

South Asia @ LSE – Me, India and LSE

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Recent LSE graduate Sanam Arora reflects on how her time at the School made her more Indian.

Many would agree that LSE is a wonderful place, especially because it is a truly international university. As an LSE student, you get to meet people from places you haven't heard of outside geography lessons at school. You interact with them, discover new cultures, and develop new ways of thinking. But as I graduate from LSE, I realise that, above all, my years at the School have helped me discover and appreciate the Indian in me.



This may seem surprising, but one of the things LSE has done for me is to bring me closer to my homeland—not because I was homesick during my time here, but because of the journey of discovery the School helped me embark upon.

While at the LSE, I developed my ability to understand the issues that India faces and, crucially, the will to engage with these issues—the will to genuinely ‘understand the root causes of things’. This is partly because LSE shares [historic ties](#) with India, cherishes them, and constantly [develops them](#). This might be why ‘[India Week](#)’ has become one of the most anticipated events in the LSE student calendar.

More importantly, LSE provides opportunities for development as well as endless support, monetary or otherwise. Whether it is generous grants from the LSE Annual Fund or the knowledge that I can knock on Professor Mukulika Banerjee’s door to discuss vote-bank politics in India, or the chats on Shah Rukh Khan I’ve shared with my marketing lecturer—all these things have made me realise that LSE is becoming an extremely India-friendly university.

Who would’ve thought I’d make the audience in the Old Theatre rise to “Jana Gana Mana”? Or who could imagine an audience of more than five hundred singing “Main Shayar Toh Nahin” alongside Rishi Kapoor during his visit to the School? Did I expect to welcome Shiv Nadar and Prashant Bhushan to LSE? And did we dream of playing against the LSE Pakistan Society at the iconic Lord’s Cricket Ground in the presence of the legendary Ajay Jadeja and Mushtaq Mohammad? Yes, we did. Gratefully, it was LSE that helped us dream, and LSE that helped us achieve.

There is no doubt that LSE is a world-leading institution of academic excellence. But it’s not limited to that. And that’s my message to current and incoming students—LSE is a land of opportunities, including the opportunity to better understand where you come from. It is easy to get lost amidst course work, exams, and internship applications, but it is easier still to articulate and groom your passion.

Thank you, LSE.

Sanam Arora is the president of the National Indian Students Union UK and the former president of LSESU India Society, Spice. She graduated from LSE's Department of Management in July.

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