



# Qila Quotes

**VOLUME 32**

THE SCINDIA SCHOOL  
TRIENNIAL PUBLICATION



President Board of Governors HH Maharaja Jyotiraditya M Scindia



Chief Guest Mr Kunal Bahl, Co-Founder & CEO of Snapdeal inaugurating the Founder's Day exhibition.

## THE FOUNDER

Maharaja Madhavrao Jayajirao Scindia

### President

H H Maharaja Jyotiraditya M Scindia

### Vice President

Mr. Rajendra S Pawar

### Members

H H Rajmata Madhviraje Scindia

Mr. Vinay Modi

Mr. Mahesh Gandhi

Mr. Harpal Singh

Mr. Arun Kapur

Mr. Vikram Mathur

Mr. Jyoti Sagar

Mr. Shiv Shankar Menon

### Government Nominee

Mr. Harish Bhojwani

Mr. Amar Jyoti Bindal

### Invited Members

Mr. Rahul Kulshreshtha (President, SOBA Central)

Mrs. Darshana Jaini (Parents' Representative)

Mr. Ravi Saund (Expert - Infrastructure Development)

### Ex officio Member, Principal & Secretary

Dr. Madhav Deo Saraswat

### Bursar

Wg Cdr Vivek Saxena

### Scindia Old Boys' Association

#### President

Mr. Rahul Kulshreshtha

#### Vice President

Mr. Banjul Badil

Mr. Nupur Patel

#### Treasurer

Mr. Virupaksha Kadam

#### Secretary

Mr. Arun Kumar Bhagat

**04** **Principal's Message**

**06** **Editorial**

**09** **Old Boys' News**

**10** **Students' Achievements**

**11** **Faculty**

सुनहरे पल

Dr Bhakuni, Dean of Discipline and Student Welfare

**14** **Literary**

Really Free? Are we?

Utkarsh Vats XI-B

**15** **Alumni**

The Band in the Background

Sugandha Shukla-Ex Mahadji, 2015

**17** **Alumni**

Jayaji House Re-union

By Banjul Badil-Ex Jayaji, 1988

**19** **Interview**

Mrs Geetanjali Pandit, author of the bestseller 'Buddha at Work', in conversation with Staff Editor Qila Quotes Ms Puja Pant

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](mailto:pujap@scindia.edu).



Principal Dr Madhav Deo Saraswat addressing the parents on the Parents' Day.



Kite flying at the Oval field on Basant Panchami

## PRINCIPAL'S DESK



The academic year 2017-18 is drawing to a close. The Batch of 2018 is all set to leave the nest and in a few months from now a new set of boys will join our fold. As a Principal, around this time of the year, I always question myself- Have we succeeded in our mission and promise to provide signature experiences to the young men who are about to graduate? Do we have it in us to live up to the faith and expectations of the prospective parents? And quite hearteningly so the answer has always been a resounding YES.

I'm sure all would unequivocally agree that we provide our boys a challenging academic environment emphasizing learning, as well as social and personal growth. But if you were to ask me '*what is it that I hold particularly close to my heart and compliment my team on*' I would say it is the numerous immeasurables which go on to change their lives in ways they could never have imagined. What I find immensely gratifying is that we teach them to seek quality over mediocrity and to set goals worthy of their highest efforts. We also teach them the appreciation of diversity, the respect for excellence, the opportunity for service to others, and the natural flow of empathy. Our endeavour is to produce a generation of well informed and emotionally sound individuals and I am sanguine that we will continue to unfailingly achieve this.

The last four months have been rather eventful. The School celebrated the 120th Founder's Day with great joy and pride. Year after year we have successfully nurtured the vision of our Founder with a sound balance of quality educational programs, state-of-art facilities, and great services. Slowly and steadily we have grown into a school that continues to build on its accomplishments. An immense portion of credit in this regard is attributed to our students, staff members, parents and the community so thank you all for helping us to achieve what we had set out to.

We keep recalibrating our work environment with a view to taking our school and student achievement to the next level of greatness. To achieve this we need to constantly strengthen our team. With great joy I introduce Dr. Chitra Singh Bankawat and Ms Smita Chaturvedi who have joined as Vice Principal (Academics) and Vice Principal (Pastoral Care) respectively. Their diverse areas of expertise will build upon the remarkable dedication to excellence in teaching and research that characterizes Scindia. They have brought with them fresh viewpoints which will give a boost to the core values and objectives of the institution.

I would also like to express my deepest appreciation for the alumni who love and faithfully support this great institution. It was an absolute delight to welcome the Batch of 1968 and the Old Boys of Jayaji House as they flocked to the school in large numbers for their reunion. Dear alumni it is always a pleasure to listen to your reminiscences and see you connect with the present students. The school truly lives in each one of you.

As I write this message I miss the presence of my senior colleague Dr BS Bhakuni who retired after three decades of dedicated service. The entire faculty joins me in appreciating his contribution and mentorship in the spirit of a true Public School master. I thank him for the time and effort he spent on all of us. His motivation, knowledge and insight will continue to be our guiding star. Needless to say that The Scindia School will always remain a loving home for him.

As an individual I have always believed that there is no contradiction between learning and fun, pleasure and the pursuit of excellence, the global and the local, and between respecting tradition and embracing change. It is just a happy coincidence that the philosophy of this great institution aligns beautifully with my own belief system.

It is indeed an honour and privilege to be the Principal of The Scindia School. With this I wish you all a great 2018.

Happy Reading!

Dr Madhav Deo Saraswat



A still from the English Play



Mime performance

# EDITORIAL

*The Scindian air redolent with the fragrance of childhood memories, the enticing old world architecture albeit now endowed with all modern amenities and the vivacity which has always coexisted with the calm of the Fort...everything here at school has a timeless aura. Who can possibly deny that The Scindia School straddles effortlessly on the seesaw of the 'then and the now' ? This timelessness gets reinforced year after year as we witness the joyous celebration of Founder's Day, soak in the vibrancy of campus life or bring out the warmth as we prepare to bid adieu to yet another Batch of Class XII with the confidence that they will live upto the rich Scindian legacy.*

The School celebrated the 120th Founder's Day with grandeur and bonhomie. The three day celebration comprised Parents' Day, Founder's Day and Old Boys' Day. Parents' Day saw our talented students put up a mesmerising theatrical performance entitled 'Charandas -The Thief' which received widespread appreciation. Mr Mahesh V Gandhi, Trustee Scindia Education Society and Member, Board of Governors graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and Mr Arvind R Vohra, CEO and Managing Director, Gionee India was the Guest of Honour. The day wound up with a 'Salsa n Jive' get-together for all. The Chief Guest on Founder's Day was Mr Kunal Bahl, Co-Founder & CEO of Snapdeal. He showered encomiums on the boys for their splendid talent as witnessed in the various exhibitions and the orchestra performance. Mr Bahl gave away the awards which are given to students and Houses for excellence in different verticals of the School. The three day carnival came to an end with the celebration of the Old Boys' Day.

Academics and Pastoral care are two very significant verticals of a residential school. We welcome Dr. Chitra Singh Bankawat and Ms Smita Chaturvedi who have joined as Vice Principal (Academics) and Vice Principal (Pastoral Care) respectively. They bring with them several years of experience as educators and administrators. They will be strengthening the hands of the faculty in nurturing the culture of excellence in the school.

The School misses the energetic and inspiring presence of Dr BS Bhakuni who hung his boots after almost three decades of distinguished service. Dr Bhakuni contributed significantly as a Hindi teacher and Dean of Discipline and Student Welfare. He remains in our hearts not just as an intellectual lodestar but as a guardian of the rights of the underprivileged through the service ventures undertaken under his mentorship.

It is a matter of great pride that the School Brass Band marched on the Rajpath for the fourteenth year in

succession. In addition to the pride and honour of marching for the nation our contingent also gave a Guard of Honour to the Vice President, the Defence Minister and the Chief of Naval Staff. They also took part in the PM's rally. Our boys received tremendous appreciation and widespread coverage in the national media.

## Academics

We are cognizant of the fact that attaining academic excellence entails taking the extra mile to achieve the set goals. Students are guided and mentored to avoid any distractions and remain on the tracks till they get to the finishing line. They are challenged to think, perform, and grow with a carefully calibrated curriculum taking care that they don't get overwhelmed in the process. The dedicated team of teachers consistently designs activities to engage student interests, aptitudes, and abilities with a view to reinforcing academic learning.

With Board exams round the corner Classes X and XII have become the prime focus of our endeavours. We follow a 'No Child Left Behind policy' in spirit and therefore special academic sessions have been designed for all students ensuring timely remediation and enrichment. The Winter Study Camp was a fortnight of rigorous drilling of concepts, doubt clarification and testing with personalised feedback. All these efforts have helped our boys identify their areas of strength and weakness and they feel more confident of facing the Boards. We are confident that they will do us proud

## Workshops

Harbour Technologies in association with Radiance IIT Bombay conducted the 'Techradiance' workshop on the topic of Solar Panel & Smart Energy Systems for the students of Classes IX and X. The participants learnt the nuances of harnessing solar energy and designed solar mobile charger, solar powered car and sun tracking solar panel. At the end of the workshop, a competition was

conducted for the groups. The first four position holders will get a chance to participate in the Techfest at IIT, Mumbai.

A Website Designing and Robotics Workshop was conducted by Technospecies for a National Level championship 'TECHVRIDDHI' organised by IIT IT CELL, Kharagpur. It focused on creating dynamic web applications using JAVA. Students interested in Robotics were taught to program the embedded system using the 'C' language. They were given ultrasonic sensor, motors and were instructed how to program and control it.

Mr Jonathan Gil Harris, Professor of English at Ashoka University conducted a workshop on 'Shakespeare in Bollywood' He explained the various literary techniques used by Shakespeare which account for the universal appeal of his plays. Students enjoyed learning the various aspects of commonality between Bollywood and Shakespeare viz use of puns, music and fusion language for enhancing reader/audience appeal.

Mr Varun Kapoor, Additional Director General of Police, Narcotics, conducted a workshop on Cyber Security for the staff and the students. He cleared many misconceptions and bridged many gaps in our knowledge about Cyber Crime. He talked at length about various aspects of getting into the Cyber World and the associated vulnerabilities. Students were educated on ways to safeguard themselves from possible exploitation. Krishnam Purwar and Shashikiran Gonegunta were awarded appreciation certificates and a badge for their brilliant answers.

#### Faculty Enrichment

Mr Gopal Chaturvedi attended two workshops in New Delhi under the banner of IN- DaF and PASCH. Both the organisations which are committed to popularising German celebrated their tenth anniversary. The IN DaF workshop began with the election of the new executive body. German teachers from various parts of the world attended the workshop which aimed at motivating the teachers to continuously bring innovation in their teaching strategies. Partner Schulen der Zukunft(PASCH) welcomed new members into its fold. Their workshop was aimed at encouraging teachers to take initiatives for better classroom engagement. Future plans and projects were shared with the entire community. Several new teaching methodologies to make German learning interesting were discussed. Mr Chaturvedi has particularly liked the concept of the Google classroom and Spiel im Unterricht( learning German through theatre) and wishes to introduce it for his students in due course of time.

Mr Srijith Pillai, Mr Manjeet Singh Benipal and Mr Somarajan attended a Regional Summit on the various aspects of the new role of a teacher as a counselor and guidance leader. The conference was jointly organised by the Emerald Heights School and Institute of Counsellor and Training Research (ICTRC) New Delhi. Dr Raveendran, Director of ICTRC, was the key note speaker on the occasion. He reminded all attendees of the need to reframe teaching

strategies in view of the change in the role of a teacher from 'Lecturer to Facilitator to Coach'.

Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan organised a fifteen days' 'Regional Workshop on Hindi Language and Literature' at KVS Regional Centre, Gwalior. Dr B.S. Bhakuni and Mr Manoj Mishra were invited to the same, as keynote speakers. They delivered lectures on 'Hindi Kavya Main Prateek Aur Bimb' and 'Harivansh Rai Bacchan Aur Unka Kavya' respectively.

It is a matter of great pride that Dr Smita Trivedi conducted a workshop at Woodstock School, Gwalior as the Resource Person for CBSE, Centre of Training and Excellence, Pune. The name of the programme was 'Capacity Building Programme in English Communicative Class X.

#### Community outreach

Six boys along with Mr Kamlesh Singh attended the IPSC service project organised by Rajkumar college, Rajkot(Gujarat). The service project involved building an approach road, painting a school and constructing a concrete bench for a small primary school in village Khakhana which was 25 km away from the Rajkot city. The delegates were divided into different groups and each group prepared a skit on a social issue like cleanliness, domestic violence and education for the girl child. The delegates returned with a great sense of fulfillment.

Six schools took part in the 5th Round Square Service Project hosted by The Scindia School at Nathon-Ka-Pura, a village adopted by the school as part of its commitment to the cause and welfare of the less privileged section of the society. Over four days the delegates constructed a cemented drainage channel, repaired the roof of the government primary school, restored a dilapidated Chabootra and whitewashed the village school's boundary wall. Through talks, surveys and skill development programmes they promoted gender sensitization and women empowerment. Each student returned with a great sense of accomplishment and satisfaction at having made a difference.

#### Events

The School organised the second edition of the Scindia Literary Fest in the month of November. The festival is aimed to bring the best of literary and creative minds on the Fort so as to spark the imagination and literary thirst of our boys. This year eleven distinguished writers visited the Fort and infused the air with erudite discussions and evolved thought. They read excerpts from their books, engaged with the boys in question answer sessions and enlightened them about the craft of writing. A Book Fair named 'Book Vook' was also organised and it witnessed a multitude of students and teachers eager to buy the books. The boys also got the books signed by their favourite authors.

The School hosted the fourth edition of the Model United Nations' Conference. The three day conference was a mega event with 97 delegates from six schools participating in it. This year the International and Domestic Committees

were simulated with agendas ranging from The Crimean Annexation, The Question of Rohingya Refugees, The Review of Art 124 (A) of the IPC and the Sri Lankan Civil War. The International Press Corps worked tirelessly to cover the proceedings. The Scindia School was awarded the Best Delegation Award and the Runner-Up was Rajkumar College, Rajkot.

#### Visitors

The Headmaster of Toowoomba Grammar School, Australia along with the Head of the Curriculum, of the same school visited the School. The visit was aimed at exploring the possibilities of academic and socio cultural exchange between the two schools for both teachers and students.

Mr Christopher Dorrell from Uppingam College, U.K. is on a two month visit to the School as a Gap Student. He has been taking English and Social Studies classes for the middle school students. Christopher is getting to

understand and appreciate the similarities and differences of the two cultures and education systems in the course of carrying out various other responsibilities and duties of school life.

We laid out the red carpet for our alumni as they flocked in large numbers to reaffirm their connect with the alma mater. The Jayaji House reunion witnessed a confluence of seventy Jayajians from different parts of the world to relive their memories. They brought with them, overwhelming conviviality and excitement in the atmosphere of the School. The Old Boys felicitated the former and present House Masters and the support staff of Jayaji House.

Thirty one Old Boys from the Batch of 1968 visited school in the month of January to celebrate their Golden Jubilee reunion. They went around the Fort delving into nostalgia and exploring their favourite spaces. They also took part in the Republic Day March Past on the 26th January.



The delegates of Round Square Service Project at Nathon ka Pura

# OLD BOYS' NEWS

On the occasion of the 120th Founder's Day of the School the Madhav Award was conferred on the nationally acclaimed Sound Designer and Recordist Mr Hitendra Ghosh (Ex Ravindra 1967). The coveted SOBA Award was presented to Mr Mahesh Gandhi and the SOBA Cup went to the Varanasi Chapter.

The Times of India (TOI) has promoted its Consulting Editor, **Dr Nalin Mehta** (Ex Rn-1996) and assigned him the role of Executive Editor, TOI – Online.

The Scindia fraternity heartily congratulates **Dr Ravindra Gandhi** (Ex Je-1980) on receiving the Entrepreneurial Excellence Award by MIDC Industries Association, Nagpur. He received the award from Union Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari.

**Mohit Mandeliya** (Ex Sh-2012) who was the first SOBA scholarship recipient lived up to the confidence reposed in him by the community. It is a matter of immense gratification and pride that he has got placement as Marketing Officer in a reputed Petroleum Company. He is based at Mumbai and will be drawing an annual package of 21.4 lakh.

The SOBA Annual Blood donation Camps are organised every year in the memory of Late HH Madhavrao Scindia. Eight SOBA Chapters (Kanpur, Agra, Kolkata, Mathura, Gwalior, Nagpur, Delhi and Patna) organised the camp in the months of September and October 2017. 400 units of blood were collected for donating to Hospitals and Blood Banks. The endeavour is aimed at helping to save the lives

of the poor and needy patients.

**Mr Sachin Deva** (Ex-Jyotiba 2000), currently working with Goldman Sachs in Bangalore undertook a solo Cycling expedition from Delhi - Bangalore covering a formidable distance of 2200 kms.

**Mr B.S. Sudhir Chandra** (Ex Sh- 1959) was conferred the Eminent Engineer Award by The Institution of Engineers (India) at Bengaluru.

**Mr Amitabh Hazarika** (Ex-JE, 1982) President SOBA NE reached the Everest Base Camp, along with his friends, after an arduous trek of nine days.

Many congratulations to **Mr Sanjay Arora** (Ex- Md, 1980) on being conferred the Doctorate of Philosophy for 'Marketing Communication' by Nagpur University.

Many congratulations to Scindia Old Boys' Association on the formation of two new SOBA Chapters namely **SOBA Gurugram** and **SOBA Jabalpur**. May these chapters add more vibrancy to the alumni network.



Handing over of traditions and values

# STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

**Reekeela Bhutia, Zigmee Gurung and Akshay Bhargava** are the proud recipients of the Sports Blazer for excellence in various sports in the year 2016-17. **Suryansh Goyal** was honoured with the Scholar's Award for the year 2016-17 and received a blazer for his academic excellence.

**Suryansh Goyal, Eshaan Agarwal and Karnik Kanojia** represented the School at the Computer Society of India Computer Quiz, Gwalior Chapter hosted by IPS College, Gwalior. They were declared Overall Winners of the Quiz out of a total of twenty participating schools. **Karnik Kanojia** secured the 2nd rank and **Eshaan Agarwal** was declared the Zonal Topper. Many congratulations!

**Aryan Nagpal and Prakhar Agarwal** secured the highest position in their Grade in the National Astronomy Quiz. They received a Medal of Outstanding Performance for the same.

**Aditya Parashar and Shashank Kilhore** were a part of the delegation which attended the Literary Fest at Maharani Gayatri Devi School, Jaipur. They secured the second position in the event 'Double Trouble'.

**Eshaan Agarwal and Harshvardhan Jadon's** music video has been selected for Raggabund, a German Band. These boys will get a chance to participate in the Regional German Youth Camp to be held in Sri Lanka in 2018.

Our students attended an IT event "Technacks 2017" at Maharani Gayatri Devi Girls' School, Jaipur. **Sameer Manger** secured the first position in Audio Editing, **Pranav Wadhwa** and **Shubham Sultania** secured the second position in Multimedia Presentation and **Sameer Manger** and **Prashant Bansal** secured the second position in Typography. Our congratulations to the winners.

A group of six students participated in the 3rd Creative Eye Film Festival 2017 at Assam Valley School. **Varun Kapoor** received the award for the Best Screenplay and **Vishwajeet Singh** was adjudged the Best Actor.

18 boys of the School participated in the IPSC Art Fest 2017 held at Scindia Kanya Vidyalaya, Gwalior. **Yuvraj Bhatia** secured the first position in Photography and **Kushagra Kaushik** secured the second position in Cartooning.

Sir Jiwajirao Scindia Museum, Gwalior organised an Essay writing competition on the occasion of National Youth Day. Twenty three students of the School took part in the competition. **Kabir Saund** secured the third position and **Himanshu Majooria** secured the second position in the English and Hindi category respectively.



Harshvardhan Jadon and Eshaan Agarwal

# सुनहरे पल

मानव का जीवन अनंत है और अनंत काल से चला आ रहा है। सभ्यता, संस्कृति, धर्म, नीति, राजनीति, दया, करुणा और उदारता की आवश्यकता, मन-मस्तिष्क और आत्मिक उन्नति के विषय में मानव समय-समय पर विचार बनाता है और सकारात्मक सोच के साथ जिन राहों पर चलता है, उन सबका सहज स्वाभाविक वर्णन मुझे एक शिक्षक के चरित्र में दृश्यगत होता है। एक शिक्षक के नाते यही भाव और विचार मुझे एक संतोष-वृत्ति की ओर ले जाते हैं जिससे मेरे जीवन के हर पल सुखद, सुनहरे एवं उज्ज्वल हो जाते हैं। हमारा जीवन सृष्टि की एक अद्भुत व सर्वोत्तम कृति है। जीवन को सँवारना, सजाना हमारा कर्तव्य है। इसको सँवारने एवं सजाने के लिए हमें दृढ़ निश्चय एवं विश्वास को अपने मन में जागृत करना होगा। ऐसी स्थिति में इस संसार में कुछ भी पाना हमारे लिए असंभव नहीं होगा। हमें चाहिए कि हम अपनी मेहनत, त्याग एवं कर्मनिष्ठता को निरंतर जारी रखें। किसी भी कार्य का शुभारंभ करते समय सकारात्मक सोच, कर्तव्य परायणता एवं मानसिक दृढ़ता के साथ आगे बढ़ें तभी उस कार्य को करके हमें अपार सुख और संतोष प्राप्त हो सकता है।

हम सभी जीवन में सुख, सफलता तथा शांति चाहते हैं, उन्हें हम तभी प्राप्त कर सकते हैं, जब हम अपनी आन्तरिक शक्तियों को जमाकर अपने हाथों को कर्म-पथ पर सक्रिय करें। सुख, शांति और सफलता पाने का यही एकमात्र चारा है इसलिए हमें सभी प्रकार के तर्क-वितर्क को छोड़कर अपने स्वर्णिम भविष्य एवं निर्धारित लक्ष्य की ओर बढ़ना चाहिए। स्वर्णिम भविष्य के लिए हाथ-पैर मारना ही जीवन का सबसे बड़ा उद्देश्य है। उद्देश्य को हासिल करना ही जीवन में चार चाँद लगाना है। हम अच्छी तरह जानते हैं कि समय गतिशील तो है ही निरंतर परिवर्तनशील भी है इसलिए हमें हर हाल में संतुलित एवं खुश रह पाने की मानसिकता बनानी चाहिए। जीवन के संतुलित पलों में रह पाने की मानसिकता हमें सकारात्मक सोच एवं अपनत्व की ओर ले जाती है। मेरा यह मानना है कि समय की गति के अनुसार हमें अपने कार्य-क्षेत्र को सुदृढ़ एवं विकासशील बनाना चाहिए। समय एक-सा नहीं रहता है पर जान-सुनकर समय के सामने हथियार डालकर हमें निराश नहीं होना चाहिए। यह आवश्यक है कि अपने-आपको हमें उसके अनुरूप ढालकर सुखमय जीवन जीना चाहिए, तभी हम अपने जीवन को स्वर्णिम एवं उज्ज्वल बना सकते हैं।

सुखद एवं सुनहरे पलों के लिए कर्तव्यपरायणता अति आवश्यक है। इसी से तन, मन एवं मस्तिष्क का विकास संभव है। निरंतर कर्मरत रहकर हम अपने भाग्य को भी सँवार सकते हैं। जैसे रात-दिन एक क्रम है उसी प्रकार भाग्य एवं कर्म का भी एक अद्भुत मेल है।

इसलिए खुश होकर अपने कर्म-पथ पर हमें आगे बढ़ना चाहिए। कभी-कभी यह देखा जाता है कि अधिक कर्म करने के बाद भी हमें उचित फल नहीं मिल पाता है। मुझे लगता है कि उसके बारे में सोचना हमारी मूर्खता है। ऐसी स्थिति में हम अपने जीवन के पलों का अच्छी तरह निर्वाह नहीं कर सकते हैं।

हम सबका जीवन सामाजिक ताने-बाने से बुना हुआ है। हम सब एक दूसरे के सुख-दुख, हर्ष-विषाद, रहन-सहन, खान-पान आदि में एक दूसरे के साथ रहकर सामाजिक संबंधों को सृदृढ़ करते हैं। इन सामाजिक संबंधों से ही हम सबका जीवन सुचारु रूप से चलता है और हमारे मन में मानवीय भावनाओं का जन्म होता है। हमारी यही मानवीय भावनाएँ हमें समाज-सेवा की ओर प्रेरित करती हैं। सामाजिक जीवन से जुड़े होने के नाते समाज में दुःखी और जरूरतमंद लोगों की सहायता करना हम सबका परम कर्तव्य है। हमारे पौराणिक ग्रन्थों में भी समाज के दुखी प्राणियों की सेवा-सहायता को ही भगवान की भक्ति एवं उसे पाने का रास्ता माना गया है। समाज-सेवा की यह भावना मेरे मन में तभी विकसित हुई जब पूर्व-प्राचार्य डॉ.एस.डी. सिंह एवं श्री ए.एन. दर साहब का पूर्ण योगदान रहा अर्थात् समाज-सेवा का यह पौधा मेरे मन रूपी उद्यान में डॉ.एस.डी. सिंह जी के द्वारा रोपा गया और यह पूर्णरूप से विकसित था पल्लवित प्राचार्य श्री ए.एन. दर साहब के मार्गदर्शन में हुआ और मैं इन दोनों के मार्गदर्शन में समाज के हर-तबके के लोगों से जुड़ा चाहे फिर वह सौंसा के लोग हों या रमटापुरा के या



Dr Bhakuni receiving the 'The King Constantine medal'



Joining hands



Role model for all

नाथों का पुरा से या फिर हमारे सभी (सिंधिया स्कूल) चतुर्थ श्रेणी के कर्मचारी। मुझे इन सभी को बहुत नज़दीक से देखने एवं समझने का सुअवसर प्राप्त हुआ। समाज-सेवा में जो आनंद एवं सुख है वह अन्यत्र दुर्लभ है। मैंने हमेशा इस सेवा को आत्मसात किया। आत्मसात किए गए ये पल हमेशा मेरे लिए स्वर्णिम एवं सुखद रहे। इसी से सिंधिया स्कूल में मेरी एक पहचान बनी। समाज-सेवा की इसी भावना से सिंधिया स्कूल के संपूर्ण परिवार का मुझे अपार सहयोग तथा अटूट प्रेम प्राप्त हुआ। उनके सहयोग के बिना समाज-सेवा का यह यज्ञ कभी भी पूर्ण नहीं हो सकता था।

शिक्षण मानव जीवन में महत्वपूर्ण है, जो मानव को परमार्थ साधना के पथ पर ले जाता है। एक शिक्षक का जीवन अत्यंत सात्विक होता है और वह छात्रों को आदर्श का पाठ सिखाता है। मैं यही सोचता हूँ कि शिक्षक संतोषी प्रकृति का होता है उसकी आवश्यकताएँ अन्य की अपेक्षा कम होती हैं क्योंकि उसका संबंध अधिकतर छात्रों के कल्याण तथा आदर्श समाज के निर्माण से जुड़ा होता है। मैंने हमेशा यही देखा कि शिक्षक अपने व्यवहार निष्ठा, अनुशासन प्रियता, स्नेह तथा सादगी, वक्त की पाबंदी का प्रभाव छात्रों एवं समाज पर डालता है। उसकी ईमानदारी विद्यालय एवं छात्रों के बीच एक अलग पहचान बनाती है। इसीलिए वह समाज एवं छात्रों के बीच उचित सम्मान प्राप्त करता है। अपने शिक्षक-जीवन में, मैंने धन तथा ऐश्वर्य से कर्तव्य को अधिक महत्व दिया, जिसके फलस्वरूप मुझे

बहुत खुशी प्राप्त हुई। इसी खुशी ने मेरे शिक्षक जीवन के सारे पलों को सजोकर स्वर्णिम बना दिया।

कुमाऊँ विश्वविद्यालय सम्पर्क केन्द्र, मनिला महाविद्यालय, मनिला, अल्मोड़ा (उत्तराखण्ड) एवं दिल्ली के व्यक्तिगत कॉलेज में शिक्षण करने के बाद मुझे राष्ट्रीय एवं अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर प्रख्यात विद्यालय ग्वालियर के ऐतिहासिक दुर्ग पर स्थित सिंधिया स्कूल में शिक्षण कार्य करने का सुअवसर प्राप्त हुआ। मई सन् 1988 से 31 दिसम्बर सन् 2017 तक अपने अध्यापन के दौरान मुझे जो सुख, समृद्धि एवं यश प्राप्त हुआ वह अन्यत्र दुर्लभ है। इस स्कूल में मेरा आत्मविश्वास एवं आत्मबल बढ़ा, मैंने यहाँ पर रहकर संगठन शक्ति, कर्मनिष्ठता, अनुशासन, सामाजिकता, कर्तव्यपरायणता, अपनत्व, प्रेम, सौहार्द, त्याग एवं समय पालन जैसे सामाजिक मूल्यों को सीखा यह सब कुछ सीखने में सम्पूर्ण सिंधिया स्कूल परिवार के सहयोग के बिना यह संभव नहीं हो सकता था। सिंधिया स्कूल परिवार के (स्कूल प्रबंधन, प्राचार्य, शिक्षक, सहयोगी कर्मचारी एवं छात्र) मार्ग-दर्शन एवं सान्निध्य में मेरी प्रतिभा विकसित हुई और मेरा शिक्षक-जीवन स्वर्णिम बना। प्रारम्भ से ही अध्यापन मेरा शौक रहा है। अपने अध्यापन के दौरान मैंने सभी क्षेत्रों में मनोरंजन के साथ कार्य किया। चाहे वह शिक्षण का क्षेत्र हो या वाद-विवाद का क्षेत्र, लेखन का क्षेत्र हो या समाज-सेवा का क्षेत्र या फिर स्कूल के अन्य गतिविधियों का क्षेत्र हो, सभी क्षेत्रों में मैंने अभूत भूव सुख एवं खुशी अर्जित की। मैंने अपने इस व्यवसाय को कभी भी बोझ नहीं समझा। मेरे शिक्षक-जीवन को सरल, सुखद एवं स्वर्णिम बनाने में विद्यालय के सभी प्राचार्यों, शिक्षकों, अन्य कर्मचारियों एवं मुख्य रूप से छात्रों की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका रही, जहाँ एक ओर मुझे प्राचार्यों एवं शिक्षकों का मार्गदर्शन मिला वहीं दूसरी ओर छात्रों का अपार प्रेम एवं सम्मान प्राप्त हुआ। इसके लिए मैं संपूर्ण सिंधिया परिवार को हार्दिक धन्यवाद देना चाहूँगा। मेरी हमेशा यही आकांक्षा रहेगी कि जिस संस्था ने मेरे जीवन में चार चाँद लगा दिए वह संस्था हमेशा की तरह शिक्षा की ऊँचाइयों को स्पर्श कर राष्ट्रीय एवं अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर ख्याति को प्राप्त करता रहे।

अंत में, मैं यही कहूँगा कि एक शिक्षक का कार्य निःस्वार्थ भाव से अध्यापन कर छात्रों का संस्कारित बनाना है और उनके उज्ज्वल भविष्य का निर्माण करना है। छात्रों का उज्ज्वल भविष्य ही सद्गढ़ एवं आदर्श समाज की नींव होती है। अगर समाज की नींव अच्छी होगी तो एक अखण्ड, उन्नतशील एवं विकासशील राष्ट्र का निर्माण होगा। अतः निःसंदेह समाज में शिक्षक का स्थान सर्वोपरि है।

**डॉ. बी.एस. भाकुनी**

पूर्व विभागाध्यक्ष - हिन्दी विभाग

# REALLY FREE ? ARE WE ?

***“At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance... We end today a period of ill fortune, and India discovers herself again.”***

These are the iconic unforgettable words from the speech titled, “Tryst with Destiny” given by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on August 15, 1947.

However, today one must take a moment to ponder and ask oneself, that are we really free and independent? Have we been able to end a period of ill fortune? And have we been able to discover ourselves as Indians? Has India's soul in its truest essence found utterance?

The foreign invasions continue albeit in a different guise. Developed countries use our land and resources to set up factories which produce goods that they can't produce in their own country for the same money. More often than not it means ignoring the safety regulations. Child labour is still common, and not a lot of eyebrows are raised when a ten year old boy serves us a cup of tea.

Hundreds and thousands of people have been, and are being, affected by terrorism yet we say that India is free and independent?

Corruption rules the country, still we say India is free and independent?

A sizeable population does not know where their next meal is going to come from, still we say India is free and independent?

What's the challenge India faces? What has kept it in chains and shackles despite proclamation of the republic 68 years ago?

The challenge stems from three sources. One is the constant struggle between state power and citizens' liberty. That is why we have separation of powers and federalism—both horizontal and vertical dispersal of powers. But in India, this dispersal of powers is inadequate. The reason why we insist on dispersal of power is, there will be no single focus of power and therefore abuse of power can be curtailed. As long as power is highly centralized in the hands of the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister, there is always a problem. The second threat is economic decision making. The government's arbitrariness in making laws,

sometimes questionable laws, constitutionally unsound laws or policies. For instance, this whole business of rationing currency, denying people's own money to them is a fundamental blow to the economic freedom of the people. The arbitrariness of the governments in the office and the inability of the courts and the people to distinguish between the legitimate and illegitimate role of the government are fundamental problems because our institutions have not matured enough, and our constitutional authorities are not able to protect the citizen's freedom. Third challenge is the coarse public discourse. A climate of intolerance and a willingness to attribute evil motives to all dissent instead of engaging in a healthy debate is always a problem. We all have the right to disagree with each other. Only logic and facts must dictate our conclusions, not prejudices. And we cannot attribute malice to our critics. If we disagree with them, let us argue, let us debate, and if finally agreement is not possible, let us agree to disagree. But, just because you disagree with me I cannot assume that you are evil or bad or you are not a patriot. Such vilification is a very dangerous trend, and of late that tendency is visible in our country.

We, the youth of the nation have to be the change we want to see in the society. We are the future of the country and on us rests the responsibility of making it what it ought to be. We have to arise and awaken and show defiance when required. We have to be not Hindus or Muslims but Indians. We need to be progressive and liberal and not fascist and ultra-Traditionalists. Change is the need of the hour and we are the change India needs. It is only if we unite as countrymen and show dauntless courage and formidable resolve that we will be able to liberate India of all social evils and bring back the *sona ki chidiya* (golden bird) that flew away long ago.

Jai Hind!

**Utkarsh Vats XI-B**

# THE BAND IN THE BACKGROUND

*I woke up to the sound of the band playing far down on the road in front of my house as it marched nearer. I let out an irritable groan and tried to muffle the sound with a pillow, but the sound kept growing louder and when it was right outside my window, I nearly wept. I opened my eyes to look at the clock hanging on the wall in front of my bed. It read 6:00 am. I closed my eyes and went back to sleep as the band marched away, subconsciously aware that the next time I hear the band, it would be marching back and I would have to wake up and go to school.*

From late July till the end of January, the school brass band could be heard almost anytime, anywhere in the school campus. J. Martin Daughtry, in his book *Listening to War*, mentions four different kinds of auditory zones in a war zone (Daughtry 76). Now, our school campus was obviously no war zone. However, our experience of listening to the school band did, in many, fit into these auditory zones. I woke up to the sound of the band, I listened to it when I was walking back to my house after late night debate practices or extra classes, and often, I even listened to it while I daydreamed in classes. I would be sitting in History or Chemistry class, slumped on the desk with the side of my head resting on my palm, thinking about the most important questions in the history of mankind, when a lone clarinet player would begin to practice behind the Madhav Pavillion in the background. The clarinet player, probably a beginner, would practice *Que Sera Sera*, hit a wrong note, stop, and then start again. And even though I listened to this sound only subconsciously, it was very well in the "narrational zone", because I could very well echolocate the sound (Daughtry 80). I could imagine the kid, standing somewhere on the porch in front of the music room, behind the pavilion, practicing the clarinet on a hot afternoon. And then later, in the time between two classes, some friends of mine who were in the band and some others who were very good with beats would collaborate on an a capella reproduction of the band tunes. And I would join them, because even though we might not have been close friends, we had these beats and tunes in common. We shared the way it made us feel and the joy it gave us to reproduce them without any instruments. We sang, we hummed, drummed on the tables with our palms and reproduced the band tunes to every note and every beat, perfectly transitioning from one tune to the other in the same order as the band. The school brass band was our pride. It was perfect. And most of all, it was tradition.

Clearly, the band tunes were infectious, becoming earworms for those of us who were exposed to their daily performances. The ones causing much more severe cases of earworms than others included *Colonel Bogey* and *Trombone King*. Hum to me a couple of notes from anywhere in these tunes, and I won't be able to stop myself

from humming the entire tune until I finish (and give myself closure). Often I wasn't even sure if the band was really practicing or if it was simply playing in my head. All of us living on campus were so accustomed to its sound, that we didn't notice it much. It was only subconsciously that we were aware of it. Due to our familiarity with the campus and with the band's sounds, we would always know whether the sound of their playing was coming from behind the Madhav Pavilion or from the Oval Field. However, this knowledge wasn't something that needed to be well-noticed or pointed out. It was obvious. So obvious, that at one point the band might have played for a whole hour without us even realizing it. The sound of this constant rehearsal lay in "the audible inaudible" zone - "a conceptual space that housed sounds so distant and/or ubiquitous that they ceased to draw the attention" of the residents on campus (Daughtry 77). By always being there, the sound of the band practicing in the distance, simply ceased to fully be "there" (Daughtry 77). Another feature of the audible inaudible zone that was known only to the residents of the campus about the band practices was the meaning of sudden silence when the entire band, in the middle of a full-fledged practice, would stop abruptly. To an outsider it would appear that the band randomly stopped playing, but we knew better. We knew that this sudden cessation indicated that someone in the band had made a mistake, and Mr. Ramesh Sharma, our Band Instructor, had stopped the entire band to reprimand them. The sound of the band was deeply embedded in the soundscape of the Scindia School, beautifully combining and blending with the sounds of students talking and laughing, soccer players cheering for their teams on the games fields and the Vice Principal's booming voice scolding a 9th grader she found fooling around during class. The sound of the band expressed the Scindian identity to such an extent that the pictures of the school campus flash in front of my eyes if I hear any of the band tunes.

Perhaps, the time when I loved the school brass band most, was when I too, along with the rest of the school, could be part of it during the school parades on Independence Day and Republic Day. We would all stand at attention, in our respective squads, on the Madhav Field, where

the march was to be held and wait for the Head Prefect's command. The Head Prefect would shout, "Schoooooo! Foooorwaaard March!!" and immediately, the brass band would come to life. It would begin with the dhum, dhum, dhum of the bass drum that would guide us to coordinate our marching, followed by the side-drums and then rest of the instruments. Being the commander of the Girls' Squad, (the first squad in the parade) the sound of the side-drums would be my cue to command my squad to march forward. I loved those moments when I shouted out the command, pulling my voice from the core of my body and projecting it above the sound of the band. This ritualized performative listening of the school band, its association with tradition, comradeship, discipline and patriotism transformed it into something more than music.

I loved the sound of the band, because I loved the tunes, the beats, the goosebumps it gave me when I listened to it, the sense of pride I felt when it performed in front

of guests from outside of the school and the lump that formed in my throat due to this pride after every major performance. For me, the sound of the band is associated with those eight, most impressionable years of my life, during the course of which I learnt, grew, failed, succeeded and changed. It is associated with a plethora of memories - dirty classrooms, the screeching of chairs, noise during recess, lectures, fights, after-lunch debate practices, cross-country races, sunset from the fort wall, the smell of damp mud combined with that of hot food in the dining hall and Founder's Day rehearsals on warm, breezy October nights. An entire nostalgic world that can be triggered by a couple of notes from *Trombone King*.

**Sugandha Shukla**  
Ex Mj, 2015



# JAYAJI HOUSE REUNION

For the seventy odd ex Jayajians as they congregated at Gwalior to attend the house reunion, the occasion was overwhelming. They had come from afar (Canada, Dubai, Singapore, Australia and every section of India). Normally as the train nears Gwalior- the fort, the school buildings and the monuments stand silhouetted against the skyline, bringing a lump to the throats of craning heads glued to the train windows. Due to winter smog we were robbed of this first glimpse and after being welcomed with garlands by the local Jayajians and checking in at the hotels we all proceeded to the fort. The amateur poet amongst us was moved to pen the following-

## The Crucible:

A Fort is designed to keep the enemy without,  
And a prison, to keep them within.  
I looked up at the ramparts at the Urwai Ghati,  
With a steel trunk and a hold-all,  
A lot of trepidation stenciled on the same.

Imposing, brown and grey they stood;  
A lodestone within my heart they weighed.  
I was sentenced for 5 years to the school within  
Cut off from the din of city noise and close kin.

The thought crossed my mind  
That no more choices I could make.  
For from now a time table I would need obey.

Just then when I had near but turned my back,  
To destiny and the garrison gate.  
What caught my eye was a group  
Of students,  
In greys and whites,  
Who from the city had returned.  
There was laughter amidst the banter  
And nary a grim face.  
If these were inmates, then this was a special cage.

I couldn't help but re look up the incline,  
For now I could see etched in history,  
The guardian of freedom, allowing dreams to kiss the skies,  
Each nook and corner a testament to bravery.  
Built patiently with time.

Ek motor! Two words that resonate till today.  
That day I too climbed that hill on faith  
And grew up within and without, in its shade.  
The teachings remain, the words etched onto my soul--  
'Where the mind is without fear  
And the head held high...'  
(Today I return and as I continue climbing the stairs... )  
And I look from the wide stone verandah at the academic  
block across  
'Where knowledge is free and not broken up by narrow...'

I look around and in the sinews of this very stone,  
Were forged friendships, values and lifelong bonds.  
Forever in my heart throbs the memories relived anew  
Today of whom I am and why I am-  
The Jayaji house and the Scindia School.

## (Devendra Bhatnagar-Class of 74)

The alumni, as gathered, from the Class of 1969 till 2014, all share that deep bond with every square inch of the fort, the school. The memories like a screening kept gushing out in stories flitting from one era to another. The emotions were palpable and we were all eagerly looking forward to the two day spectacle of visiting the house, being welcomed by the school assembly, being welcomed by the present Jayaji House body, playing the school teams in cricket & soccer, watching a beautifully choreographed entertainment programme by the Jayaji House. One has to be an 'Old Boy', literally to not be moved by the love and care given to us by Mrs. & Mr. Bakshi, the present Jayajians and the Principal Dr. Saraswat.

Jayaji House set the bar once again with meticulous attention to detail, immaculate preparations under the House Master Ms. Bakshi's guidance.

The banyan tree that guards the approach to the house and has nurtured generations before stood witness once more to vows avowed in the presence of ex house masters

Mr U C Bharaduj, Mr Virmani, Mr. Dhir (in absentia as he could not attend), Mr G.S Bakshi, ex teacher Jayajian Mr Abhimanyu Acharya and even Gangadin the house servant who served for 37 years and now at the age of 97 stood strong before us.

Recall clearly his brass bell ringing reveille each morning with his trade mark call- "*Utho panchii, hua savera. Sita Ram Bolo!*". We could see tears rolling out as this was a nostalgic moment for a lot of us. We graciously honoured them all.

The Old Boys then collected some fund totalling to Rs 1,25,000 which was handed over to the President SOBA to be sent to the school for the Jayaji House fund to be used for the ' House Common Room'.

The emphasis of this get together was also on mentoring/ meeting the present boys in addition to collecting a fund for the Common Room. The goal was to initiate a mentorship program to be started between the boys and various Old Boys from various fields the main ones being -banking, finance, engineering, law and the services to name a few.

We, the alumni had hosted two dinners at the Kadam Singh ka Bada & at the Gangwal Kesar Bagh besides a lunch for the Jayaji House.

Ms. Bakshi spoke her heart out at the lunch. We were drawn in to the passion she brings in mentoring the wards under her watch as a House Master, and to the finesse and effort put in with the Jayaji students in putting up a wonderful welcome.

Our visit at the Fort culminated with the 'Astachal'. Needless to say this remains the desire of each alumni when they visit the school to be drawn into the ethereal peace and calm that envelops each at this setting. There is a sense of merging with the cosmos with the setting sun as the backdrop. And there added that evening was a poem reaching out to the faintly twinkling stars yet to brighten the night sky that our poet recited.

We again left a bit of us on the fort and in the school, as we wound up our visit and left.

**Banjul Badil**  
Class of 1988

## (Post Script):

Jayaji House Reunion:  
I sat across the road,  
At the culvert leading to the House.  
I saw the play of shadows  
As another day unfolded.

I saw the stone tiled roof,  
Sheltering another generation within.  
The hustle bustle over the years  
Near the same.  
The red box sentinel stands in place  
In the lap of the ageless tree.  
A carpet, it stretched a welcome;  
Buntings & pennants marking the way.

Fresh scrubbed faces,  
Eager to the guidelines  
Of the House Master.  
An artist silhouetting portraits;  
The Prefect perfecting his oration,

'Good mornings', they sang in my ear.

I was drawn back to a time  
When I too was young,  
This very ground  
Today a verdant green,  
Then grated with pebbles and stone  
Each stubbed daily this and that a way.

A touch of serenity and femininity,  
I felt in the hardness of the stone.  
For much care and passion  
Seemed now running in its very veins,  
Life, it was vibrant in the public space.

I saw a sense of purposeness  
Pervading the youth.  
And noticed confidence in their gait.  
As they lavishly spoil us  
The next two days.

Jayaji was always special,  
Today even more.  
The baton over the decades  
Had changed hands,  
Many a time,  
Each adding to the lore.  
Stronger, better, firmer - the grip-  
A legacy that must be built  
And left for the next  
Around the bend of time.

But for today I can surely smile  
At the rhythm and the stride.  
For sure we remain the best  
In most things put to the test.

With the head held high  
Jayajians continue their march  
To a different drummers beat.

## (Devendra Bhatnagar-Class of 74)



# INTERVIEW

**Mrs Geetanjali Pandit is the celebrated author of the bestseller *Buddha at Work: Finding Purpose, Balance and Happiness at Your Workplace*. She is an alumna of XLRI, Jamshedpur and Lesley University, Cambridge, USA. Her career in Human Resources spans over twenty-two years. An articulate speaker and an incisive thinker, she has written two books on career management and several articles in the *Economic Times*, the *Financial Express* and *DNA*. She credits her success to the application of Buddhist principles at the workplace. She was one of the authors to visit the School during the Scindia Literary Festival. Ms Puja Pant, Staff Editor Qila Quotes in conversation with Ms Pandit.**

**Can we call your book 'Buddha at Work' a 'Self help book'?**

I almost feel like a Bollywood director or actor with that question which just begs the answer that *Buddha At Work* is a book with a difference! And by now its box office scores are really good.

Well, I hope that once you read it, you will join me and call it a novel with a difference or even describe *Buddha At Work* as a Business Inspiration book. I say this in all honesty as a very avid reader and not just as the author of the book. *Buddha At Work* is in a unique slot. An-autobiographical story with a fiction style narrative so that it reads like a novel, while being based on the reality of the professional world and all workplaces. Told in the best of story telling tradition. Yes, it has exercises, techniques that anyone can use and benefit greatly from giving it that 'Self Help' tag.

I use the exercises regularly and have benefitted tremendously from them. Readers now write in from all over India and even parts of the West to say that they are doing really well by using these methods.

My editor at Hachette India had once said that *Buddha At Work* is a Business Inspiration Book and I simply loved that term. So I would really like you to look at it like that. With a fresh perspective and a shared conviction that it is not just another self help book.

**Which age groups would you recommend it for?**

*Buddha At Work* has a broad appeal and may be appreciated by those studying in high school apart from all other readers. Avid readers of novels and those who just love reading may read it even before high school. Readers from all walks of life and therefore different age groups write to me and talk to me, so it seems to be cutting across age bands in a way that is very fulfilling as an author. I am filled with gratitude with the fantastic response to the book.

I do know for sure that those Scindians who browsed through and even read *Buddha At Work* during the Scindia Lit Fest in November 2017 would be amongst the youngest constituency of readers of *Buddha At Work*.

The exercises and even the skills of happiness, stress proofing and gratitude can be learnt and practiced from a really young age. So if the very young do not read *Buddha At Work*, it is still possible to benefit from it and hugely so, by practicing the techniques for learning and nourishing the skills of happiness, gratitude, and protection against stress.

I know for a fact that the young also have a fair degree of stress in their lives and not much defense against the anxiety and stress that they experience. This stress can be of disharmonious relationships in the family, the stress of family interactions, many times the stress of a parent's ill health, financial stress or anxiety and of course, immediate stressors of studies, performance in exams, the stress of friendships, peer pressure and relationships with the other gender and so on. So there is a relevance of *Buddha At Work* and its practical measures to help young readers. A major part of the book is about managing oneself better and bringing out one's finest elements, about creating purpose, goals and then remaining on course to achieving those. So these are elements that will resonate with young readers.

Young people joining work will find it particularly interesting. Those who worry about or think about improving people skills and their interaction with others will find it helpful. And of course, those with many more years of working experience will definitely find it relevant to their workplace woes and context.

**How transformative are the principles of Buddhism? How relevant are these to new patterns of relationships and modern workplaces?**



Ms Geetanjali Pandit



Ms Geetanjali Pandit giving a copy of her book for the School library.

When I look back on my own life and see how far I have journeyed, I totally know that Buddhism is transformative. Deeply so. I have been able to change my personal and professional life a 180 degrees from some very traumatic personal events and recrafted/rebuilt my professional life to reach an enormously satisfying level of success and repute.

Buddhism is training. This training is timeless. So there isn't a time which is not relevant for the application of these principles to our everyday life. Buddhism is not a religion (not in the way I have understood or applied it). It really is a holistic approach to my self, my life, emotions and my relationships with the world. It is an approach which is wonderfully empowering and liberating. It is enabling and makes the journey of life more enjoyable. It makes the everyday experiences easier.

My whole purpose and intent was to write for the modern workplace and for the modern mind. Which is why Buddha At Work is written as a modern story. With the very modern character called Gautam. Keeping the constraints of everyday life in view, no exercise in the book requires hours. All exercise are no more than a few minutes a day but yes there is a need to be consistent with these.

Precisely this question is posed by my character in 'Buddha At Work' to Gautam who says, "It is, indeed, true that the muni of the Shakya clan lived and taught nearly three millennia ago. But what he said at the time is true for all human beings even now. The struggles of his era and those of people today are one and the same, because human goals are universal and timeless-happiness, peace of mind, security and prosperity.

**Would you like to share any personal experience or some other interesting anecdote which links to the philosophy and power of Buddhism?**

Well, Buddha At Work is about my experiences and therefore shares rather candidly my story and my journey in faith. Buddhism is about enriching our daily life and living it with the wisdom, the appreciation that leads to happiness. Leads to the right view of life. As also the right effort.

I quote a small bit from the book directly about a time when as a first time people manager I met with aggression from my team members. This is a true and completely real episode from my first workplace after returning to India.

"Quite by chance, I overheard a conversation between BK and Mona, in which they were openly critical of me and my abilities. My initial feelings of hurt quickly gave way to anger. I approached my boss Ram with this issue, even going so far as to insist that he choose between me and the two people whom I now held squarely responsible for vitiating the work environment and my hitherto fulfilling professional life."

My boss Ram asked me to reconsider this and think of

ways and means to rise to the challenge of improving the situation. I called my 'guide or coach' Gautam and was advised to send my team members positive thoughts and prayers. "Gautam asked me to meditate and calm myself. He also suggested that while meditating, I keep BK and Mona's happiness in mind and send them goodwill. It would almost be like a prayer for their happiness. Gautam explained that he had taught this form of meditation, focused on friendship to many people.

"But I was in no mood to listen. I nearly told Gautam what to do with his precious advise. This is crazy, I thought. Their happiness? I wanted my happiness! Gautam was handing out impractical advice that couldn't be implemented. My entire focus was on scoring a point. I couldn't be bothered about the happiness of people who were little better than the backstabbing scum of the earth".

With the very difficult application of this guidance I was able to totally transform my thoughts, my view and then the relationship with BK and Mona. So much so that my relationship with Mona and BK eased, changed and became positive totally.

**Is it possible to find someone like Gautam Budhha in real life?**

I am somehow always asked this question because of the immense interest and curiosity that the character of Gautam has roused in readers and media. I am always faced with this question whether Gautam is a real character and whether I can introduce readers and even journalists to him.

Yes, it is possible to find Gautam Buddha in real life. Gautam is the highest and finest self that we all possess but always struggle to bring out. Gautam is not a stranger but the friend within. Yes, we have to still the mind a bit, become more aware of ourselves and manage our emotions such that emotions become our friends and not our enemy. So to answer the question, you are Gautam and I am Gautam.

**What would be your advice to the students and the teaching community regarding coping with daily pressures?**

I totally appreciate the pressures that both teachers and children experience. For teachers, teaching in the private education institutions the profession has undergone a sea change from the earlier times. It is much more demanding as a profession while many of the old bureaucratic stresses remain in place.

Given that opportunity to be a part of the elite institutions of higher education still continues to be so very competitive and that family and parental pressures are huge when it comes to academic performance as a means to getting admission to the right courses. Also considering that in our country these right courses are those which will help us earn our livelihood so if anything falls by the wayside in this linked chain of performance

from admission to earning, it feels like the heavens have fallen.

As a maverick and as someone whose academic career was totally average and yet having done well by all standards, I feel that stress on academic performance is many times misplaced. More important than academic performance is inculcating the right attitude, the skill of self discipline, the ability to collaborate with others, the ability to communicate well and then to continue to persevere in reaching goals that we set for ourselves.

I feel that the basis of ALL success is the ability to understand and manage one's own mind, one's own emotions. So anything that furthers this is the foundation and irreplaceable.

**Is there a Buddha way to cultivate inspiring conversations in organizations?**

Oh absolutely and thank you so much for such a beautiful question.

The Buddha way to cultivate inspiring conversations is rooted in respect and appreciation for oneself and for others. It all begins with this spirit of self esteem and respect for others. If I had to use your term of inspiring conversations, I would say that inspiring conversations start with the ability to listen with an open mind and a large heart to another's point of view especially when such point of view is different and even opposing to one's own. This would be a dialogue - open, respectful and accepting of differences.

**In the modern times when technology seems to have consumed the youth completely do you think events like Literary fests can succeed in generating interest in Literature?**

Indeed yes! A resounding yes! I have great hope that the young and the very young will be the next wave of readers. The changing age is going to push out the old ways and perceptions.

I feel very encouraged by the high IQ that so many of the young people now have. Their broad range of interests and exposure to the world and global practices is phenomenal. Technology is not a bar to reading but rather the platforms for reading will change and are changing.

Lit Fests are like an oasis - we can all quench our literary thirst at them and authors tend to bring their work alive in a manner that cannot be matched.

**Would you like to leave a message for the young Scindians?**

It is my privilege to have been a part of the Scindia Literary Fest in November 2017. The message to my young friends at Scindia School is - please make the most of the opportunity that your wonderful school is giving you. I am sure that even as you study hard, you will work harder still on understanding and training your own mind. In defining success for yourself without buying into someone else's definition of what is success in your life. Please be destination driven and not destiny driven because being destiny driven does not create value for anyone nor does it allow you to reach your destination.

Even as you train your own mind through calmness and composure, you must know that you are a Buddha in the depths of your life. And as a Buddha you are worthy of great respect. Extend the same respect to those around you as they are equally Buddhas and worthy of respect. Learn also to have a mind of gratitude for things other than those that can be bought with money. For some reason all of us have great appreciation and even gratitude for what we can buy. It is more difficult to have gratitude for things that money cannot buy but which are truly the treasures of life.

I leave you with these words from Gautam, "Life is not easy. Nor is work. Your inner confidence can keep you steady and at ease in the midst of a storm. It is up to you whether you remain calm or not. So learn to develop your confidence so that you can live and work with ease".



Ms Geetanjali Pandit with members of Qila Quotes Editorial Board

# Editorial Board...

**Staff Editor - English**

Ms Puja Pant

**Staff Editor - Hindi**

Mr. Manoj Mishra

**Editor-in Chief**

Chidghan Prabhu

**Senior Editors**

Dhruv Periwal

Shubham Agarwal

**Associate Editors**

Memoy Mishra

Chirag Rathi

**Art Editor**

Ishan Gangwani

**Student Photographers**

Hriday Soni

Rohan Khanna

**Photography**

Mr Kamlesh Singh

**Designed by**

Jitendra Jawale

**Cover Design**

Pranav Wadhwa

Jayant Kishnani

**Special Thanks**

Mr RK Kapoor

**The Scindia School**

**The Fort, Gwalior 474008, MP, India**

Telephone: +91-751-2480750

Fax: +91-751-2480650

Email: [office@scindia.edu](mailto:office@scindia.edu)

Website: [www.scindia.edu](http://www.scindia.edu)

OldBoys' Site: [www.scindiaoldboys.com](http://www.scindiaoldboys.com)

*Printed By Galaxy Printers*

*[galaxyprinters22@gmail.com](mailto:galaxyprinters22@gmail.com)*

*+91-9826214644*