



volume  
**29**

# Qila quotes

THE SCINDIA SCHOOL



The energetic display



The torchbearers

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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information printed in this edition of the Qila Quotes. If an error has occurred, please accept our apologies and contact the editor at pujap@scindia.edu.



President Board of Governors HH Maharaja Jyotiraditya M Scindia offering floral tribute



Principal Dr Saraswat with Chief Guest Shri Ratan Tata.

# PRINCIPAL'S DESK



*Dear Members of the Scindia fraternity. A very happy New Year to you.*

*As we come out with this first issue of 2017 it is time to take stock of all that we accomplished in the year gone by. My heart fills with affection, gratitude, respect and appreciation for all those, from within and without, who supported the school in its endeavours.*

Every year takes us a step closer to the attainment of our dreams and I am already excited for the promise that the New Year holds for us, both as individuals and as an institution. I am sanguine that this year will be a breakthrough one and turn all our dreams and aspirations into reality. However to make it happen, I would urge all the readers to view the world with a positive outlook. My earnest appeal to you is, be absolutely unafraid to speak your heart out with confidence, listen to others as well as your inner voice and you will surely find yourself on the correct road in the correct direction.

On the academic front we aim to make education a limitless and unending process to be enjoyed for a lifetime. The students are constantly engaged in authentic learning opportunities that inspire them to develop creativity, confidence and resilience, and become independent and ethical life-long learners. The curriculum is calibrated thoughtfully so that students are motivated to grow without getting overwhelmed in the process. Our guiding principle at all times is to deepen their knowledge, provide enriching and innovative learning experiences, while also gently urging them to come out of their comfort zone to embark on new challenges. I am positive that in times to come we will continue this journey with elevated enthusiasm and persistently provide a platform of holistic learning to our young learners.

Our desire to instill a keen social conscience in the School community made us engage our students and adults in the Service projects hosted by school. Like every year, the Sonsa Day and Shramjeevi Sports celebrations went a long way in promoting a culture of camaraderie and inclusiveness. We further strengthened our association with 'Nanhi Kali' by contributing funds to sponsor the education of 23 girls.

At a personal level, I am extremely delighted at the enthusiastic response to the inaugural edition of the 'Scindia Literary Fest'. Over three days a wide galaxy of diverse talents engaged with our students on different topics making it an intellectually stimulating festival of books and ideas. With keynote addresses, talks and workshops by the finest literary and creative minds it was quite unequivocally a 'think-fest' with a difference. We aim to provide many more such literary, cultural and artistic experiences for our students in times to come.

The School has always been a loving home for the boys and it continues to be so, no matter how long it might have been or how far they might have gone. With warmth, style and fanfare, which are uniquely Scindian, we welcomed our alumni from the Batches of 1967, 1976 and Ranoji House. The Old Boys visited school, both to relive memories, which have stood the test of time, and also to create new ones. It was heartwarming to see them spend joyful moments reconnecting, reminiscing and engaging with old friends. May their bond grow ever more strong. It was also wonderful to receive four of our distinguished former members of the faculty whose gigantic stature, commitment and knowledge helped shape many destinies.

And finally as the academic year draws to a close I feel a touch of sentimentality every time I look at the Batch of 2017 which will soon walk out of the portals of this great institution. Over seven years we have grown together, battled together, fallen together but most importantly rejoiced together. I would just want to tell them that 'you have always been the subject of our actions, the object of our thoughts and the compliment of our endeavours'. At times we may have appeared to be a little too harsh but it was to make you physically and mentally robust. So here, we give you to the world armoured with the X factor- the SCINDIAN factor. May you make a mark in whatever you undertake. Our collective blessings and good wishes shall always remain with you. May you scale ever greater heights and make the Scindia banner fly high.

**Dr Madhav Deo Saraswat**  
Principal, The Scindia School

# EDITORIAL

*A very Happy 2017 dear readers.*

*New beginnings, fresh starts, reaffirmations of our strengths and promises for scaling greater heights, all come to mind as we ring in the New Year. The achievements and accolades that we earned in the year gone by brought tremendous cheer. But all the while as we enjoyed the fireworks our mind continued to tick with positive goals and resolutions for the new year. A dedicated team along with an inspiring leadership gives us the confidence that we will achieve all our targets.*

The School celebrated the 119 th Founder's Day with a mix of tradition, splendour, regalia and bonhomie. Like every year, the festivities were spread over three days namely; Parents' Day, Founder's Day and Old Boys' Day. Her Highness Maharani Priyadarshini Raje Scindia was the Chief Guest at the cultural evening on 20th October. A trilingual theatrical presentation entitled, 'Tagore', took the audience through the life and works of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore. The concept as well as the performance by the students won accolades from all quarters. The Chief Guest on Founder's Day was Padma Vibhushan Mr Ratan Naval Tata, the legendary Indian businessman, investor, philanthropist and Chairman – Tata Trusts. He awarded trophies to Houses and individual students for exceptional performance in academics and sports in the course of the year. The orchestra ensemble entitled - 'Ragajazzmala' showcased the talent of our boys and was much applauded. Another attraction of the evening was the talk show wherein Mr Ratan Tata gave precise and illuminating responses to the questions asked by the students.

After the feverish activity of Founders the entire school went for educational camps to different places to satisfy their wanderlust and feed their adventurous side.

The Scindia School was awarded the Aqua Foundation's Excellence Award 2016 in two categories, namely, 'work on traditional wisdom' and 'Resource management'. The school has been recognized for its untiring efforts at conservation of rain water, recycling used water released from the Boarding Houses and the Dining Hall and controlling the summer fire on the wasteland of the Fort.

#### Visitors

A twenty eight member delegation from the 'China Global Philanthropy Leaders Programme' visited school. The objective of their visit was to understand 'community service and philanthropic initiatives' in different organizations in India, Scindia being one of them. They saw a presentation of all the service initiatives of our school. They lauded the school's efforts in combining

modern education, technology, preservation of culture and community service. They were very appreciative of our green initiatives and the economic and cultural transformation brought out in the lives of the people of our adopted village –Nathon-Ka-Pura

#### Sports

A friendly cricket match was played between HQ British Army Officials and the School team. The school team consisted of both students and teachers. The HQ British Army Officials won the match by 5 wickets. Their captain was declared the highest scorer with 49 runs.

The School saw a confluence of Old Boys from Mayo College, Welham Boys School, The Doon School and of course The Scindia School. They spent a day on campus, played a friendly Hockey match with the school Hockey team and attended the Astachal.

The Scindia School hosted the Alumni Cricket Bash wherein Cricket teams comprising the Old Boys of The Doon School, The Scindia School, Mayo College and the Daly College participated. The tournament was based on a quadrangular pattern. The Doon School won the match by 5 wickets and Mayo College Ajmer was the runner up. The ACB tournament brought with it an amazing bonhomie and Old Boys made new friends from across the different schools.

#### Academics

Post Founders the school moves into a strict academic mode. We encourage our students to set ambitious targets for themselves and provide all necessary tools to help them achieve these. For the second year in succession the Winter Study Camp was organised for the students of Class XII. It was an intensive academic package which combined doubt clarification sessions, testing followed by personalised feedback and drilling of examination skills. The teachers and students were able to identify the problem areas and minute attention was given to iron these out. The boys are a lot more confident about their exam preparedness post the camp.



A still from the English play.



The Chinese delegates at Nathon ka Pura.

An orientation was held for students of Class X to familiarize them with the different subjects that they can opt for at the +2 level. The HODs of all the departments threw light on their subject and the future prospects it offers. This will help our boys make informed choices.

The Indian school of Business and Finance, New Delhi, conducted a 'Plyonomics' workshop at the school. The basic idea behind 'Plyonomics' was to play with Economics. The workshop included a quiz based on real life applications of Economics, a few case studies and a Q & A session. An interesting concept of 'Learn to Re-learn' was also discussed.

A group of 10 students along with Mr Gopal Chaturvedi visited the Science Exhibition 'Erfinderland Deutschland' at Max Mueller Bhavan, New Delhi. Students gained insight on discoveries and inventions of German scientists and gave a presentation on German innovations. Each Student was allotted a workstation based on different topics like energy, mobility, digital games etc. and then had to present a talk on the same. Eshaan Agarwal was adjudged the best speaker and won a bag of goodies.

#### Career Cell News

The School has become a centre for tests for admission in different premium UK Universities by ATS (Admission Testing Services). This is a great facility as our students can appear for examination to different prestigious UK universities on home turf.

The School signed an MOU with Indian School of Business and Finance (ISBF), New Delhi. This will provide opportunities to conduct activities for faculty development and exchange and in campus selection interview facility for the students. The association will subsequently be extended in the areas of admission and scholarship for the students.

Cogito consultancy conducted Career classes for grades VII and IX. These exposed our boys to options such as Finance, Journalism and Sales and Marketing.

Dr. Indu Shahani President & Chair - Academics of the Indian School of Design & Innovation (ISDI), and the Indian School of Management & Entrepreneurship (ISME) visited school. She addressed the students and introduced them to the new career options available in design and entrepreneurship. We also had representatives from National Law School of India University, Bangalore, SRM University, O.P.Jindal Global University, IFIM and Macromedia University of Applied Sciences, Germany. Each of these visits was intended to help our students make informed choices regarding college and careers.

A dialogue has been initiated with the University of Wisconsin to have partnership with the School. We are in communication with Dr. Abey Kuruvilla, Executive Director, International Affairs regarding partnership between the two institutions. A dialogue has also been initiated with the University of Illinois at Chicago to have partnership with the University. We are in communication with Dr.

Peter C. Nelson, Dean of Engineering for the same. This will facilitate admission of students at premium institutions and also help our children get scholarships.

#### Faculty enrichment

Mr Kamlesh Singh (faculty in Psychology) attended a workshop entitled 'Mindfulness in education' hosted by the Welham Boys' School, Dehradun. The workshop highlighted the importance of self-awareness to enhance our sense of responsibility and attention.

Eight teachers from The Scindia School, namely, Mr Dharendra Sharma, Mr R.K. Kapoor, Mr Gopal Chaturvedi, Mr Manjeet Beniwal, Mr Trimurthulu Achanta, Mr Ashok Shivaraman, Ms Anita Pandey and Ms Raksha Siriah attended the 'Microsoft in Education-Global Training Partner Programme' at the Microsoft office in Gurgaon. The three day session taught them to successfully unpack the teacher training academies so that they can 'Train the trainer further'. Mr R.K. Kapoor, Dean of ICT attended the MSIA/CCGA track and got training in Touch Develop which taught him to successfully deploy MSIA /Creative Coding through Games and Apps (CCGA) and understand the benefits of Imagine Academy.

Mr Gopal Chaturvedi attended the PASCH Teacher's workshop conducted by Goethe Institut. The workshop introduced him to the latest publications in German language and modern teaching methodologies.

Ms Sudha Sharma and Ms Sangeeta Jain attended a workshop on P.S.H.E. (Personal Social Health Education) and on Sen Forum at the British School, New Delhi. The workshop focussed on human relationships, digital safety, peer pressure and self-image. Sen Forum included discussions on the challenges faced by mainstream teachers in an inclusive set up.

Ms Raksha Siriah and Ms Sangeeta Jain attended the 'Microsoft Showcase School and Innovative Expert Summit'. Experts from various institutes talked about the best IT practices used in their schools. The two faculty members also elucidated on the most preferred teaching practices and IT tools used in our school.

#### Round Square

The Scindia School hosted the RS Service Project in Nathon-Ka-Pura village. Six schools participated in the project and the delegates worked towards the accomplishment of three major goals. They joined hands to construct a 500 feet long concrete water channel. They also contributed towards the refurbishment of the existing toilets in the primary school, and lent support to the women empowerment initiatives whereby they taught the village women some economically productive skills which would make them self reliant. Surveys on Family Planning and educating the village folk about matters of personal hygiene were other important achievements.

The students also attended Round Square Conferences at Singapore International School-Mumbai, Scindia Kanya



A still from the play 'Rajrakta'.

Vidyalaya- Gwalior and Mayo College- Ajmer. Each of these experiences helped them imbibe the IDEALS of Round Square.

#### Events

The Scindia School hosted the inaugural edition of the Scindia Literary Fest. The three day carnival comprised talks, discussions and creative writing workshops by eight international and national acclaimed authors and illustrators. The students enjoyed listening to the authors as they shared interesting trivia about their writings and craft. They also learnt how to draft a story, the skill to capture their feelings in the form of words and the technique of illustrating and cartooning. Five local schools were also invited for the event. A book fair was organized to coincide with the Fest.

The School hosted the third edition of The Scindia School Model United Nations Conference. 185 delegates from eleven schools participated in this three day Conference. The delegates of each committee displayed superlative skills of public speaking, debating, writing, critical thinking, teamwork along with superb leadership ability. We managed to achieve a unique amalgamation of gumption and glamour and hope to take it several notches higher in our successive editions. Jaishree Periwal High School won the Best Delegation award.

The Scindia School hosted the International German PASCH Youth Camp in collaboration with GOETHE Institute - New Delhi. In this event, a total of 104 students and teachers from Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and India participated. The Youth Camp primarily focused on providing high quality German Language classes to the participants to improve their proficiency. Three especially

designed workshops too were organized to apprise the delegates about German life and culture.

The School observed the sixth edition of the Communal Harmony week. A variety of platforms viz. literary, artistic and cultural were provided to enable students express their understanding of the theme. It was heartening to see students expand their understanding of community from being simply based on religion to that of caste, race, gender, economic status and much more. Prayers from different religions, nukkad natak, discussions on religious scriptures, musical performances, Panel Discussion, class discussions and art expressions kept the week eventful.

Naya theatre group under the aegis of Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music and Culture amongst the Youth (SPIC MACAY) captivated the school community with a spectacular theatrical production entitled 'Raj Rakta'. The play was based on the works of legendary writer Rabindranath Tagore. The powerful play struck at the root of superstitions and associated socio-cultural malpractices, leaving everyone with a thought.

#### IPSC

The School hosted the fifth edition of the IPSC Service Project at Nathon-ka-Pura Village. 44 students and 13 teachers from 5 schools participated in it. The task at hand was to construct a 100 meter long concrete water channel starting from a hand-pump to the extremities of the village. The delegates also contributed their bit to enhancing the aesthetics of the village hutments by painting these with active cooperation from the children of the village. The villagers were also educated about personal hygiene and cleanliness. The delegates returned with a great sense of fulfillment.

# OLD BOYS' NEWS

*On the occasion of the 119th Founder's Day of the School the Madhav Award was conferred posthumously on Lt. General Sami Khan (Ex Jayaji, 1948). Founder and Chairman of Metropolis Healthcare Ltd Dr Sushil Shah (Ex Jeevaji, 1964) was the co recipient of the award. The coveted SOBA Award was presented to Dr Vikram Mathur (Ex - Ja, 1974) and the SOBA Cup went to the Mumbai Chapter. The Mumbai Chapter was applauded for the maximum collection of blood during the Blood donation camp. It is commendable that a total of 607 units of blood were collected by the different chapters of SOBA.*

In a bid to enhance a cohesive and interactive relationship within our alumni community, an Alumni Portal – "The Common Room" was launched by the Chief Guest Mr Ratan Tata on Founder's Day. The portal will allow our Old Boys to be deeply integrated with their alma-mater's growth and development. They can connect with the Scindian fraternity anywhere across the globe, share ideas on academic, social, economic and cultural issues, thereby drawing the fullest benefit of being a part of a well-knit collective. The portal also has a careers section.

The new Central SOBA executive committee has been elected. The members are:

**Mr Rahul Kulshreshtha** (Ex-Ranoji, 1981) – President

**Mr Banjul Badil** (Ex-Jayaji, 1988) – Senior Vice President

**Mr Nupur Patel** (Ex- Ranoji, 1997) – Vice President

**Mr Arun Kumar Bhagat** (Ex-Mahadji, 1974) – Secretary

**Mr Virupaksha Kadam** (Ex - Mahadji, 1993) – Treasurer

**Mr Gopal Bhargava** (Ex -Ravindra, 1977) – Immediate Past President

**Mr Sandeep Agarwal** (Ex -Shivaji, 1980) – Immediate Past Secretary

**Mr Atul Dev** (Ex Md, 1955) is the new President of the Aero Club of India. Aero Club of India (ACI) is the National Sports Federation for all air sports in India which includes - Ballooning, General Aviation, Gliding, Hang-Gliding, Paragliding, Microlight, Paramotors, Parachuting and Rotorcraft (Helicopters).

Air Vice-Marshal, **Shouvik Roy (Ex-Rn, 1975)** visited the school and addressed the entire community in the morning assembly. He spoke on the importance of hard-work and character formation. AVM Roy presented the school with two beautiful medals, one to be given to a student and another to be given to a teacher at the discretion of the school. He suggested that the criteria to decide the rightful recipients of the two medals could well be: Variety, Vibrancy, Vitality and Versatility which leads to Victory.

**Lajpat Prasad** (Ex - Je, 1974) participated in the India-Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Motor Rally 2016. He drove along with his counterparts for 40 days and covered 9256 Km in total. The onward journey of rally drivers started from Delhi all the way to Bangkok. Their return journey started from Bangkok and ended in Guwahati. We salute the Scindian spirit.

**Samir Kumar** (Ex - Sh, 1987) was recently selected as one of the delegates of the USA Governor of Idaho Clement Otter's trade mission to Beijing and Shanghai to explore business opportunities in China.

**Arjun Saraswat** (Ex-Rn, 2010) captained the team entitled 'Adidas Runners' and ran the 'New Delhi Marathon Stadium Run 2017' held at the Jawaharlal National Stadium in New Delhi. His team bagged the first position out of 36 teams which participated in it. The team covered a distance of 161 kms in 12 hours.

**Rudra Bhanu Solanki** (Ex - Ja, 2007) has started a new venture with the name - Skyhigh. Now Scindians can go skydiving in India with world class USPA skydivers. For details you may log on to <http://www.skyhighindia.com>.

**Sachin Jha** (Ex - Rn, 1989) has written a book entitled, 'The ordinary, the enchanted and the quaintly Happy'. The book is available on Amazon.

**Anuragam Vatsa** (Ex- Rn, 1988) has written three books namely - Listen to Heart: The Other Side of Life, Listen to Heart: The transformation and Listen to Heart: Radhika. The books are available on Amazon, Flipkart, Ebay and Infbeam.

**Mr Sanjiv Saraf** (Ex - Sh, 1975), technocrat, industrialist and noted aficionado of Urdu, was awarded honorary doctorate for 'outstanding services in the field of Urdu language and culture' by the Maulana Azad National Urdu University at its sixth convocation. He is also the founder of - 'Rekhta'.

**Mr Gagan Khosla** (Ex - Je, 1974) recently participated and completed the 42 KM Dubai Marathon 2017.

It is very heartening to see the enhanced enthusiasm of our



March past by Class of 1967 on 26th January

alumni to visit their alma mater to share their experience, expertise and memories. This year for the third year in succession the Golden Jubilee Batch arrived in school to commemorate 50 years of passing out from this glorious institution. 31 Old Boys from the **Batch of 1967** visited the School, out of which 23 were accompanied by their spouses. They attended the assembly and later presented a cultural evening leaving everyone spellbound with their talent. The cherry on the cake was the performance by renowned Bollywood singer Mr Nitin Mukesh. The members also took part in the Republic Day march past. In a symbolic ceremony at the astachal Mr Nandlal Rane (SSP, Ex Vivekananda - 1967) handed over the golden jubilee reunion baton to the next year's Golden Jubilee Batch representatives Mr Deepak Uppal and Mr Rakesh Himatsingka.

31 Old Boys from the **Batch of 1976** visited the Fort for their Ruby Jubilee reunion. Former teachers Mr. U.C. Bhardwaj, Mr R.S. Garg, Dr. T.S. Ingle and Mr. S.N. Uphadaya were also invited for the same. The alumni spent moments of reflection at the astachal, enjoyed the walk around the campus which had been their home and expressed deep appreciation for the modification and renovation of the building. At a cultural evening they urged the present boys to dream and to question and to never let their curiosity wane. The former teachers of the school were felicitated by Principal Dr Saraswat.

The House identity remains every Scindian's most significant badge of honour. In recognition of the staunch House loyalties SOBA has started with the concept of House reunions. 31 Old Boys from various batches of Ranoji House visited the School for the '**Ranoji House Reunion**'. The senior most in the group was Mr Atul N. Takle from the Batch of 1973 and the junior most was Hardik Agrahari from the Batch of 2016. Mr Rahul Kulshreshtha (Ex - Rn, 1981) who is the President of SOBA also graced the occasion. The Old Boys visited Ranoji House and interacted with the present boys in the Common Room of the House ensuring a handover of values from the old to the new. We are confident that this new tradition will keep the House loyalties ever more strong, the memories ever more fresh and the association so much more deep.

A Scindia School delegation comprising 18 athletes, 10 boys of the Brass Band and five members of the faculty attended the Mumbai marathon. The Scindia School athletes along with several Old Boys and the Principal ran the Dream Run which was about 6 Km. The boys of the Brass Band were positioned at the Marine Drive where they played about fifteen tunes repeatedly for almost four hours. Hundreds of participants of the marathon stopped by and danced on their way to the finish. The day wined with a joyful get together entitled - 'Astachal' at the Gallops Banquet, Mahalaxmi Race Course.

# STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

**Forty four boys of the Scindia School Brass Band represented the school at the 68th Republic Day parade in Delhi. In addition to the glorious march at the Rajpath the boys gave Band displays before several dignitaries. Band major Rekeela Bhutia's exceptional stick-work drew admiration from one and all. He commanded four different bands and earned the rank of 'Senior Under Officer'. ( Article on page 19)**

14 boys participated in the CBSE Cluster Athletics Meet 2016-17. It is a matter of great pride that **Zigme Gurung** of Class X won a gold medal in 3000m relay race and set a new Meet Record. **Anurag Yadav** of Class X won a Bronze Medal in 200m sprint. Heartiest congratulations to Zigme on his selection for CBSE Nationals.

Our school participated in a Computer Olympiad 'INFOTSAV 16' organized by the Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management (IITM), Gwalior. **Suryansh Goyal** and **Ishan Agarwal** of Class XI secured the first and second positions respectively.

**Pranav Wadhwa, Sameer Manger, Rohan Jain and Abhinav Jain** participated and won the Young Innovators Award in the School Category organized by Melting Pot 2020 at the International Innovation Summit at Taj Vivanta in Faridabad. The team won the award for their innovative project on - Waste Water Treatment. Further to this, the same organization has offered a Research Mentorship from a PhD Expert (at a subsidized cost) to these students. This would enable them to publish a research paper on their innovation at an international level and make it a permanent piece of knowledge. This should also help them secure an admission in leading universities globally (possibly with a scholarship).

The School Shooting team participated in the 60th National Shooting Championship 2016 - 17 held at Pune. **Rachit Agarwal, Toshit Goyal, Daksh Gupta, Devansh Tandon, Chaitanya Agarwal, Shashank Kumar and Aditi Joshi** qualified for the Nationals and **Rachit Agarwal, Devansh Tandon, Daksha Gupta** and **Chaitanya Agarwal** have been selected for Shooting National Squad Trials for 2017 -18.

**Pavan Jaini** was selected for the 4th SGFI Squash Nationals Tournament held in Chennai. He captained the U-19 IPSC Team and reached the Quarterfinals in the Individual Event.

**Hritvik Arjun Mehrotra** (Ex Md, 2016) received the IAYP Gold award at a ceremony held in New Delhi. Our apology for missing his name in the last edition of Qila Quotes.

**Yohen Thounaojam** of Class XI has been offered 100% scholarship to study in any of the three schools namely- Indian School of Design & Innovation (ISDI), ISDI-WPP School of Communication and the Indian School of

Management & Entrepreneurship (ISME). **Dr Indu Shahani**, Founding Dean of (ISME) the President and Chair - Academics of the Indian School of Design & Innovation (ISDI), ISDI-WPP School of Communication and the Indian School of Management & Entrepreneurship (ISME) made this offer during her visit to school.

The Under-15 Football team of the School played the Sahodaya Football tournament held at Mount Litera Zee School. The boys played marvellously and won the football tournament. **Avishkar Chettri** and **Sonam Bhutia** received a memento for being the top scorers of the tournament.



Anurag Yadav and Zigme Gurung (From left fo right)

# INTERVIEW

**Writer and journalist Ms Roopa Pai was one of the speakers at the inaugural Scindia Literary Fest. With over 20 published books - including the 8-part series 'Taranauts', India's first fantasy-adventure series in English, and last year's national bestseller 'The Gita For Children' - she is one of India's best-known writers for children. While at Scindia she gave an electrifying talk on the Gita which was enjoyed immensely by students and faculty alike. Here's Roopa in conversation with Ms Puja Pant, Staff Editor- Qila Quotes.**

**You said that the Gita is India's biggest blockbuster bestseller. What do you think accounts for the universal and timeless appeal of the Gita?**

Times change, morals change, rulers come and go, but human nature remains essentially the same. The Gita has a deep - and more importantly, compassionate - understanding of human nature. It is not a judgmental text, it doesn't impose its views upon you, it doesn't insist that you believe in it. It just offers you choices, tells you that any choice you make will have its own consequences, and therefore exhorts you to choose well and wisely. And it reassures you that it will all be okay in the end if you just do your own duty conscientiously, fulfill your own responsibilities with love, and do your work in a spirit of joy and gratitude. It understands that you will fail, and fail often, while trying to do this, but it tells you that just constantly trying to do the right thing will win you points with the universe. How could anyone not love such a text?

**It must have taken a lot of research and intensive study to write the book 'The Gita for Children'. Take us through the creative process. What were your thoughts when you took up this assignment?**

It did. In the beginning, when my editor at Hachette India, Vatsala Kaul-Banerjee, suggested I take up this project, my first instinct was to refuse. I had never read the Gita in its entirety before, and I was completely intimidated by it. But Vatsala believed I was the right person for the job because I was a big fan of Indian mythology and because I knew somewhat how to write for children. So she did not stop pushing. Six months later, I agreed to try and read the Gita in the original. I agreed to do the book only on the condition that the original appealed to me. By the time I had read two chapters, helped by various commentaries and discussions with people who knew the Gita well, I was completely hooked. I thought it was a tragedy that no one had exposed me to the text before, and decided to try my hand at interpreting it for children, if only so that they would get a chance to understand what one of our greatest texts had to say, the lessons it had to share with them.

**What according to you is the most important takeaway from the Gita? What are the myths that it busts?**

Before I started reading the Gita for the first time, I was very fearful that it would have shlokas that were casteist or sexist or patriarchal or elitist in some way. I knew I would not be able to whitewash that for children, and I was wondering what to do if indeed I came across such shlokas. But I was most pleasantly surprised to find that there was nothing in there like that. I was delighted and relieved to find that it was as secular and inclusive a text as any, and began to feel that putting it in a box that read 'Holy Book of the Hindus' was doing it a disservice. This was a book of wisdom - I like to call it 'the oldest self-help book in the world' - that needed to be shared with all humanity. And with all ages, including, yes, children.

My biggest takeaway from the Gita is this: truly, contentment lies in not attaching your effort to a particular result, because that is out of your control. Being a control freak is a good thing, but only when you are freaking out about something you CAN control, which is your own effort. No point getting all stressed out about things you CANNOT control, like the result of your effort.

**I'm sure the entire process of writing is very draining both intellectually and emotionally. Had you expected the kind of overwhelming response that you got for this book?**

Actually, for me, the writing process is a very joyous one. Sure, there's hard work involved - research, sitting at a desk for long periods, anxiety about whether you could have written / interpreted something better - but overall, it is a very joyous thing. I feel far more stressed and low on days when I do not write anything - even if it is just a short email to a friend.

I had absolutely no idea the book would have such a response. Reading, understanding (at my own level) and interpreting The Gita was transformative for me personally on many levels, but I was not at all sure it would resonate with so many other people in the same way. I feel grateful, humbled and blessed that it has.



Ms Roopa Pai

**Considering that 'The Gita for Children' has been so well received will you someday consider simplifying other books or scriptures for the young readers?**

Perhaps. I am essentially a very selfish writer who writes books that help her own intellectual and personal development. My new book, which has just released, demystifies some key concepts of Economics, which on the face of it, is as far away from philosophy as possible, for children. I have never studied Economics and didn't know anything about it, so this seemed a good way to learn it for myself.

I have always been keen on Indian mythology, and now, after reading The Gita, my interest in other ancient texts has been seriously piqued, so I am sure I will be exploring them sooner or later, and interpreting whichever of them seems relevant, for children.

**You are a Computer engineer. How do you blend your love for writing with your academic degree?**

Studying engineering helped me develop a scaffolding of logical thinking and taught me about the practical applications of various complex, sometimes abstract, concepts. I think that serves me very well in other areas of my life, including my writing. A study of science requires you to be curious, demands that you question things, and needs you to use imagination and creativity to solve problems / conflicts. That's not very different from what good writing demands.

**Tell us something about the Taranauts series which is India's first fantasy adventure series for kids?**

Oh, I absolutely loved writing Taranauts. It is a sci-fi fantasy set in a different universe called Mithya. Mithya is lit up by the supersun Tara, which is made up of 32 different stars called the Tarasuns. The story has a good guy, a not-so-good guy who is the twin of the good guy, a woman who the MIB (Most Intelligent Being) of Mithya, all manner of strange creatures, a language called Taratongue, and a conflict that begins in the first few pages of the first book in the series - the 32 star spirits are kidnapped by the not-so-guy, sending Mithya reeling into darkness. It is up to the Taranauts Zvala, Zarpa and Tufan - three young mithyakins with special powers they don't know they have - to travel in turn to the eight worlds of Mithya (which is why there are eight books in the series), locate, retrieve and crack the four riddles the villain has hidden in each of the worlds, and rescue the 32 Tarasuns.

There is a lot of science in it, and a lot of tongue-in-cheek references to Indian mythology and Indian culture. Since it is basically about puzzle-solving - there are word puzzles, math puzzles, logic puzzles, and more - readers can journey with the Taranauts and try and solve the puzzles along with them. There's plenty of action and snappy dialogue and it's all very exciting.

**Story telling seems to be your calling. Is that why you co founded Bangalore walks- the much feted heritage walks and tours company?**

My husband and I founded BangaloreWalks mainly because we are both very interested in history. After living abroad in the US and the UK for a few years, we felt very strongly that we don't present our own history well enough to visiting tourists to our country. Very gratifyingly for us, in the 12 years since our founding, we have taken far more Indians on our walks than visitors from abroad.

I think we discovered we were also good storytellers along the way - we didn't begin because we thought we were. :)

**What would be your advice to students who aspire to take up writing as a career choice?**

It's really simple. There are only two rules.

**Read, read, read** - You have to fill your head with other people's voices, all kinds of voices. You have to listen to their stories, understand how they look at the world, and why. Only through that will you develop empathy for different points of view, which is absolutely essential for a writer, and only through synthesising all those other voices in your head will you find your own, unique voice.

**Write, write, write** - You can go on wanting passionately to be a writer for years and years, but nothing ever happens simply by talking about it and wanting it - you have to actually get down and do it. So, write as much as you can, at every opportunity - write diary entries about your day, write about a trip you took with your friends, write a poem about an Astachal sunset, interview your grandparents about life when they were young and put it up on your blog - it doesn't have to be fiction, anything goes. The more you write, and the more diverse your writings are, the more you will learn to distinguish a good piece of (your own) writing from a not-so-good one. Oh, and whatever you do, do not be in a hurry to get published.



Mr Faisal Alkazi conducting a session at the SMOAT.

# BATCH OF 1967

## ORGANIZING THE GOLDEN JUBILEE REUNION

*It was sometime during the year 2012 that the idea of celebrating 50 years of passing out from school germinated during a meeting of a few batch mates of the 1967 Batch. They formed the core group of the Batch and attended the Founder's Day celebrations that year, reviving their ties with the school.*

*The first challenge for the core group was locating the rest of their class mates.*

*The starting point was the school record available for Old Boys.*

The list obtained for the 1967 batch had the contact numbers of many batch mates, but also included others from the 1966 Batch and 1968 Batch. This confusion arose due to the school being affiliated at the time to two different educational boards ....the Indian School Certificate (ISC) and the Madhya Pradesh Higher Secondary Certificate ('HSC').

The ISC final exam (11th Standard) was conducted by Cambridge University every December whereas the HSC final exam (11th Standard) was conducted 4 months later in April. So the 1967 Batch stood for the 'ISC boys' who gave their final exams in December 1966 and 'HSC boys' who gave their final exams in April 1967. The Batch was also referred to as the '66-67' Batch, which led to the misunderstanding. Some HSC boys who passed out in April 1966 (a year senior) and some ISC boys who passed out in December 1967 (a year junior) thought they belonged to the '66-67 Batch.'

So these 'seniors' and 'juniors' had to be weeded out from the Batch list, which was then compared with the school official records of those who had passed the concerned exams. It was found that a majority of the batch mates were missing from the Old Boys contact list.

Then began the hunt for the 'missing'. There were totally 75 who had passed the concerned ISC and HSC exams. All those contacted from the Old Boys list were tasked to locate others. The list began swelling. Some batch mates were discovered by contacting other Scindians, relatives or through Google Search. As time went by, however, the 'Law of Diminishing Returns' kicked in, and it would be several months before the next batch mate would be located.

With each new discovery, a cheer would go up amongst the e-mailers! However, everyone was not computer literate and some had to depend on their children or grand-children to receive/send e-mails. A few could be contacted only by phone. By mid-2015 a Whatsapp group was started which many joined. Soon this group became hyper-active.

After mid-2016 there were no additions to the list of contacts. The final tally was 65 traced of whom, sadly, 9 had 'passed away'. Of the remaining 56, there were 11 who said they would not be able to attend due to health reasons or other commitments. So 45\* batch mates was the expected attendance, most of whom confirmed that they would arrive with their spouses. They included 6 from USA-Canada, 1 from Germany and 2 from UAE. In the meantime, the dates for the Golden Reunion (Jan 25th/26th 2017) had been finalized with the school, so that all those coming from abroad could organize their travel plans well in advance.

\*(Eventually, only 31 batch mates turned up for the event).

Fervour for the Golden Reunion was built up by the Old Boys hosting parties in Delhi and Mumbai, and meeting long lost buddies during their travels in India and abroad. There were quiz contests held for identifying batch mates from their current photos. Photos of families and events, real and imaginary, were circulated by e-mail and Whatsapp. The Golden Reunion event was abbreviated to 'GR 67' and the participants dubbed as '67 GRenadiers'.

The next matter to be decided was the programme, in close co-ordination with Dr. Saraswat and Mr. Bakshi.



Mr Nandlal Rane (Ex Vivekanand, 1967)

January 26th had been chosen so that the Old Boys could participate in the march past, an idea which had received the school's whole hearted support.

The core committee decided that the entire Batch be introduced to the school, irrespective of whether present or not. To make it interesting, the presentation would be a brief audio-visual one with the school boy picture of the concerned Old Boy being projected on the screen during his introduction.

It was also decided that there should be an entertainment programme. However there were two opinions on whether the school should entertain the Old Boys or the other way around. Finally a compromise was agreed upon. The school choir would sing the school song accompanied by the Old Boys. The school orchestra would display their talent separately as well as play the back ground music for Nitin Mukesh, the popular singer and entertainer of the Batch. A choice of eight Mukesh songs, was given to Mr. Raja Banerjee, who eventually selected three songs for the school orchestra to practice. To add variety to the programme, some others from the 1967 batch also decided to do their bit on stage.

Attending evening astachal was a must for the Old Boys, as was a visit to their old Houses and school premises.

The school, on their part, very kindly added breakfast and dinner at the Principal's bungalow, evening tea at school and lunch at the boys' dining hall. Another item on the agenda was the handing over of the baton to the 1968 batch at the morning astachal after the march past. There was also an excursion for the Old Boys spouses as well as a skit for them to perform. A quiz paper was also prepared by the school for the Old Boys (who were later spotted shamelessly copying each other's answers).

Mr. Bakshi, skillfully managed to fit in all these elements into the programmes on January 25th and January 26th.

Besides the school programme, hotel bookings and transport arrangements had to be made and a dinner organized at the Jeevaji Club on January 24th, for which the '67 batch 'local boy' Rajkumar Garg's contribution was outstanding. He also hosted a fabulous dinner on January 26th close to his residence in Gwalior.

Identity tags, with the school boy image, were prepared for all the batch mates as well as for their spouses. These excellent tags were souvenirs in themselves.

In addition, a beautiful souvenir directory was designed with the batch mates contact numbers and e-mail addresses, imaginatively tucked between a collage of photos. This was distributed to all batch mates, with a signed copy being presented to Dr. Saraswat.

But the best prize for organizing the event went to the school! There were students and / or faculty members to receive the Old Boys at the Gwalior railway station, even at 2am! On arriving at school, there were small boys bearing the names of the Old Boys, who presented the Old Boys and their spouses with roses and escorted them to their seats in the assembly hall. For all the functions there were school boys and faculty members present to provide any assistance required. There were school buses at hand to carry tired old legs and even the school ambulance in attendance for any medical emergencies. The planning and execution of the events was flawless!

There could not have been a better and more warm homecoming, albeit for two days, for the batch of 1967!

Hats off to the school!

Mr Nandlal Rane (Ex. Vivekanand 1967)

# EXCHANGE TO ST PHILLIPS

***Being a part of a student exchange programme has a transformative influence on our boys. They learn to accept, adapt and enjoy a new culture and academic experience. Pavan Jaini, Editor-in Chief Qila Quotes, allows us a peek into his six week long educational exchange to St Phillips College, Australia.***

***In the course of his stay there he proved to be the most fitting ambassador of Scindia and we are proud of the encomiums that were lavished on him by the teachers of the host school. He was appreciated immensely for his absolute immersion in their school life and in a glowing reference one of his teachers commented that 'he is a breath of fresh air and it is sad to let him go.'***

It was the month of April 2016 when along with all other exchange hopefuls I lined up for the customary interview outside the Dean of Studies' office. A gruelling question answer session followed and then began the wait for the results. So finally when Mr. Gopal Chaturvedi, the coordinator for exchange programmes, informed me that I had been selected to represent my school at St. Phillip's College in Australia I was ecstatic, to say the least. Here I must mention that going for an exchange has been a dream for me from the moment I heard of this opportunity that the school offers. It was a dream fuelled by the feedback my brother and seniors had given to me about how an exchange can change one's mind-set. Today when I look back at those amazing six weeks that statement rings ever so true.

Once the dates and other technicalities for the exchange had been fixed, I delved into serious research work, trying to find out as much as I could about St. Phillip's College and Australia. The school is located in the heart of Australia, in a town called Alice Springs. This is a semi-arid region with beautiful rock structures and vast expanses of land. This part of Australia is known as the Outback and yes, to answer the question you all are probably thinking of, I did see a lot of kangaroos! I was also surprised to learn that Alice Springs has the highest aboriginal population (the original people of the continent) in Australia. The internet could only tell me so much so I went to my senior Shashwat Puri who had been for the same exchange the previous year. He gave me many helpful pointers and assured me (and my parents) that I was going to have an amazing time at St. Phillip's.

Fast forward a few days and I was standing at the Alice

Springs Airport waiting for Mrs. Sandi Crogan (the exchange coordinator of St. Phillip's) to pick me up. This being my first ever international trip alone, I was rather nervous as I wondered how I would be received by the people there and also about any possible cultural barriers that might exist between us. As we drove into the campus, I couldn't but notice the difference in the two campuses. While Scindia is ensconced in history, with old architecture and is spread out in its design, St. Phillip's had a much more modern and cosy campus, with extremely fast wireless internet and amazing laboratory facilities.

After a short tour of the beautiful campus, I was handed over to Student Access where I had to select my elective subjects besides the regular ones (Outdoor Education and Fine Arts were my immediate choices), was given my books and timetable. I was also assigned a House which was Partridge (Go Panthers!) and taken to the uniform shop where I received the school uniform. I was surprised to learn that wearing a hat, which is provided by the school, is compulsory as the school did not want its students to suffer from skin cancer. From there I was introduced to Mr. Sam Muir the Head of the Boys' Boarding House, who showed me the room where I would be spending the next 6 weeks. Later that day, I met my roommate and was introduced to my hall mates and to the rest of the boarding house. They were extremely friendly and a few even asked if I knew Shashwat. I went to sleep that night wondering as to how my first day of classes was going to be, feeling a little nervous yet excited at what lay ahead. Alas, I could manage to sleep only at an unearthly hour of 1am, what with my body clock being utterly confused from jetlag as Alice Springs is 5 hours ahead of India.

Over the course of a month and a half I got quite used to the daily routine which included an early start at 6 am and sleeping at a normal, healthy time. The only thing I never got used to was their inconceivably early dinner at 5:30 pm! However, the meals were sumptuous and surprisingly I never felt the craving for Indian food. Although on one occasion they did serve some butter chicken and naan to make me feel more at home and it actually tasted very good.

As a happy coincidence there were 5 other exchange students who had come from various parts of the world (3 from Germany and 2 from South Africa) at the same time and we all ended up becoming really good friends. The school had planned various activities for all the exchange students during the weekends. We visited many different places around Alice Springs like the Kangaroo Sanctuary which is run by an individual who nurses 'hit and run' cases of kangaroos back to health and reintroduces them back into the bush. We also visited West McDonald Ranges, where I was awed by the various geographical structures. The Reptile Centre was fascinating as Australia has its own unique and indigenous species of reptiles. We were also taken for a hot air balloon ride over the desert which left me on a high for the indescribable thrill it offered! Undoubtedly the best place we visited was our three-day trip to Uluru (Ayers Rock), Kings Canyon and Kata Tjuta, where we witnessed incredible rock structures, beautiful sunsets and moonlit nights. While there are no restrictions in climbing onto Uluru, the Aborigines consider the iconic rock sacred. We decided to respect their traditions and trekked around it but did not climb it.

One of my most memorable experiences while at school was the bush fire I witnessed while there. Since they have summers in the months that we experience winters, bush fires during the months of November upto January are fairly common. There was a full scale fire that had started off right across from our campus and I and the other exchange students were the only ones that seemed to be bothered by it! The residents and faculty nonchalantly called for the fire brigade, which promptly arrived and put out the fire. Amazingly even after the fire died out, a flame had remained inside a nearby Ghost Gum tree and the fire was actually burning the tree from the inside! From the outside the tree looked absolutely mundane, that was until a branch broke off, exposing the inside of the now hollow trunk. This resulted in flames spewing out of the opening the broken branch had created at a high pressure, giving the effect that the tree was a blowtorch! The fire brigade was called another two times before the fire was finally and completely extinguished.

As far as academics go, there was one major difference from the way we go about it in India. I realised that in India there is a great stress on rote learning rather than understanding or application of concepts. In Australia, books and textbooks were hardly used as majority of the work was done on our personal laptops. Assignments were given every day and were based on the concept that had been taught that day. These assignments were

completed and submitted online. The essays and answers were also regularly put through plagiarising softwares, leaving no room for simple 'copy and pasting'. I found such education highly appealing as it made us research and apply that research in our answers while also encouraging individual beliefs and views. The classrooms were very interactive with regular discussions and the questions posed by the teachers were always open ended which facilitated multiple individual views forming on the same topic. Another thing I picked up quite quickly about St. Phillip's students and faculty is that they are extremely comfortable with foreign exchange students as they always seem to have a few in the school at any given time. They were actually very accepting and considerate of other cultures and were definitely willing to go the extra mile to make you feel at home.

In my free time I tried to play every single sport they had to offer and learned many new games such as AFL (an Australian variant of rugby) and Netball, which were very interesting. I played squash on a few occasions as they did not have courts in camps. Due to this reason I had to head into town and play over there, consequently I made many friends at the Alice Springs Squash Courts. Fascinatingly the three people who I would regularly play with were all named Steve! I was also given a bucket list of things which denoted a true 'Australian experience' by my friends. All of which I slowly and gradually ticked off, from witnessing a wild bush fire to eating Kangaroo tail (an Aboriginal delicacy) and Vegemite (the only food Australians can ever call their own), I was lucky to do it all!

On the 9th of December, with a heavy heart I left the school gate for the last time yet feeling quite satisfied with my stay at St. Phillip's as I knew that I had undertaken in as many opportunities which were presented to me. From practising and learning new techniques in rock climbing to playing Ultimate Frisbee in the Oval I had tried to absorb as much as I could about their culture which varied so much from what I was used to. I hope I was a good ambassador not only for my country but my school and family too. Keen to understand our varied culture, I proudly shared our heritage with them as they happily did theirs.

At last I left for Sydney, where I stayed with my aunt for a few days and did some sightseeing. I visited all the popular tourist destinations like The Opera House, Bondi Beach, Manly Beach, Hyde Park, Harbour Bridge, St. Mary's Cathedral and many more beautiful sites.

In conclusion, it was definitely an experience I will never forget. Mr. Muir, Mrs Crogan and Mrs Pollitt were all very considerate and took very good care of me and made me feel at home. The list of friends I made in this short time is indeed quite long! I cherish my time spent with them and often relive the chats and jokes shared at school. I am also extremely grateful to everyone who considered me worthy of the opportunity to represent myself and my school at such an amazing institute.

**Pavan Jaini, XI B**

# REPUBLIC DAY **CAMP** 2017

*Securing one's place in the 44 member Republic Day Parade contingent is not a cakewalk. Not only does one have to establish his musical credentials as an expert at his chosen instrument it is equally, if not more, important to show high levels of discipline and consistency. Furthermore one should have the drive and the unflinching zeal to put in never-ending hours till one has attained perfection.*

*Keeping in mind the exacting standards which the band is expected to uphold it was almost after 6 months of continuous and gruelling practice that Mr. Ramesh Sharma and Mr. Ashok Kumar were able to select an elite squad. Needless to say that each of us who had made the cut felt proud and privileged at being considered worthy to perform at the Republic Day Parade and represent Scindia at the National Cadet Corps.*

Here I'd like to inform the readers what it was that made us so unique. Each individual, who constituted the Band, had passed multiple levels of challenges, which tested his determination, willpower and endurance. From waking up at 4:30 am in school, to marching 8 kilometers every day we were toughened and prepared to meet the demanding expectations of the NCC Camp. By the end of our practice session at school we were mentally and physically sturdy enough to be actual army Cadets. As we left the Fort for the NCC Camp, each one of us was brimming with confidence and bubbling with excitement to show everyone what Scindians really are.

One of the first things that I learnt there was that living in the camp was not only about performing displays and playing tunes. Discipline was a key skill which we had to perfect. Marching around in squads, standing in Roll Call for a little over an hour, staying silent in the Camp Mess and polishing one's shoes before one left the barracks were just a few things we had to remember.

From day one itself we threw ourselves wholeheartedly to rigorous practice sessions. As 26th January slowly approached, we started to refine our marching and coordination. Cadets were required to wake up at 2:30am for practice at the Rajpath. Thereafter we would attend the Roll call and then finally board our buses bound to India Gate. On reaching there, we were frisked thoroughly along with a check of our ID Cards and passes. And finally after that, our band would get to march on the much revered Rajpath. I must say that we were in august company as along with us there were various army regiments like the Gorkha, Sikhli and Rajputs who had also lined up for the march. And for the first time, the National Security Guards also participated in the Parade, right ahead of our Band. After practicing at the India Gate for almost 5 hours, we would return to the camp, exhausted and ready to sleep. After a 2 hour rest the display practice would start all over

again. Such were the rigours and challenges we had to face there. Perhaps it is all of this that makes the memories so rich and indelible.

By the time the D day approached we had perfected every nuance of the walk. Be it the musical notations or the perfectly synchronised march, everything was as good as could possibly be. The dynamic duo of Under Officer Reekeela Bhutia and Under Officer Yogesh Agarwal were to lead us. The morning of 26th of January had an all new feel about it. There was a very special excitement in all of us. The morning chill didn't make us shiver that day and the security checks also didn't feel irksome. As we saw reconnaissance helicopters fly overhead, the greatness of what we were about to participate in dawned on us. 10:20 am was the time we had to start. As we warmed up and got ready, the excitement was reaching its peak. At 10:15 am we lined up for our turn. One by one each contingent started from Vijay Chowk, with India Gate as its final destination. There I stood in the front file, looking at my fellow cadets, seeing the awe on their faces. Raindrops fell gently on our faces. The sky was overcast with clouds, but the sun managed to give it a tint of yellow. I saw the 4 kilometers ahead of me, that I had to march, already filled with other contingents. As we were about to start, with the Rashtrapati Bhavan behind us, the Parliament in sight, and India Gate straight ahead of us, four helicopters flew above us. And then we started our march to greatness. Crossing the saluting dias with the heady thought that the entire country and Scindia fraternity would be watching and applauding us made our chests swell with pride. Those moments are etched permanently in my mind because after all the hard work and hours we had put in, we had left our footprints in the sands of time. And the feeling was awesome.

Apart from the march at the Rajpath we enjoyed various other moments of glory. We got the opportunity to



The glorious march at the Rajpath.

give displays to Director General of NCC, Lt. Gen. Vinod Vashisht, the NCC officials as well as the cadets. Four other important displays were for the Vice President, the Chief of Naval Staff, the State Defence Minister and at the Horse Show. We were hugely encouraged by the tremendous confidence the Camp had in our band as a whole, and in Under officer Reekeela Bhutia, our Band Major. His amazing stickwork had become a topic of much discussion and the overall performance of the band made us earn plaudits from cadets of all State Directorates. In the midst of all the hard work we also got pampered in different ways. One of these was the visit to the Chief of Naval Staff's residence for tea and refreshments. We were indeed charmed by the warm hospitality extended by the admiral and enjoyed the

performance by the Navy Band which was the highlight of the evening.

On the 28th of January we attended the Prime Minister's Rally in which Honourable Mr. Narendra Modi addressed all the cadets and spoke about the role of the youth in this nation. We returned on the 30th of January to the luxury of our school and friends, with memories that will be with us forever.

**Kabir Saund, XI B**

# SLEEPING SOCIETY

*We've all felt that urge to rest our eyes—just for a minute! Whether it be a planned, an emergency or a habitual nap the benefits of a short snooze are well understood by the inveterate nappers. They can go on a passionate spiel extolling the merits of a power nap. And why not! Scientific studies prove that it helps reset the system, gives a burst of alertness, has brain boosting benefits, enhances creativity, alleviates sleep deficits, improves mood, calms nerves and the list goes on.... Here we have a seasoned snoozer talk about the love of his life...A good short nap.*

Sleep, ah! what a wonderful thing it is! Just browse through the internet and you will find dozens of facts about the benefits of a sound sleep. While the internet may throw up numerous empirical facts, but if you want to know the real advantages of a deep soporific slumber then you simply have to meet a true blue Scindian. Time and occasion notwithstanding, he is adept at catching snatches of it whenever, wherever and howsoever possible. And mind you this is no mean task! Braving the ire of the authorities or dodging pesky seniors who are always on the prowl to nab the lotus eaters requires both guts and skill. And the good news is that we are lacking in neither.

Our School has many clubs and societies such as the German Society, the Debating Society, the Pie club, Science club, Eco club and what have you, but there is a very large unofficial club which has been functioning secretly (well not really). This my dear readers is the Sleeping Society. This, entirely student driven society has the largest number of members and if Scindian folklore is to be believed then it has remained in existence from time immemorial. Membership is purely voluntary and the only eligibility criteria is the ability to sleep anytime and anywhere. As part of training, the members are taught to cultivate zen like discipline so that they continue to snore happily completely oblivious of the discomfort caused by noise or physical environment. So be it the boring classes, the morning prep or just before the Morning fitness each moment is considered opportune by the Society loyalists to pursue their passion.

Though the Society is not yet officially recognised, it scores over all other clubs on account of its unique style of functioning. Unlike most other clubs and societies which have their seasons wherein they keep swinging from periods of hyperactivity to those of lull the Sleeping Society remains active throughout. While other clubs and societies function on a particular day of the week during the clearly designated hour this works 24x7x365. It is only life threatening and earth shattering events like 'Examination' which cause a brief disruption in its rigour. Nevertheless the zealous members get back soon after

these are over. Another distinctive feature is that unlike the other clubs in our school, the society does not demand an annual budget. All its activities are conducted without any financial aid as it has been rightly understood that a society like this can thrive only by virtue of the dedication and consistency shown by its members. A strong belief in the democratic principle of equal rights forms the underpinnings of the Society hence there is no Leader or In-Charge.

On account of its ever increasing popularity the Sleeping Society is often perceived as a threat to the existence of other school activities. However no Teacher or Principal - however strict - has been able to close it. On the contrary, bolstered by its success the society is planning to start an online annual magazine called 'The Scindian Siesta' which will feature the pains and pleasures of the members along with the reminiscences of Old Boys as they recall the golden time of their association with the Society.

It is rather lamentable that in view of the lack of support by the School management and Teachers, it has not been possible to showcase the real talent of its members. In fact the members have to constantly battle the roadblocks which hobble their progress. Alarmed by the massive uptick in the number of sleepers and snorers there is a torrent of resentment in the faculty who have launched a massive Non-cooperation movement against this ever growing tribe. The members are strictly checked and strongly reprimanded if they are caught dozing-off during the classes. But nothing can dampen the spirit of the diehard members. They continue to doze off in the next class braving humiliation, censure or perhaps even a few rounds of the Madhav Field. Who says all good things in life come free?

The Society, also has a less active sister club called The Sleeping Sets. This set has always been at loggerheads with the School Games Department. Members of this club are forced to join other sets but they keep coming back to their favourite club. The Sleeping Society tries its best to extend all possible support to the Sleeping Sets.



What is this life if full of care we have no time to stand and stare.

However now there is some good news. The Society has recently got a great opportunity to showcase the real talent of its members. The school has started a 15-Minute meditation for peace of mind in the morning assembly. Enthusiastic members grab this golden opportunity and sleep to their heart's content during this time.

Despite difficulties such as Examinations, Non-Cooperation from the teachers and all other possible impediments, the society is flourishing. This unofficial club has now become an integral part of The Scindia School and is confident of scaling greater heights in times to come.

Chidghan Prabhu, X D

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Printed by Galaxy Printers  
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+91-9826214644