

THE SCINDIA SCHOOL

The Founder

HH Maharaja Madhavrao Jayajirao Scindia

President

HH Maharaja Jyotiraditya M Scindia

Vice President

Mr Rajendra S Pawar

Members

Mr Vinay Modi

Mr Mahesh Gandhi

Mr Harpal Singh

Mr Arun Kapur

Mr Jyoti Sagar

Yuvraj Mahanaaryaman J Scindia

Mr Dipak Haksar

Mr Rajeev Dubey

Mr Ravi Saund

Mr Rajan Varma

Mr Banjul Badil

Government Nominee

Mr Harish Bhojwani

Mr Amar Jyoti Bindal

Ex-officio Member, Secretary & Principal

Mr Ajay Singh

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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 apology and contact the editor at niharikak@scindia.edu

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK



Dear Readers



As our class 10 and 12 students sit for their board examinations, it is time to reminisce about the rigorous four months filled with excitement, the academic rigour of the winter study camp, and round - the - clock activities. Our 127th Founder's Day was a perfect blend of tradition, innovation and achievements. The presence of **Dr S. Somanath**, Chairman of ISRO, as the Chief Guest added a special significance to the occasion. His inspiring words resonated with students and faculty alike, urging us to push boundaries and embrace a spirit

of scientific inquiry. Notable among the awards bestowed on Founder's Day was the Sam Pitroda Award-winning project of **Medhansh Trivedi** - a drone capable of carrying a human passenger - a true reflection of the ingenuity our school nurtures.

Beyond academics, our school organized a plethora of vibrant extracurricular, sports and adventure activities. The IT Fest, the 76th Republic Day celebrations, the first-ever TEDx event, and the Junior House Evening all provided platforms for students to showcase their skills and creativity. Our Brass Band once again swelled our hearts with pride when they marched on the Kartavya Path. The Round Square Conference reinforced our commitment to global learning, as did the international student exchange with Germany. Another group of American students from St. Mark's School, Southborough, MA is visiting us in March. We are making all-out efforts to build global connections and fostering collaboration.

Post Founder's Day, as is customary, various groups of students ventured out for adventure activities, a testament to our commitment to experiential learning, and to encouraging students to step out of their comfort zones to become future-ready leaders. This year's expeditions, from the 576-km cycling challenge, or the National Adventure Institute in Pachmarhi for grade 6th, to the Kuari Pass trek at 12,516 feet, tested endurance and built resilience in our students.

Our Old Boys have played an integral part in the growth of our school, and their endeavours are aimed at giving back to society. Whether it has been achieving milestones or organizing a TedX talk, the SOBA has been instrumental in upholding the Scindian traditions and values.

As we move ahead, I can visualize a bright path for us filled with opportunities for learning, growth and service. We will continue to strive for excellence.

Ajay Singh
Principal, The Scindia School

REPUBLIC DAY PARADE 2025

THE SCINDIA SCHOOL BAND AT KARTAVYA PATH



Republic Day Parade 2025



Children's Day

EDITORIAL

The four months since the Founder's Day have been a tapestry of changing seasons, each bringing its own colour to our landscape. While the crisp winter mornings wrapped us in misty serenity, the golden hues of autumn whispered stories of perseverance and triumph. The gentle chill of January warmed our hearts by the sight of young Scindians marching on Kartavya Path in Republic Day Parade 2025. As February's sun began to melt away the winter cold, it also lit up our hearts with hope, friendships and farewells. We have reasons to celebrate our values which continue to shape the leaders of future.

The 127th Founder's Day began with a grand morning assembly, flag unfurling, and a speech by the batch representative **Mr Sahil Arora** (ex- Jayaji, 1999). The day included the release of new publications and the inauguration of a student exhibition. Chief Guest **Dr S. Somanath**, ISRO Chairman and Secretary, DoS, attended the evening event, which featured the school song, orchestra, Principal's Report, and **Maharaja Jyotiraditya M. Scindia's** address. The day ended with a mesmerizing choreography performance.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS FOR 2023-24 on the Founder's Day

1. The Umang Mathur Memorial Trophy for the best in academics in Class XI was won by **Keshav Jhunjhunwala** of Jayaji House.
2. The Mahendra Mishra Memorial Trophy for the best Sportsman in Class XI was won by **Amogh Bhargava** of Daulat House.
3. The Maharaja Madhavrao Scindia II Medal for All Round Proficiency in class XI was won by **Keshav Jhunjhunwala** of Jayaji House.
4. The Sam Pitroda award for the best innovative project "A drone capable of carrying a human passenger" for 2024-25 was won by **Medhansh Trivedi** of Madhav House.
5. The R. B. Pawar Medal for scoring the highest percentage of marks in Mathematics in the class XII Board examination was won by **Swejeet Taparia** of Mahadji House and **Keshav Vallabh Bhagat** of Madhav House.
6. The Governor's Medal for scoring the Highest Percentage of Marks in the Class XII Board examination 2023-24 was won by **Krrishn Leelotpal Divyaa** of Ranoji House.
7. The Field Marshal Cariappa Shield for the best sportsman was won by **Dharmendra Singh Monga** of Jayaji House.

8. The Maharaja Jeevaji Rao Scindia Medal for All Round Proficiency in class XII was won by **Dev Pratap Bansal** of Jayappa House.
9. The Khurshid Lakdawala, Jr. House Efficiency Shield was won by **Kanerkhed House**.
10. The Guru Hargovind Singh (Gurdwara) Trophy for the best house in academics for the year 2023-24 was won by **Ranoji House**.
11. The Nepal Trophy for the best House in games & sports was won by **Ranoji House**.
12. The General Efficiency Shield was shared between **Mahadji House** and **Ranoji House**.

Celebrations

The school hosted '*Saaz-e-Rang*' IPSC Music Fest (Oct 27-29, 2024), featuring 16 schools and 350 students. Competitions spanned Indian and Western vocal, instrumental, and band performances, judged by esteemed musicians. The fest concluded with a vibrant closing ceremony graced by Chief Guest **Dr Smita Sahastrabudhe**, VC of Raja Maan Singh Tomar Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya.

The Valedictory Assembly for the Class of 2025, held on 7th February, was a poignant farewell filled with nostalgia and hope. It featured an inspiring address by **Mr Ajay Singh**, heartfelt reminiscing, symbolic candle-lighting, presentation of mementoes, followed by the Principal's dinner.

The school embraced the spirit of *Makar Sankranti* with vibrant kites soaring high in the sky, hot kachoris and mangodis. It was a celebration of tradition and joy.

The VP's breakfast for the Club of 90s was held on the sprawling lawns of **Ms Smita Chaturvedi's** residence to celebrate academic



Inter-house Swimming Competition



Jr Interhouse Hockey Finals

excellence. Attended by the Principal, Deans, Bursar, HoDs, and Housemasters, the event encouraged and honoured the high-achieving students.

Students enjoyed a fun-filled Children's Day with exciting games like tug of war, musical chairs, and spider walk. The evening program, hosted by **Mr Pathak**, **Mr Singh**, and **Mr Rajkamal**, and performances by the teachers, featured qawwali, songs, dances, and comic acts, leaving students in fits of laughter. Special performances by old boy **Mr Sandeep Agrawal** and Principal **Mr Ajay Singh** made the celebration even more memorable.

The IT Fest 2024, held from November 22 to 26, showcased technological creativity through quizzes, design challenges, and multimedia events. Jankoji House led the junior category, while Daulat House triumphed in the senior category, with students enthusiastically participating in themes like AI, cybersecurity, and futuristic innovations.

The 76th Republic Day was celebrated with national pride, featuring a March Past of the Houses and of the batches of 1975 and 1984, who were on the fort for their reunion. **Mr Anil Mehta**, the Chief Guest (Old Boy, batch of 1984 and a renowned cinematographer in the Bollywood industry) addressed the gathering, followed by the *Astachal* ceremony with floral tributes and patriotic songs and readings. A Sports Day for support staff and a patriotic musical performance by visually impaired students from *Ramakrishna Ashram* highlighted the day's spirit of unity and service.

On 25th January, the school hosted its first-ever TEDx Talk, organized by SOBA, featuring distinguished speakers from various fields. The event showcased inspiring journeys, from entrepreneurship and photography to technology, dance, and conservation. Young Scindians also shared impactful ideas on sustainability and social change, making it a memorable milestone.

All Junior Houses came together in full force to showcase talent at the Junior House Evening on 23rd January. From soul-stirring choir and instrumental performances to the energetic beats of Bhangra, every moment was a testament to the vibrant spirit of our students.

Extra Curricular

The Round Square Conference 2025 was held on the school premises from January 27 to 31, 2025, bringing together 160 participants from 18 schools across the country. Themed Environmentalism, the conference emphasized the importance of sustainability and proactive environmental efforts. The event, inaugurated featured Baraza sessions, creative activities, and a visit to Fort biosphere. Delegates engaged in discussions on cultural understanding, environmental issues, and leadership.

Scindians displayed their debating skills at the Junior Inter-House Hindi Debate Competition, deliberating on the topic 'exam marks are the true measure of a student's ability'. Kanerkhed House

secured first place, followed by Nimaji and Dattaji House.

The Assembly Hall resonated with the soulful melodies of Indian Classical Duet Singing and the electrifying energy of the Western Band Competition as young musicians showcased their exceptional talent in celebration of *Basant Panchami* during the junior group Inter-House competition.

Adventure and Sports

Our students participated in various Adventure and Labour Camps after the Founder's Day, successfully completing thrilling expeditions. Grade 11 completed an incredible 576-kilometer cycling expedition, while the other group which had gone for Surya top expedition, reached 13,000 feet despite challenges. 36 students from Class VIII C and D completed the *Kuari Pass* trek, embracing teamwork, endurance, and environmental conservation while reaching 12,516 feet. Class 6 students embarked on a thrilling 5-day adventure camp at the National Adventure Institute, Pachmarhi. Class 9th, divided into two groups, participated in labour camps at Datia, MP and Snehalya, Ahmednagar respectively. This experience fostered empathy, teamwork, and a commitment to service.

The hockey field witnessed an exciting Hockey A Group final between Ranoji and Madhav Houses. Both teams played hard, giving their absolute best on the field, but it was Ranoji who emerged victorious with a 5-1 win.

Ranoji House defeated Jeevaji House in the Inter-House Cricket A Group Final, with **Shresth Agarwal's** unbeaten 56* and 3 wickets leading to a 40-run victory.

Jankoji won the intense Junior Group Hockey Finals against Dattaji House in sudden death after a 2-2 draw and penalty shootout.

Rudraksh Bansal, **Divyam Bhagwani**, and **Arnav Agrawal** secured the silver medal in the MP State Tennis Championship, held in Vidisha, in the Under 17 category.

The Inter-House Swimming Competition was a thrilling event, showcasing outstanding performances across both senior and junior groups! In the Senior Group, Ranoji House emerged victorious with 215 points, securing the first place. In the Junior Group, Dattaji House took the top spot with 53 points.

Visits

We welcomed **Mr Mike Hankey**, U.S. Consul General and his team to our campus on February 10. Principal **Mr Ajay Singh** introduced them to the school's commitment to holistic education and service, while they shared valuable insights on U.S. universities for aspiring students. The visit also included discussions on our Fort Biosphere Project and a serene moment at Astachal.

On the misty morning of 17th January, 18 International Rotarians from 10 countries, along with their 5 crew members, made a



Founder's Day Chief Guest Dr. S. Somnath



Surya Top Expedition

memorable stop at our school during their Heritage India Bike Ride from Indore to Agra.



Visit of US Consul General

Seven students from Wisdom Global School, Haridwar were in the school for an exciting one-week exchange program. They explored, learned, and enjoyed all the activities the school had to offer, with paper mache being their favourite, followed by the visit to Fort Biosphere.



Rotarians on India Heritage Bike Ride at Astachal

On December 3, **Padma Shri Paresh Maity**, one of India's most celebrated contemporary artists visited the school. This visit provided the students an extraordinary opportunity to learn from and engage with him, while he shared his inspiring journey, tracing his transformation from a small-town artist in Bengal to an award winning painter.

The students of Gymnasium Neustadt an der Waldnaab, Germany along with their Principal and three faculty members were on an exchange visit to the school in the month of November. The team explored all the activities the school had to offer, enjoyed playing volleyball matches and enthusiastically participated in learning papermache art. Beyond the school grounds, the team explored the historical and picturesque cities of Gwalior, Orchha, and Agra.

From November 23 to 26, 2024, the school hosted author **Yuvan Aves**, who led nature walks, engaged students in biodiversity discussions, and delivered an inspiring talk on deep animism and environmental harmony.

Four students - **Ayaan Agrawal, Rudransh Agrawal, Swarit**

Varshney, and Yuvraj Sethia - along with their mentor, **Mr Abhinav**, had the remarkable opportunity to meet HRH The Duke of Edinburgh as part of the International Award for Young People (IAYP). This meeting involved an inspiring exchange on leadership, resilience, and service-values that the Duke of Edinburgh's Award embodies.



Meeting HRH The Duke of Edinburgh as part of IAYP

Workshops

Paper mache teacher, **Mr Veerendra Singh Nagvanshi** completed a specialized training program in Quality Management in Handmade Paper Making at the Kumarappa National Handmade Paper Institute, Jaipur. This program, held from December 30, 2024, to January 03, 2025, was conducted in collaboration with The Scindia School.

Ms Jaya Sahdev, Mr Chetan Bhatia, and Mr Kamlesh Singh attended the National Conference of the Society for Addiction Psychology (NCMSAP-2024) on 12th and 13th December 2024. Held at Amity University, the event provided them with valuable insights into the latest advancements in addiction psychology, focusing on prevention and rehabilitation strategies.

Thinklab hosted a Robotics Workshop on 7th and 8th January, engaging Grade VII and VIII students. Led by expert **Ashutosh Tripathi**, the workshop introduced students to concepts like Arduino programming, sensor calibration, and building functional robots.

Faculty Achievements

Mr Yogesh Sharma, a talented tabla maestro and HoD Music, showcased his remarkable skills in a mesmerizing solo tabla performance in Gwalior. In *Teen Taal*, he began with traditional *Peshkar* and presented compositions from the Ajrada and Lucknow Gharanas, concluding with captivating *relas, tukdas, mukhdas, and chakradars*.

Our music teacher, **Mr Deepanshu Sharma**, delivered a captivating performance of Raag Kirwani on the sitar in 100th Tansen Samaroh. Known for its soulful essence and intricate patterns, this raag beautifully showcased the versatility and emotive depth of Indian classical music.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS



Medhansh Trivedi

Medhansh Trivedi of Class 12 has developed the MTL0-01, a manned drone weighing 32 kg, reaching 80 km/h and 4 km altitude. His innovation earned the Sam Pitroda Award on the Founder's Day. On 19th December, he was invited to meet the Civil Aviation Minister, where he shared his journey and vision to launch his own company. Medhansh has been honored with the prestigious National Youth Icon Award 2024! He received invaluable advice and blessings from HH Maharaja Jyotiraditya M Scindia.



Ayaan Chintan Shah

Ayaan Chintan Shah and Ishaan Chokhani delivered captivating speeches at the inaugural TEDx Scindia School Youth edition. Ishaan's talk, "The Fort Biosphere: Breathing Life into Heritage," showcased his passion for preserving heritage through environmental sustainability, highlighting the vital role ancient forts play in modern conservation.



Ishaan Chokhani

Ayaan Chintan Shah of Grade XI secured the runner-up position at the Nanhi Chhaan National Essay Competition at Navrachana International School, Vadodara. His insightful essay on sustainability, under the theme "Has Greed Taken Over Need?" stood out among 15 national finalists.

The Scindia School brass band, under the leadership of Band Majors Prithvee Rajswarup Pathak and Madesh Ashok, participated in the prestigious Republic Day Camp 2025 at the D.G NCC in Delhi. The band delivered stunning performances for the Chief of Navy Staff, the Air Marshal, the Raksha Rajya Mantri, and at the War Memorial. They also proudly marched on the Kartavya Path during the Republic Day celebrations and performed at the Prime Minister's rally.

Adhiraj Singh won the Jury Choice Award at NYAF 2024-25 which was also featured on the Discovery channel. His book Elation highlights youth mental health, advocating empathy, support, and healthier coping strategies to prevent stress-related issues.

Aadi Dev Goel (Class 9) secured 6th place, and Anirudh Lohia (Class 8) secured 8th in the Aryabhat Astronomy Quiz, earning a visit to Kodaikanal Solar Observatory in May '25.

OLD BOYS' NEWS

Old Boys' Day 2024 was a joyous reunion filled with nostalgia and camaraderie, bringing together the 2014 and 1999 batches. The day began with a cricket match, followed by the SOBA AGM and house visits. The evening featured Ustad Amjad Ali Khan as Chief Guest, SOBA awards, and a special talk by Mr Vikram Pearce on his father. The celebrations ended with a lively performance by Jaipur Beats, making it a memorable event for all. The awards were presented to: SOBA Award to Arun Bhagat (1974 Mahadji), SOBA Cup to Delhi SOBA, and Young Turk Award to Madhur D Singh (1999 Mahadji).



Sushobhan Verma

Sushobhan Verma (Ex-Jankoji, Ranoji 2013) accomplished another milestone on November 17, 2024, by completing the Paradox Arizona IRONMAN 140.6 in Tempe, USA. Covering 3.8 km swimming, 180.2 km cycling, and 42.2 km running, he finished in 12 hours and 13 minutes. This achievement places him 6th among Indians in the AGR Rankings for World Athlete Status 2024 in his age group.



Speakers at TedX Talk

On 25th January, the school hosted its first-ever TEDx Talk, organized by the Scindia Old Boys Association (SOBA). The event embodied "ideas worth spreading," featuring distinguished speakers from diverse fields. Rohit Sipahi Malani emphasized self-benchmarking, while Vicky Roy and Amit Ashar shared their inspiring journeys in photography. Manjari Chaturvedi highlighted Sufi-Kathak's evolution, and Sachin Jha explored technology. Harshvardhan Dhanwate spoke on tiger conservation, and Wanchoo discussed Gandhian principles. Sidhi Vinayak Singh encouraged social change, while students Ayaan Shah and Ishan Chokani addressed mindset shifts and sustainability.



Batch of 1975 at Madhav Pavillion

On January 25, Old Boys from the 1975 and 1984 batches reunited for a nostalgic homecoming. Principal Mr Ajay Singh welcomed them as the 'Stars of Scindia,' celebrating their lifelong bond. Heartfelt speeches, cherished memories, and a soulful Ghazal performance by students enriched the occasion.

Sukhyog Singh (Ex-Daulat, 2021) has won the bronze in IDA Design Awards 2024 accessories category for the design of his conch bag made of ceramic. Sukhyog is pursuing his graduation from Savannah college of Art and Design, USA.

THE SCINDIA SCHOOL FOR ME: SHAPING IDENTITY AND VALUES

Looking back, joining the Scindia School as a child just shy of eleven years old, after having lived most of my life with my parents who were mainly posted abroad, significantly contributed to the person I am today.

The most important aspect was being introduced to Indian ethos, history, culture, and values. I suppose it also taught me how to live in India. I remember it was 1968, and the country was celebrating the 100th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, which culminated in 1969. Besides the usual talks, plays, and other events, one activity that everyone had to participate in was “*Shramdaan*”. This involved physical labour to build assets for the school, such as toilets for students and staff, seating and steps for the open-air theater, planting trees, digging to remove stones, and sweeping areas. We would sweat through these tasks (I had never sweated so much before), but there was a sense of elation in knowing we were contributing meaningfully to the school and society. It taught us the dignity of labour, and throughout my life, I have never hesitated to do any kind of manual work in public.

The first festival I participated in was Ganesh Chaturthi. Until then, I had only seen this elephant-headed god as a statue in our home. It was exhilarating to join the procession, submerge the idol in one of the school’s water tanks, and eat the *sattu ka prasad*. Of course, there were other celebrations, including Diwali and Holi. On Holi, we would eagerly wait for Madhav Rao Scindia to visit the school with his group to throw colored water on us - after we had bathed and cleaned up from the morning’s festivities! We also hoped he would convince the Principal to declare the next day a holiday.

The school’s location is another incredible feature that left a lasting impression. Situated on the Fort at the top of an outcrop, overlooking the plains below, one felt a deep sense of history and a connection to the world. Riding along the horse-riding path near the battlements, one could imagine Rani Lakshmbai leading her army into battle, which inspired thoughts about contributing to the country. The road up to the Fort, with its Jain statues, always evoked a sense of awe.

Scindia always encouraged students to discover and develop their best qualities, whether in sports or creative pursuits. I was introduced to the Indian classical notation system and played in the school and house orchestra. In the all-boys environment, my first major acting role was playing a young girl, complete with makeup and all the required accessories!

“Sir, there is a pair of gloves in my desk,” I once blurted out as we settled in for English class (we moved between classrooms to where

teachers were assigned). The English teacher looked at me, smiled, and asked, “Now, how did they get there, and what are they doing there now? Why don’t you write a poem about them?” So, I did! The poem was later published in the school magazine. Another time, I wrote an essay I was proud of, but the teacher, an American named Stephen Ferg, initially gave me 4 out of 5 marks because he thought it was too good to be mine. After some remonstrance, he awarded me the full 5 marks, and rather than feeling insulted, I was thrilled. Perhaps I needed similar encouragement for my literary inclinations later in life.

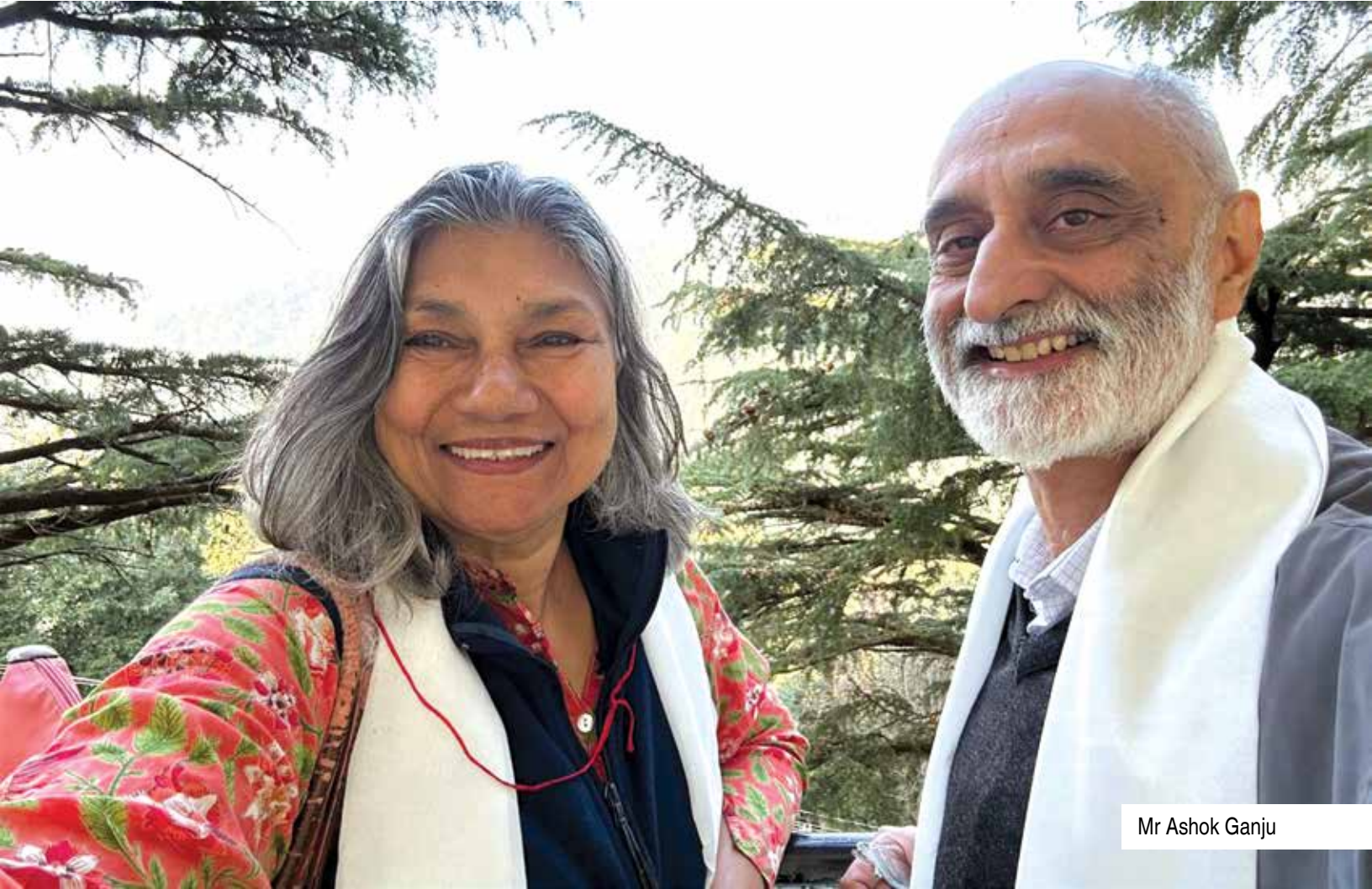
Where else would one have the opportunity to see all the greats of Indian cricket playing on the school’s cricket ground? **Ajit Wadekar, Viswanath, Eknath Solkar, Prasanna, Bishan Singh Bedi,** and others visited as guests of Madhav Rao Scindia. Seeing these heroes up close made an indelible impression on a young mind.

Evening *Astachal* was a time of reflection. As the sun set, the school would gather there for prayer and contemplation of the day. It brought a sense of peace and quiet, instilling the feeling that all was well with the world. Perhaps this was where the seeds for my meditative self were sown.

When I joined Scindia, I had lived most of my life abroad, had a strange accent (inviting giggles from my classmates), and was unsure how to navigate stressful and embarrassing situations. The school’s most positive trait was its caring environment. A senior was assigned as my mentor to guide me through the settling-in process. The house prefects and other seniors always looked out for me. I even recall the Principal intervening once when he saw an instance of bullying on a deserted stretch of road. The school nurse was a motherly figure, and students would find excuses just to meet her.

All these memories, from over half a century ago (55 years), flood back with clarity and nostalgia. I am sure Scindia continues to provide an environment for the development of well-rounded personalities, fostering the values of humaneness and compassion toward fellow beings and all sentient life.

Mr Ashok Ganju
(Ex-Scindian, 1968-1970)



Mr Ashok Ganju



SCINDIA SCHOOL, GWALIOR
MADHAV HOUSE
1948-49

Left To Right ---
Sitting on Chairs

—B. K. Madgavkar, Ramandhir, Jasvinder Pal Singh (H. P.), Rajiv Dhar (House Capt.), P. M. Khar (House Master), Ratan Shah (S. P.), Madhvendra Singh Jodon (P. Upadhyaya).

Standing 1st Row

—A. Raj, H. Trivedi, V. Sood, P. N. Agha, R. Thakore, A. Singh, V. Rathi, V. Kothia, A. Bajwa, L. Bhandari, S. Malhotra, H. Soni.

Standing 2nd Row

—A. Pachray, K. Parikh, L. K. Tiwari, P. Garg, K. Soni, D. Kapadia, A. Chitravarty, S. Jawa, A. Ganjoo, S. Khar, K. J. Singh, S. Wig, S. Kapoor, S. Patel.

Standing 3rd Row

—B. Mishra, P. Dar, J. S. Palpur, A. Bhargava, U. Nair, V. Thakore, A. Sachar, S. Tamboli.

Standing 4th Row

—P. Khosla, N. Patel, I. M. Singh, S. Kasi, K. Murnani.

Cherished Moments

FROM THE BASTION TO BOSTON

On March 26, 2024, we embarked on a journey that would leave a lasting impression on us when three of us - Sameep Mody, Keshav Jhunhunwala, I-Tanish Agrawal along with our teacher Ms Niharika Kulshresth participated in an unforgettable exchange program at St. Mark's School, Southborough, Massachusetts, USA. It proved to be a turning point in our lives- an academic and cultural adventure, exploring a world beyond our own.

Upon our arrival, we were warmly welcomed and escorted to Coe House, our home for the month, after completing a few formalities at the health center. Our student guides, **Stefen Zhang** and **Jacob Cifuentus**, quickly became not only our navigators but also our friends, providing support throughout our stay.

This exchange program was a cultural melting pot. We interacted with students from Korea, China, Ukraine, Russia, Lebanon, and many other countries. It wasn't merely an academic exchange; it was a glimpse into the lives, traditions, and perspectives of people from around the globe.

Attending classes in the 'American way' was a unique experience. The lessons were discussion-based, with students assigned readings to prepare beforehand. This approach fostered an inclusive environment where everyone had an equal voice. Notably, students were allowed to use their phones in class, but we were impressed by their responsibility and focus, even when the teachers stepped out. The absence of traditional textbooks, notebooks, and tests was surprising. Instead, our understanding of subjects was assessed through essays, allowing for deeper, more reflective learning.

Teachers had the freedom to design their classrooms to reflect their personality and teaching style. For example, Sameep's English classroom was vibrant, filled with guitars and posters of legendary bands like Guns N' Roses and Pink Floyd.

Mr L's Java class was another highlight. Each session began with a fun, unexpected game, which soon became a tradition we fondly look back on. His generosity extended beyond teaching - his classroom's resource corner stocked everything from snacks to stationery.

Keshav and I enrolled in an engineering class where we attempted to build a working model of a Maglev train. Although we weren't able to finish it before leaving, the project was a rewarding exercise in teamwork and creativity.

Sports played a significant role in our experience. **Keshav** took up lacrosse, while Sameep and I chose golf and baseball respectively. Each team had student managers who meticulously tracked performance statistics, and the rigorous conditioning routines reflected the aspirations of many students aiming to play as division 1 athletes in college.

One of my fondest memories is from a baseball match against Rivers School. We were trailing badly, but a series of daring plays by our

teammates led to a dramatic comeback. From a score of 0-9, we won 11-10 - a victory no one saw coming. The triumph, followed by a celebratory pizza party, made it an unforgettable day.

While **Keshav** explored theatre, I dove into improv comedy, where we learned to think on our feet through various exercises. For our graded project, we organized a live improv show. It was thrilling, as no one knew what would happen next. Sameep participated in Cooking and Culinary Arts, where he prepared interesting dishes alongside his classmates.

Another engaging class was on the Holocaust, where we went on field trips, watched films, and worked on creative projects, such as designing travel itineraries. These lessons were not only educational but also deeply introspective.

Outside the classroom, we enjoyed weekend excursions organized by the school. These trips allowed us to bond with our peers and explore local attractions like shopping malls and baseball games. The warmth and hospitality extended to us, from having dinner with Manasa Mahesh's family to celebrating Easter with the Cifuentes family, made us feel truly at home.

St. Mark's culture of empathy, respect, and open-mindedness left a lasting impression on us. St. Mark's being an Episcopal school, we attended chapel services every Wednesday and Friday, where the chaplain would reflect on global events, followed by a senior sharing a personal life lesson.

The school also marked the arrival of spring with the Spring Fling, a DJ party that ended with flavored ice cones for everyone. It was a joyous event that brought the entire school community together.

As our exchange program came to an end, we were filled with gratitude for the unforgettable memories and friendships we had formed. This exchange was more than just an academic experience - it was a journey of personal growth, global understanding, and shared experiences that will stay with us for a lifetime.

To the next group of students embarking on this incredible exchange, here's my advice: interact with everyone - students, teachers, coaches - anyone you can think of. The people you meet there will be extraordinary. Trust me, you'll miss that place a lot once you leave. The time will fly by, and just when you've adjusted to the schedule, it'll be time to go. Make the most of every moment!



MIT



Easter lunch with the family of Mr Neil Cifuentes

फोर्ट बायोस्फियर और किले के पक्षी

ग्वालियर शहर में हमारे विद्यालय सिंधिया स्कूल ने कई बड़े कदम उठाए हैं। उनमें से वातावरण को बचाने के लिए 'फोर्ट बायोस्फियर' परियोजना की शुरुआत 2020 में हुई। 'फोर्ट बायोस्फियर' के चार भाग हैं - जल-संरक्षण, ऊर्जा-संरक्षण, अपशिष्ट-प्रबंधन और रीवाइल्लिंग। रीवाइल्लिंग के विकास में पक्षियों का बहुत बड़ा योगदान रहा है। रीवाइल्लिंग में हम सभी बाहरी पेड़-पौधों को हटाकर स्थानीय पौधों का रोपण करते हैं। पक्षी जो बीज खाते हैं, और फिर उनके मल से जब वह बीज जमीन में गिरता है तो एक और स्थानीय पौधा उग जाता है।



सौजन्य : श्री अनूप व्ही.

किले पर पक्षियों के लिए रहने के स्थान हैं, खाने के लिए छोटे कीड़े एवं बीज हैं। पक्षियों को खाने के लिए अमरुद, बेर, पपीता, बेल तथा अनेक जंगली फल तथा सब्जियाँ भी उपलब्ध हैं। हमारा मानना है कि जब पक्षी बीज खाकर शहर के किसी भी कोने में निकलेंगे और बीट तो वहाँ नया पौधा उग जाएगा।

खाने की उपलब्धता की साथ ही पक्षियों को पीने के लिए पानी भी बहुत अधिक मात्रा में उपलब्ध है। किले पर चेरी ताल, रानी ताल, चमड़ी ताल, खम्बा ताल, धोबी ताल, कटोरा ताल, गंगोला ताल, मानसरोवर ताल और सूरज कुंड जैसे कई ताल हैं। ये ताल यहाँ कई सौ सालों से किले को पानी उपलब्ध करवा रहे हैं। तालों के कारण विद्यालय को बाहर से बहुत अधिक पानी नहीं मँगवाना पड़ता है। हाल ही में छात्रों ने विचार किया है कि क्यों न वो तालों में कोटिंग सोलर पैनल लगा दें जिससे सूरज की तेज किरणों के कारण पानी सूख न

पाए और पक्षियों को भी पानी मिलता रहे। विद्यालय ने सिर्फ अब अपना ही भला नहीं देखा, हमारे विद्यालय की यह सोच है कि वर्षा-जल को बचाकर हम शहर को भी पानी उपलब्ध कराएँगे।

पक्षियों के साथ-साथ हम सभी स्वच्छ हवा में साँस ले सकें इसके लिए हमारे विद्यालय ने एक खास प्रकार के स्थानीय घास को उगाया है। यह खास तरह की घास हवा में कार्बन की मात्रा को कम करती है। कार्बन सिंक करने वाली यह घास वातावरण में कार्बन को सोखकर हवा को शुद्ध बनाती है जो निश्चित रूप से हम सबको और पक्षियों को भी सुकून देती है।

अब यह सवाल आता है कि हम पक्षियों की संख्या कैसे बढ़ाएँ? पक्षियों को जो भी साधन रहने के लिए चाहिये होते हैं वह भी किले पर उपलब्ध हैं। पक्षियों की संख्या बढ़ाने के लिए विद्यालय 'बर्ड बॉक्सेज़' का प्रयोग कर रहा है। विद्यालय में नीम के सुन्दर पौधे और पेड़ मौजूद हैं। जिसके कारण पक्षी किले की ओर आकर्षित होते हैं। पक्षी नीम के पेड़ों पर अपना घोंसला बनाना पसंद करते हैं। यहाँ बबूल के भी बहुत सारे पेड़ हैं, कुछ पक्षी साँपों से अपने अंडों को बचाने के लिए अपने घोंसले बबूल के पेड़ पर ही बनाते हैं क्योंकि काँटे होने के कारण उस पर साँप नहीं आते।

यह स्थान शहर से हटकर है, यहाँ लोगों का आना-जाना बहुत कम है इसी कारण यह जगह एकांत है। वैसे तो पक्षी शहर से गायब हो रहे हैं लेकिन किले की ऐसी दशा नहीं है।

पक्षियों को भारी शोर-शराबे से दूर रहना ही पसंद होता है। तो यह किला पक्षियों के लिए जीते-जी स्वर्ग का अनुभव है इसीलिए साइबेरिया के दूर-दराज के इलाकों से सूरज कुंड में छोटे बत्तख आते हैं जो सर्दी भर यहीं रहते हैं और फिर वापस लौट जाते हैं। यहाँ गिद्ध भी पाए जाते हैं जो अक्सर शाम को कनेरखेड़ हाउस के पीछे के टावर पर बैठे दिख जाते हैं या फिर अक्सर विद्यालय के भोजनालय के चक्कर लगाते रहते हैं। ये अब विलुप्त के कगार पर हैं, इन्हें प्रकृति का सफाईकर्मी कहा जाता है, यदि प्रकृति को साफ रखना है तो हमें इन्हें बचाना ही होगा। किले पर अनेक प्रकार के अन्य पक्षी भी हैं और इनमें से कई तो विलुक्त होने की कगार पर भी आ सकते हैं। यहाँ पर तोता, कबूतर, मोर, मैना, कोयल, तीतर, बटेर, गौरैया, टिटहरी, कठफोड़वा, फाख्ता, हरियल, ग्रे-हार्नबिल, चील,

बाज, हुदहुद, बुलबुल, सारस, नीलकंठ, उल्लू, किंगफिशर, बगुला, रॉबिन, अबाबील, पनकौआ, बारबेट जैसी अनेक छोटी-बड़ी प्रजातियाँ देखने को मिल जाती हैं।

अगर हमें इस पृथ्वी पर जीवन को बचाना है तो पेड़ पौधों का बचाना होगा और पेड़ पौधों की संख्या बढ़ाने पर जोर देना होगा। पक्षियों को भी बचाना होगा क्योंकि पेड़-पौधे बचाने में उनका भी बहुत बड़ा योगदान है।

मयंक जिंदल

कक्षा 9, जयाजी हाउस

कुछ कविताएँ...



धूप - 1

दीवार पर गिरती धूप को देखकर

आश्वस्त होता हूँ

एक समय

जरूर आएगा

जब धूप की किरणें

कमरे के अंदर तक चली आएँगी....

धूप - 2

मेघ बालिका ने

धूप की किरणों को

यत्नपूर्वक तह कर

छिपा लिया है

अपनी धवल साड़ी के आँचल तले

मेघ-बालिका की अठखेलियों में

गुजरते

आषाढ़ के धूप, बारिश के दिन

धूप - 3

आषाढ़ के बादल

सावन की धूप को बाँधने

चले आए हैं

आओ सखी, झूले पर

मेघों को छू लें उड़कर... ..

धूप - 4

पहला

पहले दिन ही

तुम्हारी उदास आँखों में

बूँद-बूँद कोलाहल

सूरज

कितना निष्ठुर है मेघना...!!!

धूप - 5

अस्ताचल जाते रवि ने

अपनी निस्तेज किरणों की चादर

बिछा दी है

दूर्वादल पर

महानगर का यह कोना बहुत शांत है...

देव कुमार मुखर्जी

पूर्वछात्र - चैतन्य/जयप्पा सदन 1967-68

IN CONVERSATION WITH

MR VIKRAM PEARCE

On Founder's Day 2024, The Scindia School had the privilege of hosting Mr Vikram Pearce, son of our Founder Principal, Mr F.G. Pearce. He shared his father's inspiring journey, The Englishman Who Became Indian, reflecting on a legacy that began in 1927-28. Mr Vikram's deep personal connection to Scindia School made this visit even more meaningful, as it marked the beginning of his "pilgrimage" to all the schools his father established, with The Scindia School as the first stop.

Sahaj Agarwal: Good morning, Sir. Your father had a profound impact on Indian education, particularly through the Indian Public Schools Conference. Could you share more about his vision and transformation of Scindia School?

Mr Pearce: My father, born in 1892, studied at the University of London, where he met Annie Besant, president of the Theosophical Society. Influenced by her and Eastern philosophy, he moved to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) to serve as vice-principal of a Theosophical college based on Buddhist principles. He frequently traveled between India and Ceylon, aiming to train Indian and Sinhalese leaders in their own traditions rather than British ones.

By 1928, the Maharaja of Gwalior invited my father to help with the Sardar School, which was exclusive to Sardars. He agreed. Adopting the best aspects of British public schools while infusing Indian traditions, he transformed it into The Scindia School. Recognizing the need for standardization, he supported establishing the Indian Public Schools Conference (IPSC), of which he was the founding member, ensuring quality education across institutions.

Sahaj Agarwal: How did your father's principles influence your education, especially at Rishi Valley School?

Mr Pearce: My father believed residential schools foster independence and collaboration. He wanted education to fit the child, not the other way around, emphasizing learning through play. For example, children might cultivate a garden, learning math by measuring fertilizer and chemistry by testing soil pH. At Rishi Valley, junior school had no exams, allowing organic learning. He realized, however, that at higher levels, students needed structured assessments to integrate into the competitive world. I benefited

from small class sizes - my senior Cambridge class had just two students - enabling personalized learning.

Sahaj Agarwal: Could you share insights about your time at Leighton Park School in the UK and Manchester University?

Mr Pearce: My father allowed me to choose, and I opted for England. British universities required A-levels, so I attended Leighton Park, a Quaker public school, which aligned with nonviolence and no corporal punishment. I later studied electrical engineering at Manchester University. Moving to England at 16 alone was challenging - I travelled by ship to Italy, then by train across Europe. University life was my transition into adulthood.

Sahaj Agarwal: As a mentor to startups, what advice do you offer young entrepreneurs?

Mr Pearce: I started in the corporate world, specializing in control systems at the dawn of computer automation. American companies recruited British engineers, leading me to the U.S. My wife, an entrepreneur, believed I had business acumen. Initially, I struggled - three years of failures taught me resilience. Eventually, I combined corporate discipline with entrepreneurial lessons. Startups require adaptability, learning from failure, and blending structure with creativity.

Sahaj Agarwal: What message would you want to convey to our alumni, considering your father's legacy?

Mr Pearce: I believe my father would be proud of how Scindia's community has evolved. He always envisioned it as a place where future leaders could develop essential skills, particularly in collaboration and understanding diverse perspectives. Helping others ultimately brings greater fulfillment than personal achievements.

Sahaj Agarwal: Can you also discuss your mother's role in shaping your father's vision?

Mr Pearce: My mother was the daughter of a theosophist, and her family's connections to the movement influenced their meeting. She was trained in the Montessori method, which informed her approach to education. Her experiences and beliefs likely shaped my father's thoughts on schooling and child development.



Mr Vikram Pearce

THE HEART OF LEARNING

Let's begin by asking a question - Am I a teacher by choice or by circumstances? To answer this honestly, while the selection of a workplace and even the subject was circumstantial, the choice of being an educator was a conscious one. When I strived to become an educator, I prepared myself to make science look interesting, palatable, and challenging to my students. Least did I know that I was to become a mentor, a psychologist, an agony aunt, and a disciplinarian at different times.

I will make no qualms about this - I enjoy each of these roles but most of all I look forward to seeing the eyes of young pupils light up when I have explained a concept of chemistry that has long bothered them. The most satisfying moment in a classroom is when an excited student starts to extrapolate his understanding some what incoherently that he has assimilated so far in the lecture. It's akin to the satisfaction a chef must feel when a recipe he spent hours preparing finally is plated complete with garnishing or an orchestra conductor bowing down in the final moment of his music piece being staged.

However, with the passing years the techniques and methodology of teaching and learning have undergone a considerable change, and the following words are my perspective on the same. How do we teach a generation of students who learned to use a device even before they picked a pencil? How do we remain relevant to the Gen Z and Gen Alpha for whom every piece of information is available at their fingertips? Like every challenge, this too comes with its own set of solutions - the primary one being the good - heartedness of the students.

The first steps towards modern pedagogical techniques are to seek answers together with your students and the acceptance that no degree of online resources can replace the bond that you share with bright young curious minds sitting in your classroom. While letting go of some authority may be difficult for some teachers it accounts for some of the most empowered classrooms.

As modern-day educators, we need to move from didactic teaching to the realms of "teaching for effective learning". Classrooms where a teacher is simply a facilitator and a choreographer while the actual performances are done by the students. It's after all their lessons to learn! Their opportunity to falter and learn from those mistakes!

When I started teaching, I struggled to establish my gentle authority with my students owing to the small age gap between us. Times changed and now that I am comfortable in my class control, the struggle has begun anew... to let go of the authority to enable them to learn on their own. So, the real question is, are there any non-negotiables in your classroom? This one factor will include the broadest spectrum because as individuals our moral compass differs greatly from one another. While a certain type of body language and

verbal conduct may be acceptable to some, I expect my classes to interact happily while maintaining the highest standards of decorum and language. The standards I set for myself and my students are not easy to match and it requires constant reasoning and effective communication.

In the sequence of new challenges, the advent of digital and AI tools holds a prominent place. While on one hand, it has made learning engaging and collaborative, on the other the challenges of logistics remain. In an Indian school setup, it takes up substantial effort to ensure the smooth flow of digital-based learning- a challenge that is common to all urban schools. With network playing villain at times and at others, the teenagers' curiosity about the world unknown takes precedence over their love for learning. The expectation for teachers to continually adapt to new digital tools has even altered the parameters of professional validation, shifting focus from pedagogical expertise to technological proficiency.

In retrospect, I believe that as a society we are undergoing a change in our education system and the learning environment that we are in. Since educators are the first responders to a generational shift our experience is remarkably palpable.

In recent times, the professional ethos, level of attachment with the students, and our skills are under reforms. It is, therefore, time we allow our basic instincts to take precedence and remind ourselves why we are in this profession in the first place. After all, in a world full of chaos, the teacher chose a life of validation through his students' success- a life of stability over materialistic bling surrounding society.

I know that the decision to be an educator is also the choice of being a lifelong learner, of dedicating myself to the love of my subject and most importantly to a life that is fuller and richer not just by my achievements but also by the human value that I have added to hundreds of lives I have touched in the process.

Dr. Ishani Roy Chowdhury
Faculty of Chemistry

HOPE FOR 2025:

EMBRACING VEDANTA AND SUSTAINABILITY

As we look toward the year 2025, it's essential to reflect on our connection to the world and our role in it. Vedanta, a profound philosophy from ancient India, teaches us that everything in the universe is interconnected. This idea can inspire us to consider sustainability and how our actions affect the planet. Imagine the world as a vast tapestry, with each thread representing a living being, a tree, a river, or even the air we breathe. In Vedanta, we learn that although we may seem separate, we are all part of the same fabric of life. This interconnectedness means that when we take care of our environment, we also care for ourselves and each other.



In 2025, let us envision a world where everyone recognises their role in this interconnected web of life. By embracing the teachings of Vedanta, we can cultivate a sense of unity and responsibility toward our planet. We can foster a hope-filled future where nature thrives and all beings coexist harmoniously. I hope to realise these by taking action that starts with myself by cultivating compassion and to practice what Mahatma Gandhi when he said, 'Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed'.

Sustainability ensures that our planet remains healthy and vibrant for future generations. It involves making choices that protect our natural resources, reduce waste, and promote harmony with nature. By adopting sustainable practices, like recycling, conserving water, and using renewable energy, we can contribute to a healthier planet.

As students, you can lead the way toward a sustainable future. You can inspire your friends and family to understand the importance of caring for the Earth. Small actions, such as planting trees, participating in clean-up drives, or starting a school garden, can create a ripple effect of positive change. Can we set out measurable goals as to how we will further the biosphere at the Fort?

By embracing this philosophy, I aim to foster a mindset of sustainability and generosity, ensuring that my efforts contribute positively to both my personal growth and the well-being of our planet and its inhabitants. Remember, every little effort counts, and your choices today can lead to a brighter, more sustainable tomorrow. Let's work together to create a world where love, respect and care for our environment shine brightly.

Scn. Dipak Haksar
Ex-Madhav, 1976

THE INDOMITABLE POWER OF WILL: BUILDING RESILIENCE AND EMPATHY IN A CHANGING WORLD

In today's fast-paced, self-driven world, resilience and empathy often take a backseat. Many young individuals struggle to face failure and find it difficult to think beyond their immediate desires. They yearn for instant success, often with little regard for the needs or emotions of others. Empathy, once a cornerstone of human interaction, seems to be waning. To thrive in such an environment, cultivating the strength of willpower becomes paramount.



Willpower is the driving force behind overcoming adversity and achieving success, regardless of the obstacles. It entails valuing self-worth, developing a "never give up" attitude, and consistently striving for self-improvement. Iconic examples remind us of its importance: Helen Keller, despite being deaf and blind, became a renowned author and advocate, teaching the world the power of persistence. Thomas Edison, undeterred by thousands of failed experiments, exemplified the resilience needed to illuminate the world with his inventions. Similarly, sports icons like Serena Williams and Sachin Tendulkar achieved greatness through discipline, consistency, and continuous self-improvement.

Parents play an indispensable role in fostering these qualities in children. The foundation of willpower and empathy begin at home. By modelling behaviours such as perseverance, open-mindedness, and emotional strength, parents can shape their children's outlook. Teaching children to embrace failure as a learning opportunity, promoting teamwork, and encouraging them to pursue long-term goals with dedication helps mould them into resilient individuals. Simple practices, such as emphasizing effort over results and nurturing a growth mindset, prepare youngsters to face life's challenges with confidence and grace.

As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." Strengthening willpower isn't just about personal success—it's about creating a balanced, empathetic, and resilient generation ready to face the world's uncertainties. Together, with guidance and determination, we can inspire today's youth to be the architects of a brighter tomorrow.

Ms Smita Chaturvedi

Fort Fables

Ghost at Khamba Taal

I was a Day Scholar, and a resident of Barrack No. 9. Barrack Nos. 9 and 10 were adjacent and popularly known as "*Pichli Barrack*," where office staff resided. This area is now known as Admin Lane.

At the extreme left of our quarters, there was a staff residence initially occupied by **Mr Khandekar** and his family. After his retirement, it was converted into a ration shop. The inner portion of the quarter was repurposed as the Saturday Club House, where cultural programs were organized every Saturday. These included musical performances, *Sunderkand Path* recitations, and other gatherings open to all staff members. Sometimes, even school servants participated with their *Bhajan Mandali*, led by **Bhogi Ram**, who worked in the school library under **Mr G.P. Upadhyay**.

One particular incident from my childhood still makes me smile, and I would love to share it with you all.

It was a summer vacation Saturday, and a *Sunderkand Path* was organized at the Club House. The event started at around 9:00 PM and concluded around 11:15 PM, followed by Prasad distribution, tea, and snacks. As usual, the next session was a storytelling and gossiping time where we shared anecdotes and experiences.

Among those present was **Mr Ram Charan Sharma**, popularly known as "*Dau Maharaj*," a well-known figure on the fort. He was slightly short-tempered but deeply knowledgeable in spiritual matters. During the discussion, he confidently claimed to be a staunch devotee of Hanuman Ji and boasted that he had no fear of ghosts, spirits, or supernatural beings. He even claimed that he could control them anytime and anywhere.

Challenging his assertion, **Mr Muchrikar**, who was sitting next to him, said, "If that's the case, I dare you to go to *Khamba Taal* at midnight and hammer a nail into one of the temple walls."

After much coaxing, *Dau Maharaj* finally accepted the challenge. Armed with a hammer and a nail, he set off toward *Khamba Taal*, chanting "*Jai Bajrang Bali*" at the top of his voice. The distance between the Club House and *Khamba Taal* was only a ten-minute walk.

We eagerly waited for his return, watching the clock as minutes turned into an hour. By 12:45 AM we became anxious. It was decided that a group of young boys should immediately go to *Khamba Taal* to check on him.

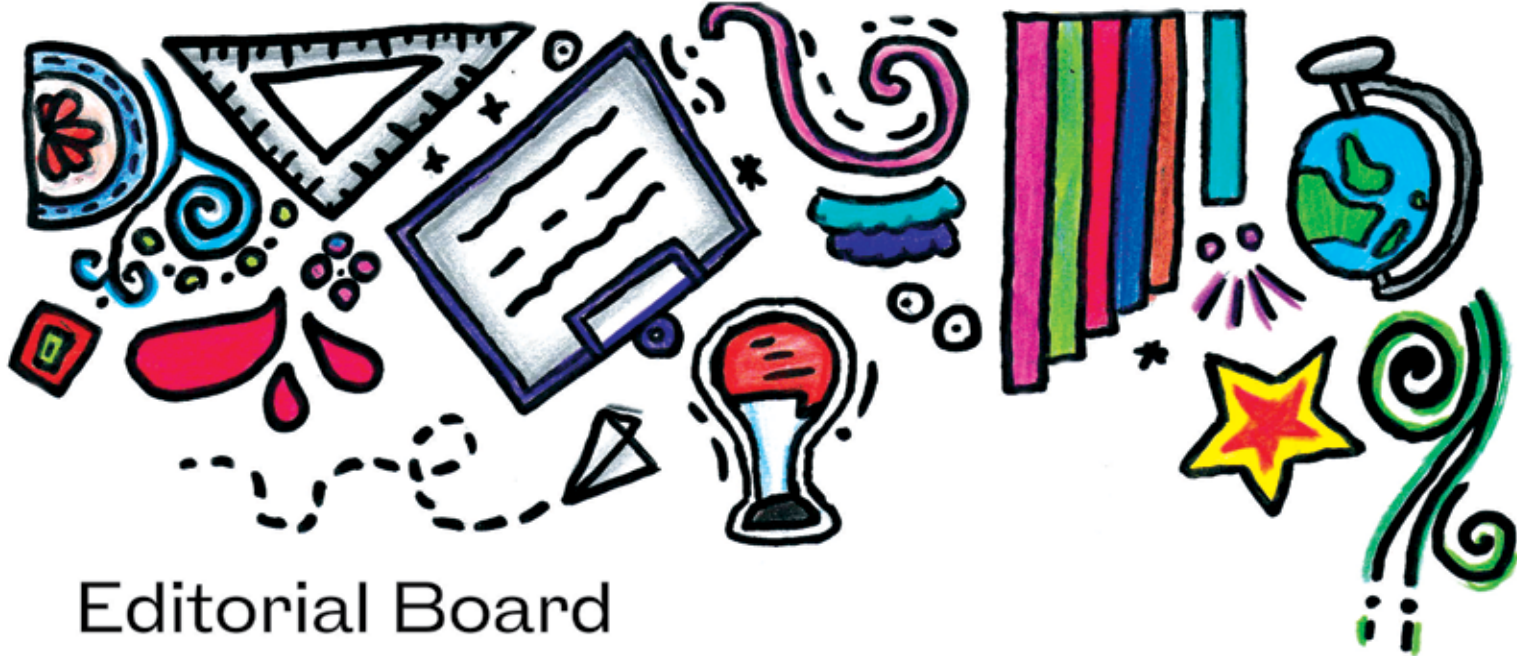


With torches in hand, we rushed toward the temple. What we saw there was both eerie and alarming - *Dau Maharaj* was lying unconscious inside the temple, his *dhoti* tangled with the nail he had hammered into the wall. We quickly sprinkled water on his face, and as he regained consciousness, he began to scream.

He recounted his terrifying ordeal: after hammering the nail into the wall, as he turned to leave, he felt something grab his leg. The next thing he knew, he had fainted. He had no recollection of what happened afterward. We realized that his *dhoti* got stuck in the nail, and while he tried to leave, he felt it pulling at his legs!

The incident left him visibly shaken for a long time. From that day onward, whenever someone challenged him to a similar task, he would simply laugh and walk away, never accepting such dares again.

Santosh Mastager
Ex-Vivekanand, 1980



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