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psst

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## haveyoursay

## THE HOLI-DISASTER

Every child's dream is to have a perfect White Christmas with family. But this year Santa gave me an unusual present and since I am only 10, I wasn't ready for it.

On the morning of December 18, I woke up and got dressed excitedly. We were going to London. But on the flight, my excitement withered as the Captain announced, "Heathrow is shut and we are diverting to Brussels." Heavy snowfall at Heathrow meant that passengers had to be offloaded at Brussels. After getting off, I found passengers streaming in from every gate.

I was scared stiff. I could see my white Christmas turn dark. Soon, Red Cross volunteers came with stretcher beds and blankets for us. That night, the freezing temperatures gave me cold feet and I felt my body go numb. But I thanked god for only giving me this physical discomfort. The next day I awoke with hope and was my rakish self again.

Amidst this imbroglio, I spent my time at the airport toy store. The ac-

tion figures of Umaga and John Cena inspired me to be strong. I also went with my sister to buy chocolates and waffles. After all Belgium is the land of chocolates! There was a food crisis and we almost went hungry. Whenever my sister and I slept, my mother would stand in a three hour-long queue only to get bread and soup. I didn't realize her pain till she complained of a backache.

After almost three days, we were given visas to enter Brussels. Finally I got some peace and quiet and a little rest at the hotel. I had snowball fights with my sister



and admired the beauty of the winter snow. I drank loads of hot chocolate. The warmth of X'mas came back again.

In no time we were back in Mumbai. I just hope that the airlines will be more sensible in the future and not plunge into such situations where they too are helpless. This unexpected adventure has taught me to be ready for the bitter realities of life.

**Keshav Rai**, 10, BIS