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OHMN

ONE HOUSE MANY NATIONS



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' HOUSE
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI



OHMN

One House, Many Nations

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Editorial

One House, Many Nations – A Tapestry of Unity

As I sit to pen this editorial, I find myself reflecting on the essence of what International Students' House (ISH) truly represents. It is more than just a residence; it is a home built on the dreams, struggles, and triumphs of individuals from across the world. We come from different continents, speak different languages, and carry diverse histories, yet here, within these walls, we are bound by a singular, unshakable spirit—one of unity, understanding, and friendship.



This year's edition of *OHMN – One House, Many Nations* is a tribute to that spirit. It encapsulates the stories of those who have crossed borders in search of knowledge, resilience, and a sense of belonging. Every page echoes laughter shared over midnight study sessions, the comfort of home-cooked meals exchanged between roommates, and the deep conversations that reshape our perspectives on life.

For many of us, leaving home was not just about seeking education; it was a leap of faith into the unknown. We left behind familiar streets, childhood friends, and the warmth of family to step into a world that was new, exciting, yet sometimes intimidating. But within the walls of ISH, we found a second family. It is here that a Ghanaian student learns the intricate dance of an Indian festival, a Bangladeshi scholar shares tea and wisdom with a friend from Latin America, and a European researcher discovers the depth of African storytelling. Our friendships are woven across cultures, proof that despite our differences, we share the same hopes, fears, and aspirations.

This magazine, like our community, is a collection of voices—each unique, yet harmonizing in a beautiful symphony. In these pages, you will find narratives of perseverance, articles that challenge norms, poems that speak of longing and love, and art that reflects the beauty of our diverse experiences. It is a testament to the fact that while we may have come here as individuals, we have become part of something much greater—a global family.

As the Editor-in-Chief, it has been a privilege to bring together these stories. It is my hope that when you turn these pages, you will feel the heartbeat of ISH, the rhythm of lives intertwining, and the unspoken promise that no matter where we go next, we will always carry a piece of this home with us.

To all my fellow residents, contributors, and the dedicated team behind this publication, thank you for making *OHMN* a reflection of who we are. Here's to celebrating our shared journey, embracing our differences, and continuing to build bridges across cultures.

With warmth and gratitude,

Siam Sarower Jamil

Editor-in-Chief

OHMN – One House, Many Nations

Messages from the Provost

It is with immense pride and joy that the edition of OHMN – One House, Many Nations, the magazine of International Students House (ISH), University of Delhi. This publication is more than just a collection of articles and reflections; it is a testament to the diversity, intellect, and camaraderie that define our vibrant community.



At ISH, we are privileged to host students from across the globe, each bringing with them unique cultures, perspectives, and aspirations. Together, we have built not just a residence, but a home that transcends geographical boundaries. Our motto, One House, Many Nations, reflects the essence of what we stand for – unity in diversity, learning beyond textbooks, and friendships that last a lifetime.

This magazine captures the experiences, achievements, and aspirations of our students, serving as a window into the lives of those who call ISH their home. It is filled with thought-provoking essays, creative expressions, and narratives of resilience that showcase the remarkable journeys of our residents. It also stands as a chronicle of the events, initiatives, and milestones that have shaped the past year at ISH.

As Provost, I have had the privilege of witnessing the incredible growth and determination of our students. Whether in academics, cultural pursuits, or social initiatives, ISH residents have consistently displayed excellence and leadership. Your contributions, whether big or small, enrich our community and make ISH a place of learning, inspiration, and mutual respect.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the editorial team, led by our talented Editor-in-Chief, and to every student who has contributed to this magazine. Your hard work, dedication, and creativity have resulted in a publication that reflects the spirit of ISH and the intellectual vibrancy of the University of Delhi.

To our new residents, I encourage you to embrace the opportunities and friendships that ISH offers. Engage in discussions, participate in activities, and take every moment as a chance to learn from one another. To our senior students and alumni, I thank you for leaving a legacy of excellence and for making ISH a beacon of inclusivity and academic brilliance.

As we launch this edition of OHMN, let it serve as a reminder of the strength found in diversity, the power of collaboration, and the limitless possibilities that come with an open mind and an open heart. Let us continue to uphold the values that make ISH a second home to so many, fostering an environment of mutual respect, support, and shared success.

I wish you all great success in your academic and personal endeavors. May ISH continue to be a shining example of global unity and intellectual pursuit.

Thank you, and happy reading!

Prof. B. W. Pandey

*Provost, International Students' House
University of Delhi*

Message from the Warden

*It is with great pleasure and pride that I extend my warmest greetings to all of you as we unveil this edition of **OHMN – One House, Many Nations**, the annual magazine of **International Students House (ISH), Delhi University**. This magazine is more than just a collection of words and images; it is a reflection of our vibrant, diverse, and intellectually stimulating community that brings together students from all corners of the world under one roof.*



At ISH, we are not just a hostel; we are a family, a melting pot of cultures, traditions, and ideas. Every resident here brings a unique story, a different perspective, and an invaluable contribution to our shared experiences. It is this diversity that makes ISH not just a place of residence, but a home away from home, fostering friendships that transcend borders and last a lifetime.

In today's world, where divisions often seem more prominent than unity, ISH stands as a shining example of harmony and mutual respect. The friendships formed here, the intellectual debates in our common rooms, the laughter shared over meals, and the invaluable academic and personal growth that takes place within these walls are testaments to the spirit of international camaraderie.

*The **OHMN magazine** captures these moments, showcasing the voices of our residents, their achievements, their struggles, and their aspirations. It serves as a platform where talents are celebrated, perspectives are shared, and the essence of our community is immortalized. I extend my deepest appreciation to the **editorial team**, the contributors, and everyone who has worked tirelessly to bring this publication to life.*

To all our residents, I encourage you to embrace the opportunities that ISH and Delhi University offer. Engage with your peers, explore new ideas, and most importantly, cherish the friendships and experiences that will shape your journey ahead. As you turn these pages, I hope you find inspiration, joy, and a deeper connection to this incredible community that we are privileged to be a part of.

*Let us continue to uphold the spirit of **One House, Many Nations**, celebrating unity in diversity and fostering a culture of learning, respect, and global friendship.*

With best wishes,

Prof. Ujjwal Jana

*Warden, International Students' House
University of Delhi*

Message from the Resident Tutor

It is an absolute honor to pen down my thoughts for OHMN – One House, Many Nations, the annual magazine of International Students House (ISH), Delhi University. As a Resident Tutor, I have had the privilege of witnessing the vibrant confluence of cultures, ideas, and friendships that define the very essence of ISH. This magazine is not just a collection of writings; it is a testimony to the unity and diversity that ISH represents.



International Students House is more than just a hostel—it is a home for students from different corners of the world. It is a place where academic pursuits are seamlessly blended with cultural exchanges, mutual learning, and personal growth. Over the years, I have seen students arriving here as strangers and leaving as lifelong friends. The bonds formed within these walls go beyond nationality, language, or background; they are built on the shared experiences of learning, adapting, and growing together.

The environment at ISH fosters inclusivity, understanding, and respect—values that are essential in today's interconnected world. Every festival celebrated, every discussion held, and every meal shared in our dining hall adds to the rich tapestry of this house. I have seen students passionately debate global issues, celebrate each other's traditions, and support one another in times of need. This spirit of togetherness is what makes ISH unique.

The annual magazine, OHMN, beautifully captures the voices and stories of our residents. It provides a platform for students to express their experiences, reflect on their journeys, and share their aspirations. Each article, poem, or artwork featured in this magazine is a glimpse into the diverse perspectives that make ISH a dynamic and enriching space. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the editorial team for their dedication in bringing this publication to life.

As we navigate through our academic and personal journeys, let us cherish the memories we create at ISH. Let this house be a symbol of friendship, intellectual curiosity, and global harmony. I encourage all residents to contribute, engage, and continue making ISH a nurturing space for everyone who calls it home.

With best wishes,

Dr. Uma Shankar

*Resident Tutor, International Students' House
University of Delhi*

A Journey of Unity and Growth

Serving as the President of the International Students House (ISH) Union has been one of the most enriching and transformative experiences of my life. Coming from Arunachal Pradesh, as a proud member of the Apatani community, I have always believed in the power of cultural exchange, inclusivity, and shared aspirations. ISH, with its diverse student body representing numerous nationalities, has been a perfect embodiment of these values.



When I first stepped into ISH, I was mesmerized by the vibrant blend of cultures, languages, and perspectives. It was not just a residence; it was a melting pot of ideas, a space where students from different corners of the world found common ground. The sense of belonging ISH fosters is truly unique, and this was something I wanted to strengthen during my tenure as Union President.

Leading the Union has been a journey filled with responsibilities, challenges, and remarkable moments of achievement. Organizing events, addressing concerns, and ensuring that every resident felt heard and valued required unwavering dedication. From cultural nights that showcased the beauty of our diverse backgrounds to academic discussions that broadened our intellectual horizons, each initiative was aimed at creating a more inclusive and engaging environment.

One of my most cherished memories as President has been witnessing the friendships that transcended nationalities. ISH is not just a place to stay; it is a home where students build lifelong connections. Whether it was resolving conflicts, supporting fellow students through difficult times, or simply sharing meals and stories, every experience reinforced the importance of unity and mutual respect.

Of course, the journey was not without its challenges. Balancing academic commitments with leadership responsibilities was demanding, but the support of my fellow Union members, residents, and the ISH administration made it possible. Their trust and collaboration have been the backbone of every successful initiative we undertook.

As I look back, I feel immense gratitude for the opportunity to serve as President. This role has not only shaped me as a leader but also as an individual who deeply values cultural harmony and collective progress. ISH has given me a family beyond borders, and I hope that future generations of students continue to cherish and uphold its spirit of togetherness.

To my fellow residents—thank you for your trust, your participation, and your unwavering spirit. As I pass on the baton, I am confident that ISH will continue to be a beacon of international camaraderie and academic excellence.

With gratitude and best wishes,

Narang Guro
President
International Students' House Union

Reflections

Mohammad Helal Allail

(Syria)

PhD Research Scholar, Management Studies, University of Delhi

Time flies, and as I sit down to reflect on my six-year journey at the International Students House (ISH) and the University of Delhi, I am overwhelmed with a mix of emotions. When I first arrived from Syria, stepping into a new country, a new city, and a new academic life, I carried with me dreams, apprehensions, and excitement for what lay ahead. Today, as I look back, I realize that these years have been nothing short of transformative—filled with learning, cultural exchanges, challenges, and personal growth.



I completed my post graduation from Hyderabad. So India was not so new to me. But Delhi is a new experience. Coming from Syria, adapting to the vibrant and bustling life of Delhi was an experience in itself. The city's energy, its diversity, and its historical significance fascinated me, but at the same time, it was a challenge to adjust to a different culture, language, and lifestyle. Fortunately, ISH played a crucial role in easing my transition. The International Students House provided me with a home away from home—a place where I met students from different corners of the world, each with their own unique experiences and aspirations.

My initial days were filled with exploration—trying to navigate the streets of Delhi, understanding the academic culture of the university, and adjusting to the food and climate. The diversity of Delhi, with its mix of ancient traditions and modern advancements, was striking. From the bustling markets of Chandni Chowk to the serene beauty of Lodhi Gardens, Delhi quickly became an integral part of my life.

As a PhD student in Management Studies, my academic journey at the University of Delhi has been intellectually stimulating and rewarding. The university provided me with world-class faculty, rigorous academic discussions, and opportunities to engage in meaningful research. My research in management studies has been deeply influenced by India's dynamic business environment, and I have had the privilege of interacting with scholars and professionals who have enriched my understanding of the field.

However, the path of a PhD is never easy. There were moments of self-doubt, rigorous deadlines, and the constant need for academic excellence. Balancing research, coursework, and personal life was a challenge, but the support from my peers, professors, and the ISH community made the journey smoother. Attending conferences, publishing papers, and participating in academic debates helped me grow as a researcher and contributed to my academic confidence.

Life at International Students House

ISH has been more than just a residence; it has been a melting pot of cultures, friendships, and shared experiences. Living with students from different nationalities has given me a broader perspective on global issues, different educational approaches, and diverse ways of life.

The friendships I have made here are lifelong. Late-night discussions, cooking meals together, celebrating festivals of different cultures, and supporting each other during difficult times have created bonds that I will cherish forever. The warmth and camaraderie of the ISH community made me feel less alone in a foreign land.

One of the highlights of my stay at ISH has been the numerous cultural and academic events organized within the community. From celebrating Diwali, Eid, Iftar parties, and Christmas to participating in

international student forums and debates, ISH has been a platform for intercultural exchange. These experiences have not only made me more adaptable but have also deepened my appreciation for different traditions and customs.

Like any long-term stay in a foreign country, my time in Delhi has had its challenges. The initial language barrier, adapting to different food habits, and handling academic pressure were some of the hurdles I faced. There were moments of homesickness when I deeply missed my family and the familiar surroundings of Syria. However, overcoming these challenges has made me more resilient and independent.

One of the most important lessons I have learned is the art of adaptability. Delhi, with its chaotic yet charming nature, teaches you how to adjust and thrive in a fast-paced environment. The city's rich history, combined with its modern advancements, presents a unique blend that requires openness and curiosity to navigate.

Another crucial lesson has been understanding and appreciating cultural diversity. Interacting with people from different backgrounds has made me more empathetic, tolerant, and open-minded. It has broadened my worldview and strengthened my belief in the power of global connections.

Delhi is a city that never ceases to amaze. My time here has been filled with unforgettable experiences—exploring historical landmarks like the Red Fort, Humayun's Tomb, and Qutub Minar; enjoying street food at India Gate; and witnessing the grandeur of Republic Day celebrations. The academic environment, combined with the cultural richness of Delhi, has made my stay both intellectually and personally enriching.

Some of my fondest memories include celebrating Holi with my friends, experiencing the monsoon rains at ISH, and attending insightful lectures and seminars at the university. The friendships, the shared laughter, the debates, and even the struggles have all contributed to making these six years special.

Looking Ahead

As my PhD journey comes to an end, I feel a mix of excitement and nostalgia. Delhi and ISH have been my home for six years, shaping my academic and personal growth. While I look forward to the next chapter of my life, I know that I will always carry a part of Delhi with me.

The friendships I have made, the lessons I have learned, and the experiences I have gained will stay with me forever. I am grateful to the University of Delhi, ISH, and all the people who have been a part of my journey. This city has given me knowledge, confidence, and a lifetime of memories.

As I prepare to move forward, I do so with immense gratitude and a heart full of cherished moments. Delhi has been an incredible teacher, and my years at ISH have been some of the best of my life. I leave with the hope that one day, I will return—to relive these memories, to meet old friends, and to once again feel the magic of this vibrant city.

A Journey of Growth and Discovery

Ibrahim Annan

(Ghana)

PhD Research Scholar, Department of Chemistry, University of Delhi

When I first arrived in Delhi in 2021, I carried with me a suitcase full of dreams, ambitions, and a heart filled with anticipation. Coming from Ghana, a country rich in culture and warmth, I knew that transitioning to a new life in India would be an experience unlike any other. Today, as I prepare to bid farewell to the International Students House (ISH), a place I have called home for years, I find myself reflecting on a journey that has been nothing short of transformative.



My journey to Delhi was not just about pursuing a PhD in Chemistry at Delhi University; it was about stepping into a world of challenges and opportunities that would shape me in ways I never imagined. Before coming to India, I was a schoolteacher, imparting knowledge and guiding young minds. However, the thirst for deeper academic exploration led me here, and the past few years have been a rollercoaster of learning, adaptation, and personal growth.

From the very first day at ISH, I was welcomed into a vibrant community of students from all over the world. It was a melting pot of cultures, languages, and perspectives, creating an environment that was both intellectually stimulating and emotionally enriching. Living in ISH was more than just having a place to stay; it was about belonging to a family away from home. The shared meals, late-night study sessions, cultural exchanges, and festival celebrations made life in Delhi less daunting and more exciting.

One of the most valuable aspects of living at ISH was the friendships I built. The diversity within the house taught me the beauty of different cultures and traditions. I learned to appreciate the rhythms of Indian festivals, the flavors of cuisines from various countries, and the essence of true camaraderie. It was here that I forged lifelong friendships, each adding a unique shade to my journey.

Academically, my time in Delhi University was demanding yet rewarding. Balancing research, coursework, and personal life required resilience and discipline. There were moments of frustration when experiments failed, and times of joy when results were achieved. The unwavering support from my peers at ISH played a crucial role in keeping me motivated. Whether it was discussing research problems, sharing career advice, or simply unwinding over a game of chess, the companionship within ISH was a constant source of strength.

Beyond academics, Delhi as a city was an adventure in itself. The bustling streets, historical landmarks, and diverse food scene made my stay even more memorable. Exploring India was an extension of my learning experience, and every visit to a new place added a layer to my understanding of the country's rich heritage.

Of course, my journey was not without challenges. Adapting to a new education system, overcoming language barriers, and dealing with moments of homesickness tested my perseverance. However, every challenge came with a lesson, making me stronger and more resilient. The ISH community provided a support system that made these hurdles easier to overcome. The staff and fellow residents created an environment where everyone felt valued and heard, reinforcing the idea that no matter where we come from, we all share common struggles and aspirations.

As I near the end of this chapter and prepare to step into the next phase of my life, I carry with me an abundance of memories, lessons, and friendships. ISH has not just been a residence; it has been a school of life, teaching me patience, adaptability, and the true meaning of global unity.

To those who continue their journey at ISH, cherish every moment. The friendships you build, the lessons you learn, and the experiences you gather will stay with you forever. To the staff and administration, thank you for making ISH a nurturing home for international students.

As I have to say goodbye to ISH, I do so with a heart full of gratitude and a mind ready to take on new challenges. Delhi has given me knowledge, ISH has given me family, and this journey has given me a new perspective on life. Though I have to leave the premises within a very short time, ISH will forever remain a part of my story, a place that shaped me into the person I am today.

A Transformative Sojourn: My Exchange Experience in India

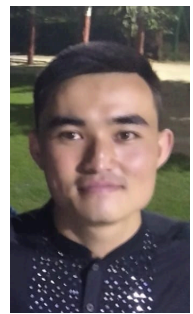
Ergashev Bakhromjon Bakhodir Ugli

(Uzbekistan)

UG Student, Department of Philosophy, Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies, Uzbekistan

A Journey of Growth, Learning, and Cultural Immersion

My name is Bakhromjon Ergashev, and I am from Uzbekistan, a country located in the heart of Central Asia. From July to December 2024, I had the incredible opportunity to study at the University of Delhi through an exchange program. It was a journey that not only enriched my academic knowledge but also broadened my personal horizons in unexpected ways.



During my time in India, I lived at the International Students House (ISH), which became an integral part of my experience. Reflecting on my stay, I am amazed at how quickly time passed. Every day brought new experiences, challenges, and insights that contributed to my personal growth. Life in India was vastly different from my home country, yet the warmth and support of my Indian friends helped me adapt and embrace this new chapter of my life.

This exchange program was not just about academics—it was a transformative journey that shaped my perspective, strengthened my resilience, and introduced me to a world of cultural diversity. I made lifelong friends, engaged in thought-provoking discussions, and experienced the vibrant and dynamic spirit of India.

First Impressions and Cultural Adaptation

When I first arrived in Delhi, I was filled with excitement and curiosity. However, the first few days were also a period of adjustment. India's diverse culture, bustling streets, and vibrant atmosphere were strikingly different from what I was accustomed to in Uzbekistan. The traffic, the crowded markets, and the variety of street foods were overwhelming at first. But soon, I realized that these very differences made India so unique and fascinating.

To get familiar with my new surroundings, I explored Delhi's historic landmarks, visited its zoos, and wandered through its beautiful gardens. One of the most intriguing aspects of Indian culture was the deep respect and care for animals. I often saw monkeys roaming freely in public parks, and it amazed me how people fed them bananas and other food daily. This was a stark contrast to what I was used to back home.

Language was another challenge. Although English is widely spoken, Hindi is the primary language of communication in Delhi. While I had studied English, my limited knowledge of Hindi made the initial interactions somewhat difficult. Fortunately, my Indian friends at ISH and Hindu College were always

there to help me navigate the language barrier, and with time, I picked up a few basic Hindi phrases that made my day-to-day life easier.

Another significant adjustment was the climate. The summer heat in Delhi was far more intense than what I was used to in Uzbekistan. Adapting to the weather took some time, but I soon learned to manage by staying hydrated and avoiding the scorching afternoon sun.

Life at the International Students House

My time at the International Students House was one of the most enriching aspects of my stay in India. ISH was not just a place to stay; it was a vibrant community of students from different parts of the world. Living in a multicultural environment provided me with the opportunity to engage with people from diverse backgrounds, exchange ideas, and build lifelong friendships.

Despite being far from home, ISH made me feel welcomed and included. The supportive environment fostered a sense of belonging and camaraderie among residents. We shared meals, discussed academic topics, and participated in social activities together. One of my favorite pastimes was playing badminton and table tennis with my fellow residents. However, my greatest passion was football, and I was thrilled to find other students who shared my enthusiasm for the sport.

We also celebrated various festivals together, which allowed me to experience Indian culture firsthand. Diwali, the festival of lights, was particularly memorable. On that day, we dressed in traditional Indian attire, took pictures, and joined the celebrations alongside local students. The warm and joyous atmosphere, the beautiful decorations, and the spirit of togetherness made the experience truly special.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Studying abroad comes with its share of challenges, and my journey in India was no exception. The biggest initial hurdle was adapting to a different academic system. At Hindu College, the teaching methods and classroom interactions were quite different from those at my home institution, Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies. The professors encouraged critical thinking, discussions, and active participation, which initially felt unfamiliar but eventually became an engaging way to learn.

Another challenge was making friends at Hindu College. While I was warmly welcomed, forming deep connections took time. However, as I engaged in group discussions and academic debates, I gradually built meaningful relationships with my classmates. The diverse perspectives they shared enriched my understanding of various subjects and broadened my intellectual outlook.

Food was another significant adjustment. Indian cuisine is known for its rich flavors and spices, which were quite different from the food I was used to. At first, I found the spiciness overwhelming, but over time, I developed a taste for Indian dishes and began to appreciate their complexity and variety.

Academically, my time in India was immensely rewarding. I had access to a wealth of resources, including the extensive library at Hindu College, which housed numerous books on philosophy—one of my primary interests. I was particularly drawn to texts that explored both Western and Eastern

philosophical traditions. Learning from esteemed professors such as Mr. Krishna, Mr. Divasia, and Ms. Ananya Barua was an intellectually enriching experience that left a lasting impact on me.

One of the most valuable skills I developed during my stay was adaptability. Navigating the fast-paced life in Delhi required patience, resilience, and resourcefulness. I learned to efficiently manage my time, budget my expenses, and find ways to make the most of my experience.

A Deep Appreciation for Cultural Diversity

Perhaps the most profound lesson I learned during my exchange program was the importance of cultural understanding and acceptance. Interacting with people from different backgrounds helped me develop a more tolerant and open-minded perspective. I realized that despite our differences in language, traditions, and lifestyles, we all share common aspirations and values.

My time in India reinforced the idea that cultural diversity is a strength. It fosters innovation, creativity, and mutual respect. Living in such a diverse environment helped me appreciate the beauty of different cultures and encouraged me to embrace new experiences with an open heart and mind.

A Life-Changing Experience

My exchange program at the University of Delhi was more than just an academic endeavor; it was a life-changing journey of personal and intellectual growth. From overcoming challenges to celebrating cultural diversity, every moment was a valuable learning experience. The friendships I made, the knowledge I gained, and the memories I created will remain with me forever.

India has left an indelible mark on my heart. I will always cherish the experiences I had at the International Students House and Hindu College. This journey has not only broadened my academic horizons but also shaped my outlook on life in ways I never imagined.

I am deeply grateful for this opportunity and look forward to applying the lessons I have learned to my future endeavors. My time in India has strengthened my resilience, expanded my worldview, and deepened my appreciation for cultural diversity. I now carry with me a wealth of experiences that will continue to inspire me in the years to come.

My Experience as a Russian Exchange Student in India

Rybin Nikita Alexandrovich

(Russia)

Department of Advertising and Public Relations, Russia-Financial University

Stepping into the unknown is always thrilling, and my journey to India as an exchange student was no exception. From July to December 2024, I had the opportunity to study at the Delhi School of Journalism, University of Delhi. As a Russian student, this experience was not just an academic pursuit but a cultural deep dive into one of the most diverse and vibrant countries in the world. My stay at the International Students House (ISH) added another layer to my journey, making it a truly global experience. Looking back, my time in India was transformative, filled with learning, adaptation, and unforgettable memories.



Landing in Delhi, I was immediately struck by the city's sheer energy. The streets buzzed with people, honking cars, street vendors, and an overwhelming mix of aromas. It was unlike anything I had experienced before. The humidity and heat in July were quite intense, but soon I adapted. I was greeted warmly at the International Students House, which became my home for the next six months. The hostel was a melting pot of cultures, with students from different countries sharing their perspectives and experiences.

Studying at the Delhi School of Journalism was a unique and enriching experience. The curriculum was dynamic, and the faculty was incredibly knowledgeable. The discussions in class often extended beyond textbooks, delving into real-world issues, politics, and media trends in India and beyond. I was particularly fascinated by the role of the media in Indian democracy and the vastness of the Indian news landscape.

One of the biggest challenges I faced was the language barrier. While English was the primary mode of instruction, Hindi was frequently used in discussions. However, my classmates were always helpful, translating and explaining whenever needed. Over time, I even picked up a few Hindi phrases, which helped me navigate daily life in Delhi.

Living in ISH was one of the best aspects of my exchange program. The hostel was not just a place to stay but a community that supported each other. I met students from Africa, Europe, and Asia, each with their own stories and aspirations. We shared meals, celebrated festivals, and engaged in deep conversations about our cultures and future dreams.

The food was another adventure. Coming from Russia, where the cuisine is milder, Indian food was a challenge at first. The spices were intense, and I had to slowly build my tolerance. But by the end of my stay, I had developed a taste for butter chicken, dal makhani, and even street food like pani puri and samosas.

Beyond academics, exploring India was a highlight of my stay. I visited historical sites like the Red Fort, Qutub Minar, and Humayun's Tomb, each reflecting the country's rich history. The chaotic yet charming

streets of Old Delhi, with their centuries-old markets and traditional eateries, gave me a glimpse of India's past and present coexisting beautifully.

However, adjusting to the cultural differences was not always easy. The crowded public transport, the constant bargaining at markets, and the different social norms took time to understand. As a Russian, I found the concept of personal space quite different. People in India are generally warm and expressive, which was both fascinating and overwhelming at times.

One of the most memorable experiences was celebrating Diwali in Delhi. The city lit up with fireworks, diyas, and festive decorations. The spirit of the festival, with families coming together and exchanging sweets, made me feel a sense of belonging despite being miles away from home.

My exchange program in India was an eye-opener. It taught me resilience, adaptability, and the importance of embracing diversity. I learned to step out of my comfort zone, to interact with people from vastly different backgrounds, and to appreciate perspectives different from my own.

Academically, I gained insights into journalism in a fast-paced, diverse country where media plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion. Personally, I developed friendships that I will cherish forever, and I left with a deep appreciation for India's culture, history, and people.

If I were to sum up my experience in one word, it would be 'transformative.' My six months in India were filled with challenges, learning, and immense personal growth. For anyone considering an exchange program, I would highly recommend it. India, with all its complexities and contradictions, is a place that will change you in ways you never imagined.

As I return to Russia, I carry with me not just academic knowledge but a heart full of memories and a newfound perspective on the world. Thank you, India, for an experience of a lifetime!

A Home Beyond Borders: My Transformative Journey

Ven. Mahawaththe Subodha

(Sri Lanka)

PhD Research Scholar, Department of Sanskrit, University of Delhi

I stayed at the International Hostel while pursuing my Ph.D. in Yoga in the Department of Sanskrit at the University of Delhi—a transformative chapter in my life. It was not just a place to live, but a vibrant space where I grew academically, culturally, and personally. The hostel became my second home—a melting pot of diverse cultures, languages, and traditions that enriched my worldview and left me with countless cherished memories. As I reflect on this journey, I am filled with gratitude for the experiences, friendships, and lessons that helped shape the person I am today.



One of the most remarkable aspects of my time at the International Hostel was the opportunity to connect with people from around the world. Living under one roof with students from various countries allowed me to forge friendships that transcended borders. I vividly remember evenings spent in the common room—sharing stories about our homelands, teaching each other phrases in our native languages, and discussing global issues from diverse perspectives. These interactions were not only about cultural exchange but also about building a true sense of global camaraderie. Whether it was learning new languages or savoring homemade dishes from different countries, every moment was a celebration of unity in diversity. These friendships taught me empathy, open-mindedness, and the beauty of human connection.

The hostel was also a hub of cultural festivities. Celebrating festivals together remains one of my most unforgettable memories. Diwali—the festival of lights—was a grand affair, with the entire hostel adorned with diyas and colorful rangolis. We exchanged sweets, lit fireworks, and shared joy with friends from all religious backgrounds. Buddhist festivals, Eid, and Christmas were celebrated with equal enthusiasm—with carol singing, cake cutting, and a warm spirit of togetherness. These occasions were not merely rituals; they embodied shared joy and a deep sense of belonging. They reminded me that, despite our differences, we are all united by our shared humanity.

Beyond the celebrations, the hostel was a place where countless unforgettable memories were made. From late-night study sessions in the library to impromptu parties, every corner of the dormitory holds a special place in my heart. I fondly remember laughter-filled evenings playing badminton, heated debates over cups of chai, and quiet moments of reflection in the hostel garden. These experiences were not just fun—they helped build a strong sense of community and mutual support. We celebrated one another's successes, offered comfort in difficult times, and grew together as individuals.

Amidst all the cultural exchanges and celebrations, I remained focused on my academic goals. Pursuing a Ph.D. in Yoga was both challenging and rewarding, and the hostel provided the perfect environment to balance study and leisure. I spent countless hours in my room poring over ancient texts and preparing for presentations. There were painful moments—periods of self-doubt and exhaustion—but the encouragement from my friends and the supportive environment of the hostel kept me going. I am proud to say that I successfully completed my education on time.

As I conclude this reflection, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who made my stay at the International Hostel so meaningful. To Prof. B.M. Pandey, Provost, whose leadership fostered a welcoming and inclusive environment; to Prof. Ujjwal Jana, Warden, who ensured our safety and well-being; to Dr. Uma Shanker, Resident Tutor, who was always available for guidance and support; and to all the staff who worked tirelessly to make our lives comfortable—thank you. I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to Narang Guro, President of our hostel, for his unwavering dedication and efforts to foster unity and belonging among all residents. Your contributions, both big and small, have left an indelible mark on my life.

To my friends who became like family, I am forever grateful—for the laughter, the lessons, and the love we shared.

My two years at the International Hostel were more than a period of academic pursuit—they were a journey of self-discovery, cultural immersion, and lifelong friendship. As I move forward in life, I carry with me the memories, lessons, and bonds formed in those two years. The International Hostel will always hold a special place in my heart—not just as a place I lived, but as a place that helped shape who I am today.

“Reimagining ‘International’ Life at the International Students’ House”

**Rikuto Ito
(Japan)**

Department of Political Science, University of Delhi

As an ICCR Scholar from Japan who studies political science in India, I cannot help but ponder what “international” means in India. The Japanese term Kokusai (国際), meaning “international,” was coined during the Meiji restoration era’s process of modernization by adapting Western concepts with Sino-Japanese (Kanji) vocabulary. As indicated by the characters “国” (nation) and “際” (boundary), the term presupposes the existence of nation-states and borders. Yet, in corridors of the International Students’ House in University of Delhi, the rigidity of this term is gradually loosened through daily life—a living phenomenon where identities, histories, and aspirations for the future intersect.



In the West, the notion of “international” is largely shaped by the system of sovereign nation-states that began with the Treaty of Westphalia, and even today this perspective dominates the world. However, life at International Students’ House offers an alternative viewpoint. First is for the idea of boundary “際”. In Japan, the “international” that I perceived was something that came from across vast oceans, but in India, “international” is brought even through contiguous lands. In this hostel, many residents come from neighboring South Asian countries. The presence of people from such countries such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Myanmar attests to historical and political ties that remain unbreakable despite drawn boundaries at the cost of many lives and livelihood. When they converse in Hindi with the hostel staff, one senses an intimate and immediate form of “international”. Moreover, students from Central Asia remind us of the deep connections that medieval North India engaged with that region.

Second, this contiguous land border also carries implications for the concept of nation “国”. The presence of students from Tibet quietly questions what a “nation” truly is. Their histories cannot be fully expressed within the confines of the nation-state framework. There are also children of Indian immigrants who speak Hindi completely with Haryana accent, even though the country to which he belongs is not India. Our hostel president, a student from Northeast India, comes from a community that shares ethnic ties with neighboring countries.

In this hostel, my own notions of “boundary” and “nation,” shaped by my upbringing in an island nation of the Far East, have been dissolved. Here, I learn not only about political science but also about people, conversation and how identities, culture and histories transcend “international”. In this context, it seems that “international” should be, as Tagore envisioned, not a mere collection of fragments but an organic whole. That is why our hostel is not merely a hostel—it is a House.

Brick by Brick: How an International Student House Built Me

Chemi Rigzin
(Tibet)

**PhD Research Scholar, Department of Geography,
Delhi School of Economics
University of Delhi**

“Not all classrooms have blackboards. Some have bunk beds, broken fans, and an unspoken bond stitched into midnight conversations.”

There are places that house you, and there are places that shape you. For me, the International Student House at the University of Delhi was not just a building I stayed in. It was a forge — it took a nervous, soft-spoken Tibetan boy and helped shape him into a man who learned to listen, argue, celebrate, compromise, and lead.



Getting admission into an international hostel is a unique experience. The walls echo with languages from every continent, and daily life becomes a melting pot of ever-changing conversations and endless cultural exchange.

Living among students from Africa, Latin America, Europe, South Asia, and beyond was like being in a permanent Model United Nations — just without the suits, and with far more midnight barbecues. I met people whose lives were wildly different from mine, and yet, somehow, we shared something real: a desire to belong.

The most rewarding part of living here has been the friendships I’ve forged. I’ve shared laughter, meals, and stories with students from every corner of the globe. Each conversation and shared experience has broadened my perspective and helped me grow — not just as a student, but as a human being. I’ve learned to value diversity, to listen with empathy, and to celebrate our differences.

Not every day was easy. The hostel didn’t make life simple — and I’m thankful for that. There were roommate conflicts, cultural miscommunications, noise complaints, and the endless politics of shared bathrooms. But that’s where the real learning happened — not in classrooms or libraries, but in the ability to adapt, to listen, and to coexist. I learned how to advocate for myself, how to negotiate differences without compromising my values, and most importantly, how to remain true to myself in a world that constantly asks you to change.

The hostel offered more than just lodging. It provided the means — a diverse peer group, a democratic environment, and a free flow of ideas. It offered the way — a culture of debate, mutual respect, and coexistence. And it presented the opportunity — to grow in directions I had never imagined. I’ve shared laughter over Ethiopian coffee, Japanese sake, Myanmar tea, Vietnamese snacks — and heartbreaks over Tibetan dishes. We celebrated Christmas, Diwali, Eid, and Losar — not because we were all the same, but because we had learned to make space for each other’s stories, to internalize one another’s hopes and traditions with respect and openness.

To the next batch of international students reading this: take this chance. This house is not perfect, but it is real. You may feel like leaving the moment you set foot inside. But if you stay, I promise — it will leave you with memories that sharpen over time, and friendships that will follow you wherever you go.

And to my fellow alumni: this house was our crucible. Let us carry forward its spirit wherever life takes us — as ambassadors of diversity, dialogue, and dignity. Some houses are forgotten once you move out. But this one? This one will always be cast in stone — in memory, in character, and in heart.

Photo Gallery



A Nepalese cultural Dance Presentation at the 59th ISH Milestone



Our African brothers in their traditional attire



Ramp walk at the 59th ISH Milestone 2025



A Russian troupe at the ISH Milestone festival 2025



Sharing kindness and giving back to the community as one during the peak of summers in Delhi



Visit of ISH team at the Vice Chancellors office for interaction with the NAAC team visit



Farewell of ISH students is a congratulatory ceremony that is celebrated with diversity





Farewell of ISH students is a congratulatory ceremony that is celebrated with diversity



ISH Team visit to Sree Guru Gobind Singh Tricentenary University.



Celebrating Diwali, Christmas, Eid and Birthdays have become a tradition to be celebrated together





Practicing and respecting different culture is a tradition at the ISH





ISH team visits with H. E. Brig. General Felix Diallo, Ambassador of the Republic of Mali in India and Gokul Basnet, Cultural Counsellor, Embassy of Nepal in India



ISH team at the Republic of Burundi's embassy to meet with the H.E Ambassador Brig. Gen. Aloys Bizindavyi to strengthen the relationship and their interest in an international institution.



Warden Prof. Ujjwal Jana, Resident Tutor Dr. Uma Shankar, ISH Union President Narang Guro, and Vladislav Ermoshin attended the Northern Fleet Ensemble concert organized by the Russian Embassy in India.



A Bangladeshi cultural Dance Presentation at the 59th ISH Milestone

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ONE HOUSE MANY NATIONS



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' HOUSE
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

