

HAWK EXPRESS

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Celebrating Excellence: Aditya Varshney Secures Top 3 Spot Globally at Monash University's 'Change It' Competition!



Photo credit: International School Dhaka

We are thrilled to celebrate the outstanding achievement of Aditya Varshney (Class of 2026), who recently competed in the prestigious 'Change It Challenge' competition, hosted by Monash University—one of the world's top-ranked institutions, ranked 37 in the QS rankings. Out of 140+ teams across all of Asia, Aditya's exceptional performance earned him a place in the Top 3 globally, making him one of the continent's brightest young innovators.

What makes this achievement even more remarkable is that Aditya won the National Round in Bangladesh, cementing his position as the country's best before advancing to the highly competitive global stage.

The competition challenged students to develop innovative solutions to pressing global issues, bringing together the most talented young minds from across the region.

Aditya captivated a panel of Monash executives with his well-researched, compelling presentation and his ability to speak with confidence and clarity. This accomplishment is nothing short of extraordinary, considering the sheer scale of competitors and the prestige of the competition. Being ranked among the top 3 in all of Asia places Aditya in an elite group of young changemakers, proving his ability to think critically, present persuasively, and inspire action on an international level.

**MAKE YOUR
CHANGE**

Photo: Monash University Website

We congratulate Aditya on this phenomenal success and look forward to seeing where his talents take him next!

Special Thanks to: : Aditya Varshney



ISHRAT JAHAN
HEAD OF BANGLA

আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষা দিবস: বহুভাষিক সংস্কৃতির মাঝে এক বন্ধন



ইশরাত জাহান
বাংলা ভাষা বিভাগের প্রধান

ভাষা কেবল কথা বলার মাধ্যম নয়, এটি আমাদের পরিচয়, সংস্কৃতি ও ঐতিহ্যের প্রতিফলন। ২১শে ফেব্রুয়ারি— আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষা দিবস, সেই দিন, যা আমাদের শেকড়ের সঙ্গে সংযুক্ত রাখে এবং একই সঙ্গে সকল ভাষার প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা জানাতে উদ্বুদ্ধ করে। এটি কেবল বাংলাদেশের ইতিহাসের একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অধ্যায় নয়, বরং বৈশ্বিক প্রেক্ষাপটে ভাষার অধিকারের জন্য সংগ্রামের প্রতীক।

এই দিনটির তাৎপর্য আরও গভীর, কারণ এটি এসেছে আত্মত্যাগের বিনিময়ে। ১৯৫২ সালের ২১শে ফেব্রুয়ারি, মাতৃভাষা বাংলার স্বীকৃতির দাবিতে বুকের রক্ত ঢেলে দিয়েছিলেন সালাম, রফিক, বরকত, জব্বারসহ অনেক ভাষাসৈনিক। তাদের দৃঢ় সংকল্প আর আত্মত্যাগের ফলেই বাংলা পেয়েছিল রাষ্ট্রভাষার মর্যাদা। এই আন্দোলন কেবল বাংলাদেশের নয়, বরং বিশ্বের সমস্ত মাতৃভাষার অধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠার অনুপ্রেরণা হয়ে উঠেছে। ১৯৯৯ সালে ইউনেস্কো ২১শে ফেব্রুয়ারিকে আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষা দিবস হিসেবে ঘোষণা করে, যা এখন বিশ্বব্যাপী ভাষার বৈচিত্র্য ও সংরক্ষণের প্রতীক হয়ে দাঁড়িয়েছে।

ইন্টারন্যাশনাল স্কুল ঢাকা, একটি আন্তর্জাতিক বিদ্যালয়ে এই দিনটি উদযাপন করা এক অনন্য অভিজ্ঞতা। এখানে শিক্ষার্থীরা আসে বিভিন্ন দেশ ও ভাষার পটভূমি থেকে, কিন্তু এই বিশেষ দিনে তারা সবাই একত্রিত হয় ভাষার প্রতি সম্মান জানাতে। বাংলা, স্প্যানিশ, ফরাসি, কোরিয়ান, ডাচ, হিন্দি— প্রতিটি ভাষার শিক্ষার্থীই অনুভব করতে পারে এই উদযাপনের তাৎপর্য।

প্রতিবছর আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষা দিবসে কৃতজ্ঞতা ও শ্রদ্ধা নিয়ে স্মরণ করা হয় ভাষা শহীদদের ও তাদের আত্মত্যাগের গভীরতাকে। একইদিনে বিদ্যালয়টি উৎসবমুখর হয়ে ওঠে বিভিন্ন ভাষার কবিতা, গান, বক্তৃতা, ও সাংস্কৃতিক পরিবেশনায়। শিক্ষার্থীরা তাদের নিজ নিজ ভাষায় আবৃত্তি করে, গান গায়, নাচ পরিবেশনা করে— যা আমাদের মনে করিয়ে দেয়, ভাষার বৈচিত্র্যের মধ্যেই লুকিয়ে আছে প্রকৃত ঐক্যের শক্তি।

একুশে ফেব্রুয়ারির মূল শিক্ষা হলো— প্রতিটি ভাষাই সমানভাবে মূল্যবান। মাতৃভাষা শুধু যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম নয়, বরং এটি চিন্তা ও অনুভূতির প্রকাশ, সংস্কৃতির ধারক। আমাদের বিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষার্থীরা যখন একে অপরের ভাষাকে সম্মান জানায়, তখন তারা কেবল নতুন শব্দ শেখে না, বরং নতুন সংস্কৃতি ও ভাবনার জগতে প্রবেশ করে।



Celebrating International Mother Language Day,
International School Dhaka, 2025

একুশে ফেব্রুয়ারি আমাদের শিখিয়ে যায়, ভাষার প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা মানেই একে লালন ও চর্চা করা। মাতৃভাষার পাশাপাশি অন্যান্য ভাষার প্রতি আগ্রহ ও সম্মান দেখানোও সমান গুরুত্বপূর্ণ। বিশ্ব আজ যেমন সংযুক্ত, তেমনই প্রতিটি ভাষা আমাদের সাংস্কৃতিক বৈচিত্র্যকে আরও সমৃদ্ধ করে।

তাই ২১শে ফেব্রুয়ারি কেবল একটি দিন নয়, এটি একটি উপলক্ষ— আমাদের শেকড়কে সম্মান জানানোর, এবং একই সঙ্গে বিশ্বজুড়ে সকল মাতৃভাষাকে উদযাপনের। ভাষার এই বহুমাত্রিকতা আমাদের বিভক্ত করে না, বরং ঐক্যের সেতুবন্ধন গড়ে তোলে। ভাষার জন্য ভালোবাসা ছড়িয়ে পড়ুক বিশ্বজুড়ে— এই হোক একুশের অঙ্গীকার।

International Mother Language Day: A Celebration of Unity in Diversity

Language is more than just a way to communicate; it carries our identity, culture, and heritage. February 21st—International Mother Language Day is a day that connects us to our roots while reminding us to honour and respect all languages. Though deeply tied to Bangladesh's history, this day has grown into a global symbol of the fight for linguistic rights and cultural preservation.

The significance of this day is profound because it was earned through sacrifice. On February 21st, 1952, students like Salam, Rafiq, Barkat, and Jabbar gave their lives for the right to speak their mother tongue—Bangla. Their courage and determination led to the recognition of Bangla as a state language, inspiring movements worldwide that defended the right to linguistic identity. In 1999, UNESCO declared February 21st as International Mother Language Day, a reminder for all nations to cherish and protect their linguistic heritage.

At International School Dhaka (ISD), celebrating this day in a multicultural environment is a truly unique experience. Our students come from diverse backgrounds and speak different languages at home—Bangla, Spanish, French, Korean, Dutch, Hindi, and many more. Yet, on this special day, we all come together to celebrate the beauty of language, realizing that while our words may be different, our emotions, stories, and traditions bring us closer.

February 21st teaches us that every language is valuable. A mother tongue is not just a tool for communication—it carries emotions, memories, and a deep sense of belonging. When our students show respect for one another's languages, they are not just learning new words; they are stepping into new cultures, understanding new perspectives, and building bridges across differences.

Every year, our school comes alive with vibrant performances—students recite poetry, sing songs, deliver speeches, and showcase their artistic talents in different languages. Through these celebrations, we are reminded that linguistic diversity is not a barrier but a powerful force of unity.

More than anything, International Mother Language Day is a call to embrace and protect the languages that shape us. While we cherish our own mother tongue, we must also appreciate the richness of other languages around us. As the world becomes more interconnected, our ability to understand and respect different languages makes us stronger, more empathetic global citizens. So, February 21st is not just a day—it is a celebration of who we are, where we come from, and how language connects us all. Let's honour our roots and embrace the beauty of every language, knowing that in diversity, we find true unity.

Let the love for languages spread across the world—this is the true spirit of Ekushey.



É no horizonte o Bangladesh surgiu



Claudia Maria Martins Da Costa
Mother Tongue Coordinator



Photo: AI

I wrote this poem in Portuguese, one of my two mother tongues alongside French, capturing my family's journey in Bangladesh over the past four years. Wanting to share it in English, I turned to AI for a translation, curious to see how it would handle the rhythm and rhyme. To my surprise, the final result not only preserved the meaning but also maintained the poetic flow and emotions of the original. It was fascinating to see how AI could adapt creative expression across languages while keeping the essence intact. 🌟

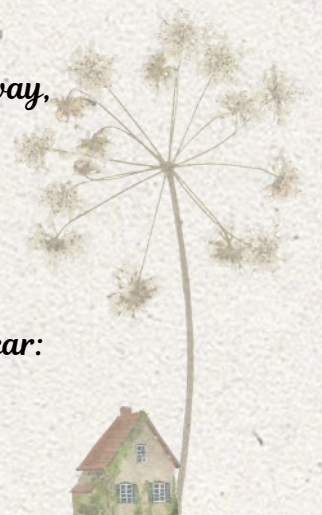


É no horizonte o Bangladesh surgiu!

No horizonte distante, o Bangladesh surgiu,
A nossa família, três filhos, aqui se reuniu.
Deixámos a Europa, terra tão familiar,
Para um novo mundo, pronto a explorar.
Quatro anos de vivências, um conto a tecer,
Entre Dhaka e os mercados, um novo renascer.
Culturas entrelaçadas num ritmo apressado,
E o coração aberto a um mundo alargado.
Do velho continente ao Oriente vibrante,
A mudança mostrou-nos um olhar fascinante.
Aprendemos no calor do Ganges a correr,
Que o mundo é vasto e há tanto por ver.
No Bangladesh, encontrámos mais do que um lar,
Descobrimos que o mundo é para abraçar.
Aqui, entre sorrisos e desafios a enfrentar,
Crescemos em família, sempre a mudar.
Bangladesh, terra de luz e cor,
Onde o passado e o futuro se cruzam com fervor.
Quatro anos passaram e fica a lição:
A mudança transforma-nos o coração.

And on the distant horizon Bangladesh appeared!

On the distant horizon, Bangladesh appeared,
A new home for our family, as the path cleared.
We left behind Europe, so known, so bright,
For a world unknown, yet full of light.
Four years of stories, a tale to weave,
Through Dhaka's streets, we learned to believe.
Cultures entwined in a hurried embrace,
With open hearts, we found our place.
From the old continent to the East so wide,
A change that opened our eyes with pride.
In Ganges' flow and Bengal's heat,
We learned the world is vast and sweet.
In Bangladesh, more than a home we found,
A truth so deep, so strong, so profound.
With smiles and struggles, we shaped our way,
Growing as a family, day by day.
Bangladesh, a land of light and hue,
Where past and future blend in view.
Four years have passed, yet one thing is clear:
Change shapes the heart, year by year



Aditya Varshney and Mukhammad Earn Merit Award in Prestigious MIT Engineers Without Borders Competition!

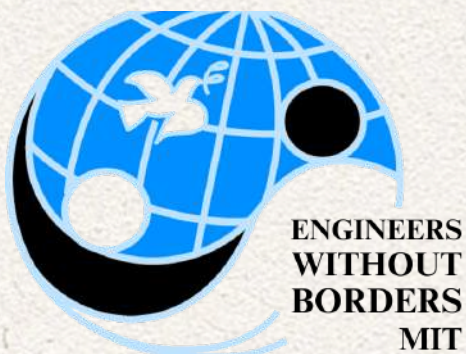


Photo: AlgoEdWebsite

We are proud to celebrate the remarkable achievements of Aditya Varshney and Mukhammad Sagdullaev, students of grade 11 who competed in the prestigious MIT Engineers Without Borders competition. This global challenge saw participation from 160+ schools, and over 1000 students, across 30+ countries, making it an incredibly competitive event.

The competition consisted of a rigorous online examination that tested participants' ability to apply biology, chemistry, physics, and mathematics to real-world problems. With a strong emphasis on critical thinking and problem-solving, this challenge pushed students to think beyond textbook knowledge and tackle complex engineering scenarios.

Against fierce competition, Aditya and Mukhammad achieved the National Merit Award. Their outstanding performance showcases their technical expertise, analytical thinking, and ability to solve real-world problems under pressure. This recognition on an international stage is a testament to their dedication and skill, and we couldn't be prouder of their success. Congratulations to Aditya and Mukhammad on this incredible accomplishment!

Special Thanks to : Aditya Varshney

Secondary Sports Day



ISD secondary sports day brings a fun-filled day, packed with a variety of sports for each grade to play. Throughout the day, the four houses brought not just strong rivalry, but also good sportsmanship, resilience to push through one game after another, and being a team player. With an exciting score wave, the teams were pulling off wins to have their house step up to the winning bar.

House Everest, being the most resilient house, kept it up with their spirit till the end. Not backing up and keeping giving the opponent a trying time was in their spirit through and through.

House Amazon, on the other hand, shows their strong determination on keep on fighting. Their massive come back and score boost at the end reflects that they should not be taken any lightly.

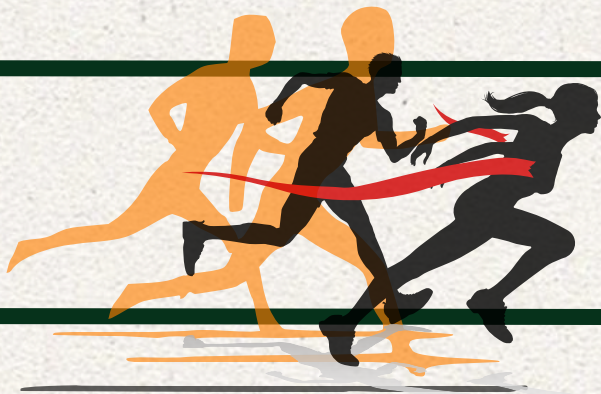
House Sahara has been making being the best one easier for themselves at this point. They have been on the winning side and so far carrying the highest score. The shoulder shrug and a self-tap on the shoulder would be well deserving.

And of course, congratulations to House Pacific, for winning the sports day cup. The blue ribbon suits well on the golden cup. As it should.

Shout out to everyone involved to make the sports day such a joyful experience.



Photo credit: International School Dhaka



Track & Field



Nusrat Jubida Bhuiyan
Writer



Just before the spring vacation, this February, ISD students had the wonderful opportunity to participate in the inter-school Track & field tournament at American International School Dhaka (AISD). The tournament is hosted by AISD where a variety of events are included such as the 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, discus, shot put, long jump, high jump, 200m relay, and 400m relay.

These competitions took place over three days, and our athletes gave it their all. Some pushed themselves so hard that they collapsed after their events, showing their dedication and effort. Despite facing schools that had months of preparation while our athletes had only days or weeks to train, many still secured top-three finishes in their events. Whether they won a medal or not, they put in incredible effort, so take a moment to congratulate them for their hard work and determination!



Here are the track and field results. Six schools took part in this meet.

Silver - 4 X 400 relay
Wayne Akiko, Carlos Otieno, Tanzil Toshi, Adriane J. Kwashira

Bronze - 4 X 400 relay
Imraan, Nazeef, Madyan, Azaan bin Abdullah

Silver - 4 X 100 relay
Wayne Akiko, Carlos Otieno, Tanzil Toshi, Adriane J. Kwashira

Bronze - 4 X 100 relay
Eugenie Barnaart, Saanvi Maithani Mady Barnaart, Unaysha Sadat

Bronze - 200 m
Eugenie Barnaart

Gold - Discuss Throw
Arafat bin Abdullah

Silver - Discuss Throw
Talha Kabir

Gold - Shot Put
Sultan Hossain

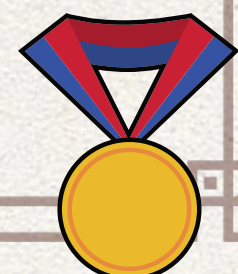
Silver - Shot Put
Arafat bin Abdullah

Gold - High Jump
Wayne Akiko

Bronze - High Jump
Eugenie Barnaart

Gold - Long Jump
Wayne Akiko

Bronze - Long Jump
Eugenie Barnaart





The Quizmaster



Chris McMahon

1

On 8th November 2016, Donald Trump was elected President of the USA for the first time. On the same day, what major economic event happened in India?

2

Who is this ISD member of staff?



3

What are the six officially recognised religions of Indonesia?

4

Dakar is the capital city of which country?

That's Dakar spelt D-A-K-A-R.

5

Who is this ISD member of staff?



6

Which state of the USA is nicknamed the Hoosier State?



8

Who is this ISD member of staff?

7

In the Russian Orthodox Church, which holiday is celebrated on 7th January each year?

9

Who is the current First Lady of France?

10

What term is given to people born between 1997 and 2012?

Answers will be revealed in the next edition of Hawks Express.

Answers for the November 2024 quiz:

- 1) Mr Steve Calland-Scoble
- 2) Mr Jordan Doddridge
- 3) Mr Brian Eng
- 4) Mr Olivier Gautheron
- 5) Mr Tom Johnston
- 6) Ms Laurie Joynt
- 7) Ms Jennifer Lumsden
- 8) Ms Claudette Muller
- 9) Dr Michael Palmer
- 10) Mr Giuseppe Tagliarini

STATE OF MIND

THE EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPE

Giuseppe Tagliarini BACP
Social Emotional Counselor
bacp | counselling changes lives

WHAT IS LOVE? OH, BABY, DON'T HURT ME. NO MORE

Love: The Ultimate Playlist of Heartstrings

Back in the day, not so long ago, as a young-man working in Llyod's insurance in London, I recall bobbing my head to the song "What Is Love" by Haddaway. A song that touched on the complexities of relationships, particularly emotional confusion, vulnerability, and the fear of being hurt. The repeating refrain, "What is love? Baby, don't hurt me, don't hurt me, no more," reflects a plea to avoid emotional pain, hinting at the frustration and uncertainty people often feel when trying to understand love, especially when it involves heartbreak or unreciprocated feelings.

When I look at songs throughout the world and throughout history, I believe they revolve around love and heartbreak—either the euphoria of 'finding a love like no other' or the agony of betrayal and shattered dreams. Do we seek someone to rescue us so we can feel whole, or are we simply looking for limerence—the desire to be swept off our feet by an idealized version of love?

The lyrics of these songs often resonate deeply, encapsulating our desires and fears. But why does love dominate our playlists and culture so overwhelmingly? Maybe it's because love is one of the few experiences that connects us all—whether romantic, platonic, familial, or self-love; we all crave it in some form.

And with love often comes its shadow—heartbreak. As much as we celebrate the highs, the lows are just as profound. Songs about friendship betrayal and loss remind us that love isn't always easy. It demands vulnerability, and with that openness comes the potential for hurt. We seem endlessly fascinated by this dance of joy and pain, constantly asking: Is love worth it? Or are we simply addicted to the hope that it might be? What is love...don't hurt me....

ভা লো বা সা কি ? Ti ne i agapi?

Love in English can be expressed in phrases like "I love you," "I also love chocolate," or "fish and chips," but in Greek, the meaning is much deeper, encompassing many types. Here are 5 that I think are key!

1. Philia (Friendship Love): This type of love is built on trust, companionship, and mutual respect. Philia represents the bonds formed with friends who support us through life's ups and downs.

2. Storge (Familial Love): Often seen as the most unconditional form of love, storge exists between family members, reflecting deep-rooted connections and shared experiences.

3. Agape (Selfless and Sacrificial Love): This compassionate love extends to others, often viewed as a godly or divine love. Agape is characterized by selflessness and the willingness to sacrifice for the well-being of others. It reminds us of the importance of empathy and understanding in our relationships.

4.Pragma (Practical Love): This type of love emphasizes practicality and long-term commitment. Pragma involves making choices that benefit both partners, often based on shared goals and values.

5. Philautia (Self-Compassionate Love): A deeper aspect of self-love, philautia encourages individuals to be kind and forgiving to themselves, promoting mental wellness and resilience.

The Balance of Love

Love affects our brains and bodies in profound ways. When we experience love, our brains release a cocktail of chemicals, including:

- **Dopamine:** Often called the "feel-good" hormone, is linked to pleasure and reward, making us feel happy and fulfilled in loving relationships.
- **Oxytocin:** Known as the "bonding hormone," fosters feelings of closeness and attachment. It's released during physical touch, such as hugging or cuddling, and plays a crucial role in forming emotional bonds.
- **Serotonin:** This neurotransmitter contributes to mood stabilization. Love can boost serotonin levels, enhancing our overall well-being and sense of inner peace.

You Should Go and Love yourself

Positive, healthy relationships contribute to:

Reduced Stress: Supportive relationships can act as buffers against stress, promoting relaxation and emotional well-being.

Increased Happiness: Love fosters a sense of belonging and purpose, contributing to higher overall happiness and life satisfaction.

Improved Resilience: Love provides support during difficult times, helping individuals cope with challenges and bounce back from adversity. But maybe the real question isn't just what love is—it's how we love. Do we love with expectations, hoping someone will complete us? Or do we love freely, recognizing that the best kind of love doesn't rescue us but meets us where we are, flaws and all? Because if love becomes a transaction—"I'll love you if you love me back"—it turns fragile, like glass waiting to shatter. **Real love, is learning how to be whole on our own and finding joy in sharing that wholeness with friends, rather than needing them to fill a void.**

Check out these films that beautifully capture the essence of human experiences and the journey of love & self-discovery.



In the same way, as you focus on your academics and future aspirations, remember that your journey is uniquely yours. Just as love flourishes when we are whole and confident in ourselves, so too can your academic and personal growth. Embrace your passions and goals, knowing that they are not just stepping stones to a destination but integral parts of your identity. True fulfilment comes from within, enabling you to approach your aspirations with confidence and purpose.

Spring Campus



Advithi Renjith Nair
Writer

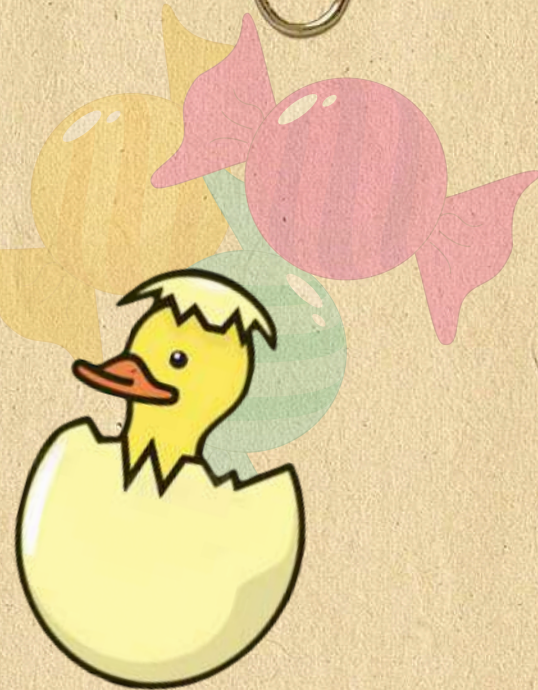


February has a mix of winter and spring. The mornings are often chilly and foggy, but by the afternoon, the sun comes out, making everything feel a bit warmer. In Bangladesh, February is significant for International Mother Language Day (Ekushey February), which honours the Bengali Language Movement. People visit the Shaheed Minar (Martyrs' Monument), participate in processions, and lay flowers to remember those who sacrificed their lives for their language.



While we share our thoughts and minds in our very own language, the loving spring brings stories to the campus. February campus has been full of celebration, anonymous roses, a fresh spring break and a beautiful wrap with the drama production "Mother Goose". Students are keeping up their study and shenanigans, as well as having a welcoming spirit for the month of Ramadan.

We hope your stories add meaningful shades and lights to your chapters. And so it continues...



Write to us,
The sky is just another home



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