's Young People Speak Out

- An end to corruption
- Increased government accountability
 - A safe environment for women
 - A cleaner environment
- Better municipal infrastructure (better roads, more trees planted, increased street lights)
- Sensitive and kind government school teachers with no corporal punishment
- Better facilities in government schools
 - All government schools should provide access to all streams
 - Decreased in price rise of essential goods
 - Fast track courts for crimes
- Increased punishments for rape and other heinous crimes
 - Increased water supply
 - Increased electricity supply
 - Proper housing for everyone
- Facilities for the homeless
- Fair and affordable electricity and water bills
 - Increased job availability
- Availability of drug de-addiction centres
- Job Placement programmes for beggars
 - End to child labour
- Better police force: no corruption, increased sensitivity and respect for the people
- Promotion of Vernacular Languages in schools
- Public financing of election campaigns to reduce corruption
- Lower fees and more scholarships for higher education
 - Development of slum areas (sanitation, etc.)
 - Increased rural development
- Increased voice for young people

Qutub Minar Presentation



Hello everyone! My name is Manish and I am a student of Level III. I am going to tell you about my history walk. We went to the Qutub Minar. We had a guide and his name was Nasit. First of all I saw an Iron Pillar. There were corridors and pillars. There were two different designs on the pillars. There were some designs that looked like Ganesha, the dancing girl and snakes, etc.

Many questions were in my mind. Nasit told us about three emperors who were rulers at that time. I touched the walls. It was so cold! There was also a big graveyard next to the Qutub Minar.

Then I went and saw the Qutub Minar. From nearby it was too high to see. I wondered to myself, how did they make it? In that time they didn't have machines!

He also told us that the height of the Qutub Minar is 238 feet, and that it has 379 steps. It is the highest stone tower in India.

I also saw the unfinished duplicate Qutub Minar. Ala-ud-din Khalji tried to make it. He wanted to make it double the size of Qutub Minar. He had success only with the first floor because he died.

Qutb-ud-din Aibek completed the first story of Qutub Minar, while the second, third and fourth stories were completed by his successor, Ilt-ut-mish. It was damaged by lightening in 1336 and 1328.

Entry to the Qutb Minar is prohibited because of a stampede accident some time ago.

I was ashamed when I saw things written on the walls by people. They spit on the ground also. Foreigners come to our country to travel but when they see the vandalism I hang my head.

I think we should take action; otherwise we will lose our historical places.

Nature

Nature is a planet

Nature is so beautiful

Nature is life

No nature, no life

Nature is trees, planets

Safe animals, birds

Water-anything

Meghna, Level Two English

Safdarjung Tomb



A: Hi friends. Today we are going to give a presentation.

R: Wait, wait!

A: Where were you till now?

R: I was in my tuition!

A: Do you remember anything from our history walk to Safdarjung tomb?

R: Yes!

A: Okay, please tell me something about it, maybe something about the entrance.

R: The Safdarjung Tomb had only one entrance and the entrance was covered by a garden. Now you tell me about the garden.

A: Okay; the whole tomb is surrounded by the garden and you can see the garden from the top also.

R: And one more thing. The tomb was built by Nawab Shujaud Daula.

A: Why did Nawab Shujaud Daula make this tomb?

R: Nawab Shujaud Daula made this tomb in remembrance of his father.

A: The tomb has been divided into four parts. The architecture looks the same from each side.

R: The tomb was made to be elevated because during the Mughal rule, the elevation was in fashion and tomb look enormous and huge and beautiful and the stairs are very big because in the Mughal period people were very tall!

A: Yes, right, and did you know an Ethiopian was the architect?

R: But the design of the tomb was made in Hindu style.

STUDENT VOICES

My name is Jaya. Before this course, I was not able to read, study and talk in English. But now after taking English class in Kutumb I am talking in English. I read English a little bit. I like my classes and my teacher Namita di.

-Jaya, Level II English

When I join Kutumb English class my English was not good. But now my English has improved. Now when I talk to someone in English I feel so good.

-Sagar, Level II English

The Kutumb Foundation NGO is so important to me because of what I learn here. I am improving my English speaking and writing. One more thing, I learned how to have English conversations and use more verbs. Thank you Kutumb!

-Divyanshu, Level III English

Hello, my name is Muskan and I am a student in Kutumb English class. I want to tell you about my experience. I did not learn English in School that's my in Kutumb I am learning English. Kutumb has helped me with my studies and my personal life. I am independent in my life now.

-Muskan, Level II English

THE MIRROR THEATRE GROUP

"Kutumb is my family. I've learned so many things. Because I love theatre, I wanted to start a theatre group. Our aim was to do our own thing, and my friends wanted to help. We chose to do a street play about violence against women because we want to change people's mentality towards women. I don't know what the future will hold, but Mirror Theatre Group wants to change India's mentality!"

-Sumit

"I'm no longer hesitant!"

-Tushar

"I have more confidence now."

-Rajina

"Working with friends, and being a leader to people of my same age is difficult, but it is rewarding."

-Mohit

"After I started working with Mirror Group, I can feel positive changes in my personality!"

-Rani

"I am learning so many new things in Mirror Group."

-Vicky

