

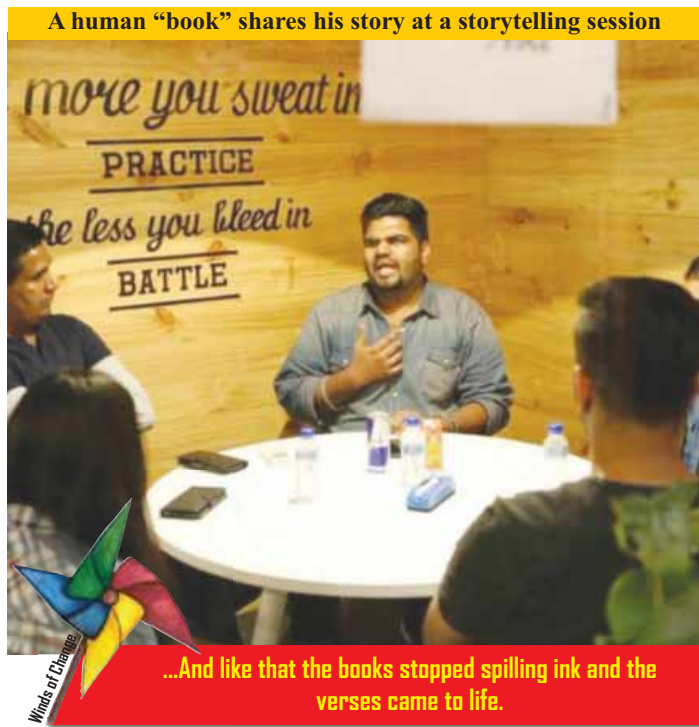


The unwritten epilogue

A place where stories come to life, where lives become stories to be told and questions to be answered. Come listen, relate, and experience a whole new world where books tell their tales

GROUND REPORTING
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A steaming cup of coffee sits blissfully abandoned atop a wooden table in one of Lutyens' Delhi's most archaic buildings. The owner of the drink listens with rapt attention, her espresso long forgotten in favour of the young man sitting across her, who has ten others like her held captive through his soliloquy. The man pauses abruptly. It is only after several minutes and a rueful smile that the eleven people jolt back to reality and realise that the man has finished his story. Their twenty minutes are up. They shuffle out of their wicker chairs, just as a new group of listeners settles in. The young man welcomes them, and restarts his story for the fourth time that day. While the conventional notion of a library involves hushed whispers and the surreptitious flipping of pages, what is happening here is different. The books here speak, and the verses come to life, literally. The Human Library Project, to which the aforemen-

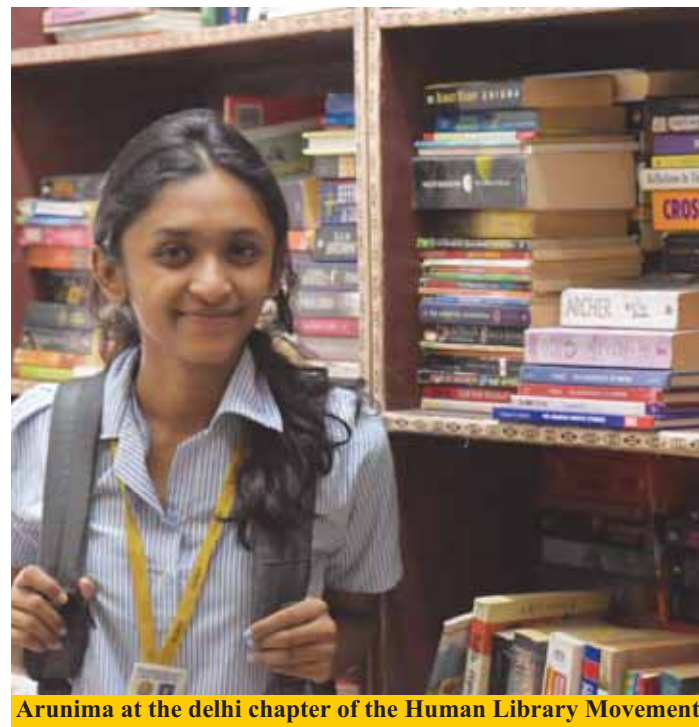


A human "book" shares his story at a storytelling session

...And like that the books stopped spilling ink and the verses came to life.

tioned storyteller belonged, redefines the age-old concept of 'narratives' by presenting a curated collection of stories via the spoken word. With its roots tracing back to Copenhagen, the Human Library Movement has now spread across 80 countries, with more than a million live storytellers or 'books' on the official page's 'library'. "The books we have here are

very distinctive from the ones you'd expect in some other event. There is no ink here, for starters. Just people, telling their stories. We found our 'books' entirely from Facebook. We met people online who agreed to share their story. It's simple, the books here can answer questions. Your questions. There aren't any cliffhangers," Neha Singh, the Delhi Chapter's book depot man-



Arunima at the delhi chapter of the Human Library Movement

ager excitedly told us. The dainty studio, called Innov8, had a two-hour waiting, as curious Delhiites crowded the building below, waiting to get a twenty-minute slot with one of the storytellers. "The outcome was overwhelming to say the least," said Shashank Mathur, one of the volunteers at the event. "600 people showed up yesterday, and we could facilitate only around 100,

but the enthusiasm was encouraging. We'll definitely be conducting another session soon." The Delhi *silsila* was a two-day event, each day catering to six new 'books'. Each of the 'books' had a remarkable story to relay, with one young woman telling us her story of how she gave up her profession as a tea seller and became a traveler. Naznin Khan, yet another storyteller, gave us a

painful account of her journey as a refugee from Rohingya to India, a land she now calls home. Nan-Jung Tonuka told a rapt audience how he left his small village Cachar in Assam, and reached Bombay in an attempt to fulfill his lifelong dream of being a playback artist. And everyone listened, awed into silence. The history of narration isn't one that has left India untouched. Everyone remembers their grandmother's velvety voice retelling the Mahabharata with just the right amount of *daanavs* to keep a 7 year old excited. Narrations of ancient texts have always been an important part of our culture, and the Human Library Movement takes that tradition forward. "It's what art has always strived to do," Rishab, a listener tells us. "It connects people, and this project has done just that." The initiative is a beautiful one, one that transcends the borders of time and people. An old concept revamped into something more vibrant; it is the perfect example of how while we are all being swept by the winds of change, we're holding onto our roots, resilient to not stray too far. Our books may no longer bleed ink, but they still have their souls intact. 📖

Pics: Rishab Gupta, AIS Noida, XII B
 Pics: Srishiti Manchanda, XII F; Naomi Rajwanshi, XI A & Ria Upreti, XI D: AIS Noida

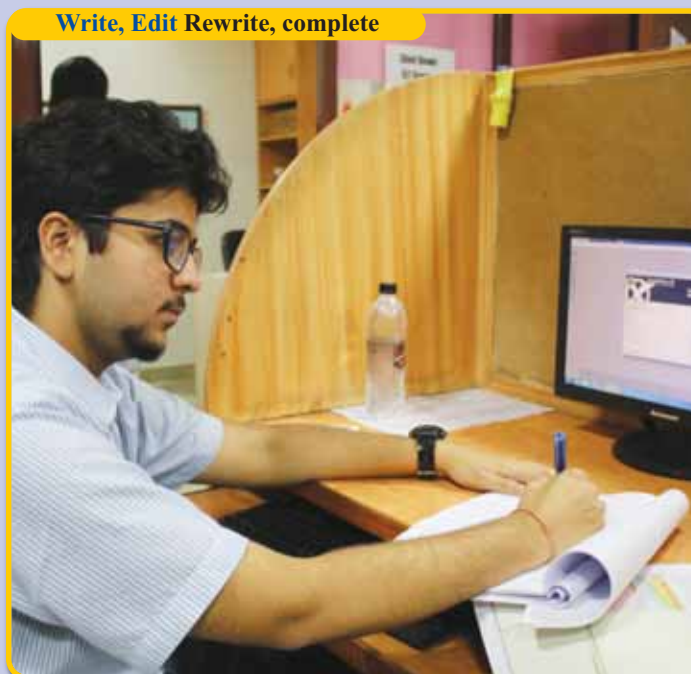
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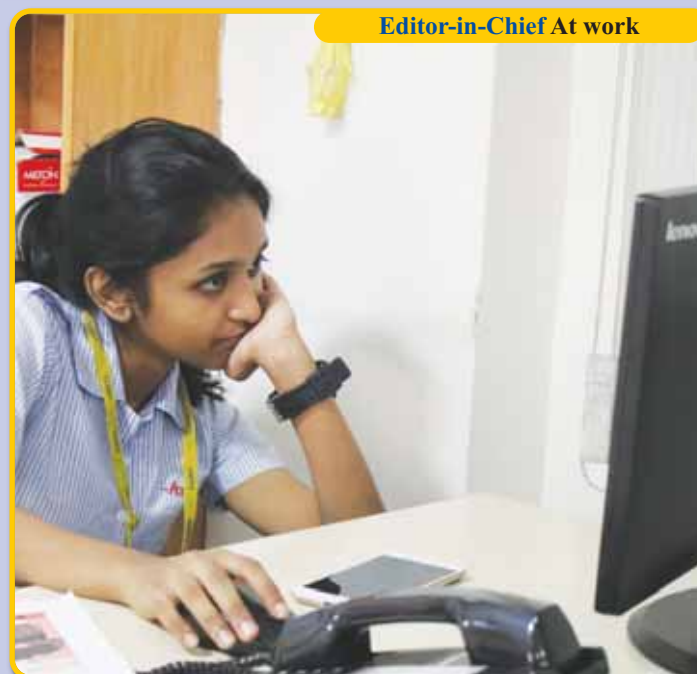
Euphoria The final draft



We THE TEAM



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Editor-in-Chief At work



Happiness An edition to call your own