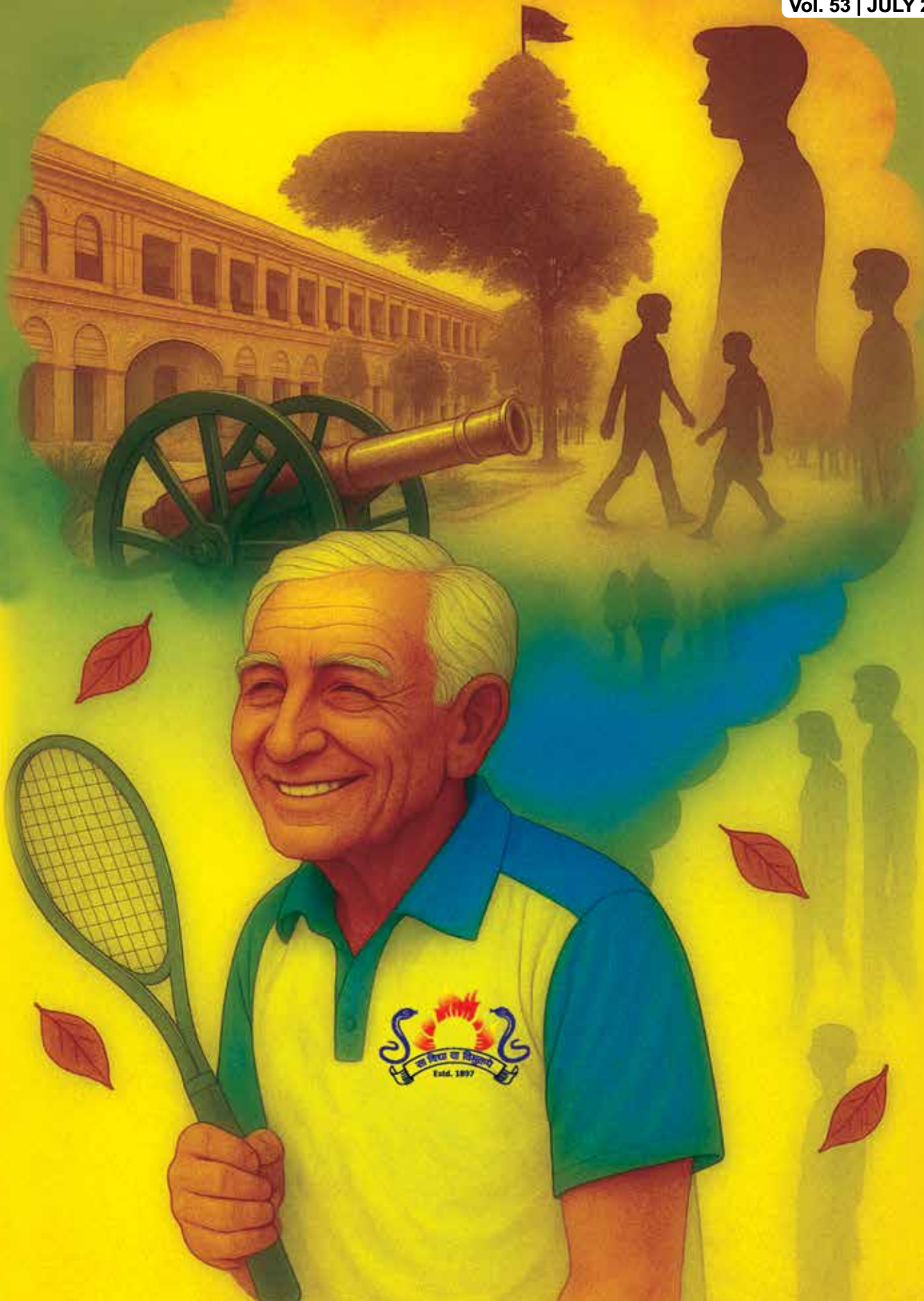




QILA QUOTES

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THE SCINDIA SCHOOL

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HH Maharaja Jyotiraditya M Scindia

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Ex-Officio Secretary & Principal

Mr Ajay Singh

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Mr Mahesh Vadilal Gandhi

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Mr Jyoti Sagar

Yuvraj Mahanaaryaman J Scindia

Mr Rajeev Dubey

Mr Ravi Saund

Government Nominee

Mr Harish Bhojwani

Mr Amar Jyoti Bindal

Invited Members

Mr Dipak Haksar

Mr Rajan Varma

Mr Mitul Dixit (President SOBA)

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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



Accolades earned by us in the last term have been as bountiful as the rains we have received on the Fort, painting our campus into a vibrant tapestry of different shades of green. The Scindia School has once again lived up to its ethos of excellence-not just in academics, but across every arena of school life.

The Board results have been phenomenal - stellar average of 90.75% of class 12th to 87% of class 10th highlight the dedication of our students and the mentorship that shapes them. But the story of our institution has never been just about numbers. It has more to do with the soul of the school- the

people who give it life. We also crossed several milestones in sports and extra-curricular activities. Our cricketers retained their championship, swimmers won medals, and equestrians galloped to glory. SMOAT like always turned out to be a venue for cultural confluence, celebrations and creativity in performing arts. Adventure activities and service project during the summer validated our commitment to developing the values of perseverance and teamwork.

We are proud to share that The Scindia School was bestowed with the titles of 'Outstanding Standalone School in Tech Practices' and 'Excellence in School Management Software Integration' at the ET Education TechEDU India Awards 2025. This prestigious recognition affirms our commitment to blending tradition with cutting-edge innovation. Equally inspiring is our recognition as a leader in sustainability. The Scindia School has been ranked #1 in the Sustainable Schools of India Green Rankings 2025! This achievement reflects our unwavering dedication to eco-conscious practices and environmental responsibility.

We are in the process of continuously upgrading our infrastructure and resources in keeping with the evolving needs and advancements. Our Chemistry lab bears a new look, and so does our Teachers' Resource Centre and computer lab, with newly acquired iMacs. Jayappa house is undergoing renovation, and the revamping of Old Jayappa and Old Daulat is in the offing.

Our old boys brought laurels to their alma mater. Foreign Secretary **Mr Vikram Misri** was the voice of the nation during the historic 'Operation Sindoor', **Mr Pankaj Mishra** was appointed CDBT member, **Mr Ashok Gajapathi Raju** became Goa Governor, and Aishik Ghosh advanced Higgs boson research. **Anubhav Sachan** excelled in international polo, **Mr Girish Chandorkar** completed Annapurna Circuit trek, and our SOBA chapters continued to inspire by their philanthropic endeavours.

This year, we also stood tall in global arenas. International exchanges with the USA, Germany, and Japan gave our students transformative experiences—fostering cultural empathy and lifelong friendships.

Let's Celebrate a term of excellence together and continue to shine brighter!

Ajay Singh

Principal, The Scindia School



Sham-e-Ghazal



ET Education TechEDU India Awards 2025

EDITORIAL

As the monsoon paints the Fort in lush hues of green, each raindrop seems to echo a celebration of success. Students - old and new have been welcomed by the rains which have filled our taals to the brim, bringing the campus alive with joy and abundance.

Our Board Results for 2024-25 have been spectacular! The Batch of 2025, Class 12, achieved an impressive 90.75% average, setting a new benchmark. Class 10 students also performed commendably with an 87% average, reflecting dedication and mentorship. Together, they exemplify Scindian values and leave behind a proud legacy.

We were bestowed with 'Outstanding Standalone School in Tech Practices' and 'Excellence in School Management Software Integration' award at the ET Education TechEDU India Awards 2025. We will continue to strive for excellence and set new benchmarks in education.

We are proud to be ranked #1 in the Sustainable Schools of India Green Rankings 2025! This achievement reflects our deep commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility.

Our Fort Biosphere is more than just an idea, it's a thriving ecosystem where young minds grow into eco-warriors of tomorrow.

Celebrations

Sham-e-Ghazal on 2nd April marked an evening dedicated to the soulful art of *Ghazals*, introducing students to this poetic musical tradition. Audiences were enthralled by renditions of classics immortalized by legends like **Jagjit Singh**, **Pankaj Udhas**, **Farida Khanum**, **Ghulam Ali**, and **Asha Bhonsle**. From the heartfelt performances of Grade 9 students to a mesmerizing recital by our Principal, the evening was a testament to the power of music in bridging generations and emotions.

The Scindia School proudly hosted the Gwalior Sahodaya Samiti's Annual General Body Meeting on 3rd May, with 28 schools participating. The event fostered collaboration and shared purpose. Led by Principal **Mr. Ajay Singh**, the day was marked by thoughtful exchanges, successful reviews, and a spirit of unity and growth.

Is all humour acceptable? Or does it come with responsibility? The Scindian Talk House of 6th April sparked a compelling conversation around the thin line between humour and sensitivity. Students delved into how words meant in jest can sometimes cross into hurtful territory and how being mindful doesn't mean being silent.

The Ladies Club brought India's vibrant diversity to life with their

celebration themed "India in Scindia." The evening featured colourful state-specific attire, cultural performances, and lively games.

A musical play "*Swaraj Ek Krantikari Andolan*" performed by students at SMOAT on 19th April, paid tribute to India's freedom fighters and their revolutionary spirit. Through stirring performances portraying legends like **Bhagat Singh**, **Rajguru**, **Sukhdev**, and **Chandrashekhhar Azad**, they paid heartfelt homage to the martyrs of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

Junior House Reports on 25th April saw Junior House representatives take the stage at the Assembly Hall, sharing their house journeys, milestones, and proud moments. From academics to activities, it was a celebration of growth, teamwork, and individual achievements.

On 25th April, SMOAT came alive with the 90-minute-long play presented by the Hindi Department- "*Ek Aur Dronacharya*", a gripping play by **Shankar Shesh** that mirrors the struggles of today's teachers, caught between principles and pressures in a flawed education system. Directed by **Mr. Manoj Mishra**, the characters assayed by the students came alive on the stage.

English Annual Play, staged on Friday at SMOAT on 26th April, brought alive the timeless tale of The Strange Case of **Dr Jekyll** and **Mr Hyde**. The gripping adaptation explored deep themes of duality and inner conflict, leaving the audience spellbound and emotionally stirred. Through seamless transitions between the two characters, evocative props, and haunting music, the students demonstrated remarkable acting and storytelling finesse.

Inter House Manika Ghosh Memorial Art Competition for Group B and C took place on 31st March, featuring various art forms like Wood work, Paper Mache, Metal work, Clay Modelling, Painting, etc. 120 students participated, with two representatives from each



Annual English Play- The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

house in each event. The students showcased their creativity, enthusiasm, and dedication to art, exploring diverse topics, colours, and techniques.

The 20th edition of the Suryodaya IT Fest 2025 (April 8-9) was inaugurated with the theme “AI for Good: Shaping a Better Tomorrow,” emphasizing the positive impact of artificial intelligence. The Scindia School emerged the overall winner, lifting the Champion’s trophy after a series of close, competitive rounds.

The 8th Scindia Model United Nations Conference provided a platform for students to engage in diplomatic simulations and global issue discussions. With over 230 student delegates from 25 prestigious schools across eight committees, including UNICEF, UN Women, *Lok Sabha*, and the UN Security Council, the delegates deliberated on critical global issues. The Best School Delegation award was won by St. Xavier’s School, Sirsa.

In the month of April, Project Teams based on LSIP reviewed key areas - Wellbeing, Feedback, Communication, Induction, and Policies - to drive impactful change. They presented their findings and actionable recommendations at the Project Review Meeting on 28th April, shaping strategic improvements for a better school environment for all.

Senior House Reports held on 17th March at the Open - Air Theatre, marked the culmination of the academic year, honouring outstanding achievements in academics and sports. House representatives took the stage with pride, presenting the accomplishments of their houses and the Housemaster of each house presented awards to students.

Brass Band 2025 Honours : Our brass band students who marched on *Kartavya path* in RDC 2025 were honoured in the morning assembly of 11th March. Their dedication, discipline, and excellence continue to uphold the legacy of the school.

On the World Earth Day on 22nd April, students participated in activities promoting environmental conservation and sustainability. Participants expressed their ideas through drawing, sketching, and graffiti, choosing from topics like rewilding, water management, waste management, energy conservation, and organic farming.

Our students shone at the Assam Dharohar Heritage Fest 2025 at SKV Gwalior, securing top positions in folk song and traditional cuisine competitions. Their performances reflected Assam’s rich culture and true Scindian spirit. Congratulations to **Shlok, Aryan, Sarthak**, and **Ranveer** for making us proud!

The Scindia School marked National Science Day with a special assembly celebrating the spirit of scientific exploration. The session featured an engaging science quiz, an insightful presentation on Indian women in science, and reflections on why we celebrate this day. A wonderful tribute to curiosity, knowledge, and innovation!

The “Know Your Friends” outing to *Orchha* offered new students a joyful and welcoming start to Scindian life. With ice-breakers,

reflective discussions, poolside fun, and DJ sessions, the event and venue fostered friendships and eased their transition. It built trust, empathy, and a strong sense of belonging in a warm, supportive environment.

Principal **Mr Ajay Singh** and **Mrs Anamika Singh** hosted the Principal’s Breakfast, a warm welcome feast for new students and faculty on 13th July. Though rain forced the event to the dining hall, the atmosphere remained friendly and inviting. Thoughtfully prepared food and personal greetings fostered comfort and connection, as senior staff and pastoral members joined in to support and engage with the newcomers.

On 11th July, the school hosted a University Fair featuring over 60 universities from six countries. Students from Classes 9 to 12 engaged with university representatives, gaining insights into courses, admissions, scholarships, and campus life. The event empowered students to explore global academic options and make informed decisions about their future paths.

On 5th July, the new students of Grades 6 to 11 gathered in the Assembly Hall for an engaging workshop with our Well-Being Counselor, **Ms. Jaya Sahdev**. Through discussions, role-plays, and reflections, students explored the essence of friendship, resolving conflicts, and showing respect, especially in interactions with girl students on Fort. The session reinforced values of empathy, camaraderie, and responsible conduct

Ms. Niharika Kulshresth led a workshop on Bullying Prevention and Empathy Building for Junior Houses on 10th July. Through interactive discussions and activities, students explored the impact of bullying, the power of empathy, and the importance of speaking up. The session encouraged open dialogue, self-reflection, and collective responsibility in creating a safer, kinder school environment. The students found it very engaging and helpful.

As part of our LSIP programme designed to reshape the future of our school through a journey of co-creation, collaboration, and collective growth, the school organized an off-site Faculty Development Programme on the weekend of 26th July in *Orchha*, led by **Mr. Sounak Chakraborty**. The objective was to enhance teachers’ skills in pedagogy, technology, and professional growth. Nineteen enthusiastic educators participated in engaging activities, quizzes, and a talent show. The workshop, both insightful and enjoyable, concluded with a visit to the *Betwa* riverside, guided by local historian.

Faculty Achievements

The debut of our Music teacher **Mr Deepanshu Sharma** as a music director marked a major milestone with his film Thank You Zindagi winning Best Short Film at the prestigious ARFF Berlin International Film Festival. Adding to the acclaim, the film also received a Certificate of Excellence at the 14th Kolkata Short Film Festival, earning national and international recognition.



Sports Banquet



World Earth Day

Mr Pushpesh Pandey, Faculty of Math completed the Basic Mountaineering Course with A grade at the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi. The training, held in rugged and high-altitude terrains, enhanced his technical climbing skills, endurance, and leadership. He summited Hurra Peak and gained invaluable experience in rock, snow, and ice craft techniques.

Investiture Ceremony: Prefectorial Board 2025-26



19 prefects were appointed for the investiture ceremony held on 7th July. Their Names, Designation and Houses are as follows:

Ayaan Agrawal- Senior School Prefect- Jayaji; **Shresth Agarwal**- Deputy Senior School Prefect- Ranoji; **Ayaan Chintan Shah** - Deputy Senior School Prefect- Madhav; **Swarit Varshney** - Academic School Prefect- Jayaji; **Dhir Bharat Jhun Jhunwala**- School Prefect- Jayaji; **Parth Agrawal**- School prefect- Ranoji; **Aarni Sharma**- Cultural School Prefect- Ranoji; **Bhavesh Mittal**- School Prefect- Mahadji; **Arnav Joshi**- School Prefect- Mahadji; **Abhiraj Singh Parmar**- School Prefect- Jeevaji ; **Jayant Agrawal**- School Prefect- Jeevaji; **Kavin Singh Chhatwal**- School Prefect- Madhav; **Rudransh Agrawal**- School Prefect- Madhav; **Ryan Batra**- School Prefect- Shivaji; **Bhavya Saini**- School prefect- Daulat; **Yuvraj Sethia**- School prefect- Daulat; **Madhesh Ashok**- School prefect- Daulat; **Sahil Kilhore**- School prefect- Jayappa; **Ishaan Chokhani**- School Prefect- Jayappa

Exchanges and Excursions

On 15th May 2025, 26 Scindians and 2 teachers went for an enriching Japan tour, visiting Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka. Highlights included the Osaka Expo, Hiroshima, Universal Studios, and Kansai University. Students experienced Japan's culture, discipline, and innovation, gaining confidence and global exposure through local interactions and immersive educational experiences.

In the month of April, five students visited St. Mark's School, USA, with mentor **Mr. Jagdish Joshi**. The exchange blended academics, sports, and cultural exploration across Boston and New York. Living in dorms and engaging in campus life fostered independence and global understanding. They returned enriched with friendships, insights, and unforgettable experiences.

From 9th to 13th March 2025, six students and two teachers from St. Mark's School, USA, joined The Scindia School for a vibrant exchange. Through academic sessions, cultural visits, and shared meals, they experienced India's heritage and hospitality, fostering mutual respect and strengthening the bond between the two institutions.

As part of the German Exchange Program, 10 Scindians and 2 teachers visited Munich, Nürnberg, and Kassel. They engaged in language classes, cultural visits, and real-world interactions, enhancing global awareness and empathy. Highlights included museum visits, a student podcast, and learning about German public safety systems and social etiquette.

Adventure and Sports

Our team of students completed the Ladakh Service Project by building a classroom at Lamdon School, Sumoor. Apart from this, their project included a trek to Shanti Stupa and Leh Palace, followed by cultural immersion at the Silk Route Festival and sand dunes. The team trekked 35 kms to reach Warila Pass situated at an altitude of 17429 feet.

Students from all houses participated in the Cross-Country Run on 23rd February with spirit and determination, proudly wearing their house colours. Energised by cheers and encouragement, they showed remarkable endurance. Junior House boys excelled, finishing in a block. The event celebrated resilience, teamwork, and the strong bonds of the Scindian community.

The U-17 Scindia School Cricket Team went head-to-head with Tansen Cricket Academy on 24th March in an intense practice match ahead of the H.H. Maharaja Madhavrao Scindia Memorial Cricket Tournament. Both teams displayed remarkable skill, determination, and sportsmanship, making it a thrilling contest. The Scindia School secured a well-fought victory with a 24-run lead.

Students vs Teachers Water Polo Match on 21st made waves! With teamwork and skill, the teachers secured an 8-5 victory, but the real win was the energy and sportsmanship on both sides.

The 28th Annual Sports Banquet was a celebration of achievements in sports, and a lesson in determination. Our esteemed Chief Guest, **Mr. Mir Ranjan Negi**, shared his inspiring journey- one of facing adversity, rising above criticism and ignominy, and staying true to his passion for the game. The film '*Chak de India*' was inspired by the story of **Mr. Mir Ranjan Negi**.

Welcome

We welcomed **Mr Sanjay Choudhary** to the Science Department, **Mr Lokesh Kumar Awasthi** to Accounts and **Ms Mahima Nanda** as the French Faculty. **Mr YPS Ramakrishna** joined the Math Department, and **Mr Saptarshi Bhattacharyya** joined the English Department. **Ms Sagarika Pradhan** is our new SEN Counsellor.

OLD BOYS' NEWS



Mr Pankaj Kumar Mishra (ex-Jayaji, 1983) who was serving as Member (Finance) of the Atomic Energy Commission was one of the four IRS officers appointed as the member of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).

We are proud to share that our esteemed old boy, **Mr Ashok Gajapathi Raju** (ex- Chaitanya, 1968), has been appointed as the Governor of Goa. This milestone is a proud moment for the entire Scindian community.



Girish Chandorkar (ex-Jayaji, 1975) completed the Annapurna Circuit Trek in Nepal. He carried the school banner of the 50th Reunion celebrations of his batch to Thorong La Pass, one of the highest trekking passes in the world at 5,416 meters (17,700 feet). He took a photograph at the summit, proudly displaying the banner against the majestic Himalayan backdrop.

Palaash Bhargava (ex-Ranoji, 2011) is graduating from Columbia University with a PhD in Economics, specializing in topics related to education, social networks, behavior and household finance. He will soon join the University of Chicago as a postdoctoral scholar in the Department of Economics and the Harris School of Public Policy. Following this, he will take up a position as a Senior Research Fellow at the Max Planck Institute in Germany.



Mr Sandeep Agarwal (ex-Shivaji, 1980) has been working tirelessly to make the world a healthier, better and safer place. Through posture correction workshops and yoga sessions, he promotes physical well-being and mindful living. Additionally, he conducts traffic awareness programs to foster responsible road behaviour.

Aishik Ghosh (ex-Ranoji, 2011), a UC Irvine postdoctoral scholar in physics and astronomy – in conjunction with Whiteson and researchers from France's Irene Joliot-Curie Laboratory, the University of Massachusetts and Belgium's University of Liege – introduced an AI technique for high-dimensional statistical inference in ATLAS that vastly enhanced scientists' ability to measure the Higgs boson's width, one of the most elusive Higgs properties.

In June, Scindia School alumni organized a *Bhandara* in front of the Lokayukta office, Gomti Nagar. Inaugurated by UP Lokayukta Dr.



Sanjay Mishra, the event saw active participation from association leaders and families, who distributed *Prasad* and hosted a grand feast, celebrating community spirit and service.



On March 17, Lucknow SOBA donated seven wheelchairs to Charbagh Railway Station, enhancing accessibility for travelers with mobility challenges. The event, attended by Scindians and DRM Mr. Sharma, showcased alumni-driven social impact, highlighting



SOBA's commitment to community service and fostering a culture of empathy and proactive support in public spaces.



Lucknow SOBA's *Holi* celebration on March 16 at the Poolside Banquet Hall, Lucknow Golf Club, was a vibrant success! With more than 65 attendees, the event featured gulal, flower petals, and Chandan, creating a joyous and eco-friendly atmosphere. Laughter, music, and togetherness embodied the true Scindian spirit of celebration.



Anubhav Sachan (ex- Jayaji, 2024), currently at the University of Warwick, UK, played in the B3 division of the prestigious SUPA Winter Nationals Polo Competition. With over 120 universities participating, his team emerged as runners-up in the National Championship, a remarkable achievement in one of the world's largest university polo events.



Mumbai SOBA organized a networking dinner for the old boys. The highlight was inducting the recent Class of 2025 into Mumbai SOBA and warmly welcoming them into the SOBA fraternity.



STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS



53rd MP State Swimming Championship

The 53rd MP State Swimming Championship was held in Khandwa from June 1 to 5, and our swimmers made us proud! **Aditya Sharma** stood out, securing 2 Bronze Medals in the 800m Freestyle and 4x100m Freestyle Relay.



Winners at the HH Cricket Tournament

20th HH Maharaja Madhavrao Scindia Memorial Cricket Tournament was held from March 28 to April 1, 2025, with participation of eight schools. The Scindia School clinched the title for the second consecutive year. They defeated MNSS, Rai by 41 runs in the finals. The Scindia School cricketers got the award for Best Batter: **Pranet Pathak**; Best Bowler: **Abhijay Pratap Singh**; Best All-Rounder: **Bhavesh Mittal**. **Ansh Kumar** (MNSS, Rai) got the Best Fielder award.

13 of our students represented the school at the NIDJAM District Athletics Trials held on April 6 at the Synthetic Track, Khel Gaon, Gwalior. Out of these, 8 students delivered exceptional performances, earning their place to represent the district at the upcoming National Inter District Junior Athletics Meet (NIDJAM) in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. The medals won are as follows: **Yuvaraj Singh** – Gold in 60 Meters; **Akhand Pradeep Rai** – Gold in Long

Jump; **Anant Shivhare** – Gold in Shot Put; **Arjun Lamba** – Gold in Triathlon C Group; **Yuvaraj Singh** – Gold in Pentathlon; **Ishaan Gupta** – Silver in 600 Meters; **Abhigyan Singh Rathor** – Silver in 80 Meters Hurdles; **Ekam Singh Dang** – Silver in Triathlon A Group; **Arnav Jain** – Silver in Triathlon B Group.



Horse Riding Team at Delhi Horse Show

The Scindia School won 10 medals at the prestigious Delhi Horse Show. In Open Hacks, Bronze medal was won by **Shriyans Agarwal**, **Madhavnath Kaushal** and **Kiaan Dasgupta**. In Junior Hacks, **Shriyans Agarwal**, **Madhavnath Kaushal**, **Sayush Agrawal** and **Swaraj Mahadik** won Bronze medal, while **Kiaan Dasgupta** got silver. **Rajyavardhan Singh** won Bronze medal for Lemon and Spoon and **Ved Deshmukh** for Stick and Ball.



Young Astronomers- **Aadi Dev Goel** and **Anirudh Lohia**

Anirudh Lohia and **Aadi Dev Goel** visited premier solar observatories in *Kodaikanal* and *Nainital*, and leading research institutes in Bengaluru. Exploring historic telescopes, advanced optics, and interacting with scientists, they gained valuable insights into astronomy. The experience ignited their curiosity and broadened their understanding of space science and research.

ROYAL MAHADJI:

A BOND FORGED IN STONE AND TIME

Atop the timeless Gwalior Fort, The Scindia School stood like a world apart. And within this world, tucked in the quiet strength of the South Block, existed a house that wore its identity with a certain lazy pride - Mahadji House. Fondly known as Royal Mahadji, it was more than a residence for its boys. It was a state of mind.

In 1976, I entered the school in senior sixth standard, a batch unique in the school's history. We were the only sixth standard ever housed in the senior school before the class returned permanently to Junior School. That early induction was our abrupt initiation into a life we would carry forever.

Mahadji was not known for chasing trophies. We were not desperate for victories in inter-house competitions or lining up for the Efficiency Trophy. We did not hunger for the top spot. Ours was a house content in its skin, watching the chaos of ambition unfold from a comfortable distance. That earned us the name Royal Mahadji; not for honours or dominance, but for the effortless grace with which we lived.

Mahadji house sat beside the mess, looking over a square called Ram Chabutara where a small Hanuman ji temple stood. That square was our centre of gravity. During House Day, it transformed into a stage alive with music, lights, and performances rehearsed with the same seriousness as a final exam. It was also where we gathered, talked, played, and sometimes just indulged in irrelevant arguments and random teasing that led to bouts of uncontrolled laughter.

Just across from us was *Katora Tal*, a shallow, rectangular-shaped pond that historically stored water for warriors during prolonged conflicts. It was a favourite spot for reflection, idle talk, or simply sneaking a moment of peace. Few places in the school had the same quiet magic.

The house was presided over by **Mr. K.G. Gaur**, our housemaster, whose gentle presence became the soul of Mahadji. Unlike the fearsome disciplinarians of other houses, Mr. Gaur was calm, distant, and almost philosophical in his approach. He rarely raised his voice. In many ways, he personified the spirit of a non-aspiring royal Mahadjians; dignified, content, and quietly wise.

Prefects were responsible for rules and punishments. The most common ones came not from great mischief, but small lapses - dirty nails, unpolished shoes, or being late for Prep or PT. The consequence? A run around the riding field. By the time you finished the loop, lungs heaving, shoes coated in dust, you'd learned your lesson; not through reprimand, but repetition. The luckier ones were made *Murga*. There was occasional slapping for those who really needed to be disciplined.

One of our house duties was to ring the iron bell that announced

dinner time. It was a simple task, but one we took pride in. The sound of that bell echoing across the stone paths felt symbolic - a Mahadji voice, calling the hungry to a sumptuous meal. The same bell, and the boy who rang it; known as the *Ghanta* incharge, also served as the informal timekeeper for the evening *Astachal*. The *Ghanta* incharge held a quiet power, and often, in a small act of loyalty, would delay the bell by a couple of minutes to allow a friend rushing across the field to make it in time.

Of course, not everything was idyllic. The toilets were notorious - forever low on water, forever high on frustration. Then there was the *Garma*, the ancient water boiler. Every winter morning, it became the most sought-after resource. Seniors, with their unspoken authority, used up the hot water, while juniors settled for the infamous *Kaua Marna*; a quick splash of freezing water on the face, enough to jolt you awake and remind you of your place in the hierarchy.

We entered as boys; some unsure, some afraid. But Mahadji shaped us, gently, patiently, into men. Into dreamers and doers, rebels and thinkers. Into people who still carry that house colour in our hearts. Mahadji was where lifelong friendships took root, where the bonds of brotherhood were forged. It was in the common room, during late-night chats, in dormitories after lights-out, during inter-house A, B, and C team matches, and while doing laundry or lining up for the evening snack *Nihari*, that we formed a strong bond. Gwalior-based boys brought in a different kind of comfort. Their homes became our havens during holidays. Their families, our guardians.

When we passed out, stepping into colleges and universities across the country, we took with us more than a mark sheet. We carried the Mahadji spirit — laid-back but resilient, rooted but open, proud but humble.

Even now, decades later, when we gather as old boys, we talk of Mahadji with a lump in our throat and a glint in our eye. Because no matter where life has taken us; across continents or careers, it was in that stone barrack, beside the mess, facing the temple square, that we first found ourselves.

Mahadji was not just a house. It was a heartbeat, a brotherhood, and above all, a real home away from home.

Atulya Mishra (ex- Mahadji, 1983)

HOME IN THE '60S- WHEN SCHOOL WAS HOME

As a ten-year-old, I should have been petrified at the thought of exchanging a warm and loving parental home for an oddly situated boarding school. But no-I was full of beans, totally excited to travel to Gwalior, without any idea where it was on the map, and to live in a Qila that had horses! And lots of potential friends.

Ms Lakdawala, the Junior School Principal, conducted an entrance test and, impressed by my English (and kindly overlooking my dismal Hindi), welcomed me in. I promptly fell in love with her! I was drafted into Sidhartha House, where the House Master, Sharma Sir, welcomed me and cheerfully passed me on to the House Matron, Mardon Ma'am.

Now, this lady was fascinating! Thin and gaunt, her constant companion was a lit cigarette between her fingers. Her Anglo-Indian voice was tobacco-coated, and the air around her gave her a smoky halo. Who knows-maybe it was this aura of hers that led Anil (Gupta) and me to dive into the forbidden pleasure. We found enough secluded spots behind our House to light up Cool, a menthol brand that, according to the advertisements, freshened your breath!

The two years in Junior School passed in a flash. The House wasn't a barrack but a home, with neatly arranged beds and blue-grey counterpanes in dormitories filled with young inmates who were raucous and abrasive, as well as gentle and generous. The boy whose bed was beside mine, Sethi, came from Uganda and happily shared his beautifully printed comics, which I devoured passionately. Parents regularly sent parcels of goodies, which we shared and wolfed down within minutes. Some boys hid their tucks, and their cupboards were fair game! It was here that I made friends for life.

Then came Senior School. My friends Mahesh (Sethia) and Kallol (Chatterjee) went to Shivaji and Madhav Houses, while Anil (Gupta) and I were allotted Ranoji. There was no Matron here - we were now 'adults' - and though our House Master, **Mr. Devi Shankar Sharma**, was kind and encouraging, I did miss the comforting presence of Mardon Ma'am... and the unstinted approval of Ms Lakdawala!

Ranoji, I soon came to believe, was unique. It had the most genial seniors. We freshers were simply asked to introduce ourselves in the Common Room. The seniors good-naturedly let us go after we had cracked a joke, recited a poem, or sung a song. I danced to "*Aao Twist Karen!*" from Mehmood's Bhoot Bangla, and that was that.

Ranoji, at the time, was widely referred to as the "Bania House" - no guesses why! Also, perhaps because it was in a phase where it won nothing, it carried a somewhat lightweight image. It pleases me

no end to imagine that the upturn began in my final year when we won the Inter-House Cricket Trophy. Thereafter, the House gained momentum, and the boys turned it into a competitive force, ensuring its perch high up on the totem pole.

Among my most enduring memories of my home in the '60s - and there are thousands! - is the visit of the House Master to my room. I had just been made Prefect and had been assigned a room to myself. Enthusiastically, I was putting up posters of beautiful actresses on the wall when **Mr. Devi Shankar Sharma** knocked on the door. His eyes swept over the room. I saw his glasses haze slightly as his gaze lingered on the posters adorning the wall. He looked away, cleared his throat, and whispered, "Latif, you should remove the pictures. They will distract you."



Every time we left the Qila to go home for vacations, we cheered that we were "out of jail!" And when we returned, at the *Urwai Ghati*, we loudly lamented our "return to jail!" But the moment we stepped into our House - it was Home Sweet Home!

Aly A. Latif (ex- Ranoji, 1969)

RANOJI HOUSE
THE SCINDIA SCHOOL
1967-68



From Left to Right

Sitting on Floor :- S. Halder, A. Patankar, H. Amin, Niraj Gupta.

Sitting on Chairs :- N. K. Taparia, B. K. Chhatwani (H. P.), B. P. Singh (H. P.), M. Gaur (S.P.), Shri Devi Shanker (House Master), S. Guha (H. P.), C. M. Adhikari (H. P.), A. Birla, Ali Latif.

Standing 1st Row :- D. Chhatwani, A. Mehta, S. Tiwari, N. Kamdar, Uday Phalke, Pradeep Sharma, J. L. Wadhwa, Anil Gupta, A. Singhani, A. Bhargava, Sandip M. Shah, N. Mantri.

Standing 2nd Row :- S. Khanna, B. S. Mane, Chandradip Dass Gupta, S. Sharma, Vijay Phalke, Matish Shah, D. P. Singhal, Ram Krishna Agarwal, Atul Kumar Jindal, Ashok Goyal, Rajesh Mohan Johary, Pavan Gupta.

Standing 3rd Row :- Mahendra Kumar Kedia, J. M. Maheswari, S. Mantri, Chandrakant Gupta, Vinod Kumar, G. Gandhi, Sonil Bhargava, P. S. Guha, Asim Gupta, A. Jain, Beni Madhav Roy.

(Photo by Y. Studio Gwl.)



Ms. Lakdawala with Dattaji House on a trip to Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, and Puri, highlighted by a special meeting with Shri Biju Patnaik

नाट्य-अनुभव: सिंधिया स्कूल

जितनी कलाएँ इस संसार में विविध रूप में विद्यमान हैं, वे सभी “नाटक” रूपी समुद्र में आ मिलती हैं और रंगमंच पर अपनी छटा बिखेरती हैं। नृत्य, गीत-संगीत आदि नाटक को सम्पूर्ण बनाते हैं। यदि आप नाटक से जुड़े हैं, तो आपमें सभी कलाओं का अंश पनपने लगता है। यही कारण है कि छात्रों के ‘व्यक्तित्व के समग्र विकास’ के लिए उन्हें “नाटक” में भाग लेने की नसीहत दी जाती है।

तारीख २२ अप्रैल २०२५ | शुक्ला स्मृति मुक्ताकाशी रंगमंच। समय ७ बजे से..... एक और द्रोणाचार्य। कक्षा ग्यारहवीं, दसवीं, नौवीं एवं आठवीं के छात्रों को निष्णात अभिनेताओं की तरह अदाकारी के जलवे बिखेरते देखना एक अभूतपूर्व अनुभव था। नाटक देखते-देखते अनेक प्रश्न और विचार एक साथ आये।

सबसे पहला सवाल यही आया कि वह कौन पहला अध्यापक होगा, जिसने नाटक विधा को शिक्षा में पिरोया? फिर गर्व महसूस हुआ सिंधिया स्कूल की वार्षिक नाट्य-परंपरा पर, कि साल-दर-साल यहाँ एक से बढ़कर एक नाट्य-प्रस्तुतियाँ होती हैं। यह भी कि इस बेजोड़ शैक्षणिक गतिविधि ने कितने ही अभिनेताओं, निर्देशकों और कलाकारों को जन्म दिया अथवा उनकी प्रतिभा को मंच देकर उन्हें खुद को तराशने का अवसर दिया।

विगत दो दशक की ही बात करें तो अनेक पूर्व छात्रों ने अपनी औपचारिक पढ़ाई सफलता पूर्वक सम्पन्न करके, अभिनय की रुचि को आगे बढ़ाया। अनुराग सिन्हा ने ‘ब्लैक एंड व्हाइट’ फिल्म से ज़बरदस्त शुरुआत की। आज जब हम उनके काम की फ़ेहरिस्त देखते हैं, तो अभिमान होता है। उनकी हालिया रिलीज पुरस्कृत फिल्म ‘शैडो असेसिन्स’ में उनका काम देखते ही बनता है। फिल्म निर्देशक अनुराग कश्यप को कौन नहीं जानता? मैत्रेयी बाजपेयी भी एक लेखक निर्देशक के रूप में अपनी प्रतिभा दिखा रहे हैं। अभिनेता राज जुत्शी ने तो वर्षों पहले अपने अभिनय का लोहा मनवा लिया था। पूर्वछात्र शादाब कमाल, शशिभूषण, विकास कलंत्री, कुशल टंडन आदि ने भी अपने अभिनय से अपनी अलग पहचान कायम की।

हिन्दी विभागाध्यक्ष श्री मनोज कुमार मिश्रा पिछले दो दशक से नाट्य गतिविधि में छात्रों की अभिरुचि को बेहद करीब से देखते आये हैं। अपने अनुभव साझा करते हुए उन्होंने बताया कि उन दिनों नाटक “कौमुदी उत्सव” का नाट्य-अभ्यास

चल रहा था। चाणक्य की भूमिका शादाब कमाल को मिली। पात्र को एक चोटीदार विग लगाने का सोच-विचार चल रहा था। अगले दिन के अभ्यास में देखा तो शादाब सिर मुँडवाकर चले आये थे। ऐसा था जुनून उस समय के छात्रों में नाटक के प्रति। वैसा ही मुक़ाम उन्होंने पाया।

सिंधिया स्कूल की नाट्य-परंपरा भी यही है खासियत कि गुम-सुम छात्रों के ‘झिल - मिलाते’ स्वरूप को अभिव्यक्त कर देती है। यहाँ की वार्षिक नाट्य मंचन परंपरा आरंभ से ही समृद्ध रही है। जिन नाटकों ने हिन्दी साहित्य एवं रंगमंच की दुनिया में प्रतिष्ठा प्राप्त की है, लगभग सभी नाटकों का मंचन यहाँ हो चुका है। जब यहाँ से बाहर निकलकर छात्र अपना परिचय देता है और कहता है कि मैंने ‘तुगलक’ किया है तो लोग चौकन्ने हो जाते हैं। ‘अभिज्ञान शाकुंतलम’ में राजा दुष्यंत का अभिनय करने के बाद छात्र अपने को तैयार कर लेता है कि अब तो मैं कोई भी भूमिका निभा सकता हूँ। इस आत्मविश्वास की वजह यही है कि इन छात्रों को बहुत प्रतिभावान एवं समर्पित गुरु मिले। नाट्य-अभ्यास में एक छात्र भी नहीं पहुँचा तो साइकल, स्कूटर जो भी मिला, उठा कर हाउस जा रहे हैं। दूसरे शिक्षकों से मिन्नतें कर रहे हैं, अलग से पढ़ाने के वादे कर रहे हैं।

यहाँ की नाट्य-परंपरा में हिन्दी अध्यापक श्री आत्माराम शर्मा व श्री विष्णु शरण सक्सेना जी का बड़ा योगदान है। उनकी सेवा-निवृत्ति के बाद से श्री मनोज कुमार मिश्रा इस परंपरा को साधते चले आ रहे हैं।

अभिनय सीखने के लिए एक सरल तरीका यह भी है कि आप ‘कर-करके सीखो’। आप अपने विद्यालय, महाविद्यालय या नगर में होने वाले नाटक देखने जाइये। प्रदर्शन के बाद अभिनेताओं और निर्देशक से मिलिये। अपनी रुचि बताइए कि आप नाटक करना चाहते हैं। इस तरह किसी भी एक थिएटर ग्रुप से जुड़िए। उनके साथ काम कीजिये प्रॉप ‘मंच सामग्री’ बनाना, मंच सजाना, नाटक के समय ‘मंच सामग्री’

को लगाना-हटाना, रूप-सज्जा करना, वस्त्र पहनाने में सहायता करना आदि से शुरू करके आप नाटक को समझने लगेंगे और अभिनय आपको आने लगेगा।

अभिनय की दुनिया में अपनी छाप छोड़ने वाले अभिनेता मार्लिन ब्राण्डो के अनुसार “अभिनय व्यक्ति की एक ‘आत्मिक’ अंतर्गता” है। ये बिल्कुल सही बात है। जब आप किसी चरित्र को मंच पर प्रस्तुत कर रहे होते हैं, तो आप अपने भीतर बैठे किसी अन्य मनोभाव को जी रहे होते हैं। यह किसी अनजानी जगह पर जाने जैसा होता है। कई बार आप रोमांचित होते हैं, तो कई बार हैरत में पड़ जाते हैं। कई बार आपसे अभिनय ठीक-ठीक नहीं हो पाता है, तो लगता है कि मंच पर आप एकसार नहीं हुए। जितनी बार आप अभिनय करते हैं, उतनी बार आपको अपने से मिलने का सुअवसर मिलता है। आप अपने व्यक्तित्व की परत-दर-परत खोलते जाते हैं। किसी पात्र को ठीक-ठीक निभा लेने पर स्वयं को आनंद की अनुभूति तो होती ही है, साथ ही अनजान बंधनों से मुक्ति का एहसास भी होता है।

अच्छी भूमिका निभाने के लिए आपको अभिनय भी दमदार करना पड़ता है। क्या ये अभिनय सीखा जा सकता है? क्या अभिनय सिखाया जा सकता है? नसीरुद्दीन शाह जैसे कद्दावर अभिनेता अक्सर कहते हैं कि अभिनय सिखाया नहीं जा

सकता। तो फिर इतने गुरु और प्रख्यात संस्थान कैसे बन गए जो अभिनय प्रशिक्षण के लिए जाने जाते हैं? राष्ट्रीय नाट्य विद्यालय, नई दिल्ली से गोल्ड मेडलिस्ट, अभिनय में निष्णात कालजयी श्री आलोक चटर्जी सदा से ही अभिनय के प्रशिक्षण की बात करते रहे। वे इस बात पर जोर देते रहे कि सिद्ध गुरु से अभिनय कला सीखनी चाहिए। ये बहस रंगमंच के गलियारों से लेकर फिल्मी दुनिया तक आज भी ज्वलंत है।

इस बहस में, एक बात बहस के योग्य नहीं है, वह है ‘सीखना’! भले ही कोई आपको सिखा न सके, मगर आप सीख जरूर सकते हैं।

संक्षेप में कहें तो नाटक जिन तत्त्वों से बनता है, वे तत्त्व आप सीख सकते हैं और विशेषज्ञ आपको प्रशिक्षित कर सकते हैं। मगर इन नाटकीय तत्त्वों को मिलाकर, उनको अपने व्यक्तित्व में सजाकर, रंगमंच पर आप ही ‘जगमगा’ सकते हैं! इसे कोई नहीं सिखा सकता !!

श्री गणपत स्वरूप पाठक
हिंदी-विभाग



IN CONVERSATION WITH

MR NEIL CIFUENTES AND MS KATE ERICKSON

Mr Neil Cifuentes and Ms Kate Erickson visited The Scindia School with the students who had come from St Mark's School for the exchange programme. Mr Cifuentes is the Director of Global Citizenship at St Mark's School, while Ms Erickson teaches religion in the school.

How does the teaching environment here differ from your home institution?

Neil: I find that the environment here is very disciplined, harmonious, and dedicated. The students are respectful and hardworking. The faculty members are kind, engaged, and knowledgeable. They are deeply invested in the development of the student body, which is very inspiring.

Kate: The tempo of the school day is quite different from that in the USA. We have fewer classes per day, each meeting for longer periods, but the trade-off is that we only see our classes three days per week. I appreciate the continuous instruction and the emphasis on broad, survey-style subject knowledge that The Scindia School provides.

What were your first impressions of the school and its atmosphere?

Neil: A beautiful campus, a beautiful setting, and wonderful people. Everyone is so welcoming and helpful.

Kate: Serene, beautiful, and disciplined.

How has this exchange challenged or expanded your perspectives on education?

Neil: I believe that partner exchanges like this one enrich the depth and breadth of an institution. They offer opportunities to better understand people from different cultures and bring diverse perspectives into the campus and classrooms. These experiences help build meaningful, lasting friendships and eliminate stereotypes. They are a step toward creating global citizens. Professionally, such exchanges allow teachers to learn and adopt different pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning.

Kate: I love growing in my profession by observing other excellent

teachers in action. I feel fortunate to witness the dynamic and engaging approach used at Scindia.

What aspects of Indian culture have you found most fascinating or inspiring?

Neil: I love the history and culture of India! Although I don't know much yet, I'm learning. I enjoy the natural beauty, the food, and I especially appreciate Raga music.

Kate: As a teacher of religion, I find India's religious diversity both fascinating and informative. I have been very excited to experience religious traditions that are new and unfamiliar to me.

Were there any cultural traditions or values here that you feel could positively influence your school's environment?

Neil: The sunset ceremony is magical - it's one of the most beautiful school traditions I have ever witnessed. I am inspired by how well-mannered the students are. I also appreciate the values imparted during the school assembly.

Kate: The emphasis on all-school singing is fantastic. My school in the USA could learn a lot from this! It brings the community together and creates a sense of pride and unity.

What has been the most memorable part of your exchange experience so far?

Neil: We visited *Orchha* yesterday, and it was amazing! Thank you for giving us that experience. We're also really enjoying creating art.

Kate: Eating fantastic food and meeting kind, knowledgeable people!

What are some practices or ideas from this school that you'd like to take back with you?

Neil: I would love to see our students be as present in mind and spirit as the students here at Scindia.

Kate: I'd like to explore ways of incorporating some of the teaching techniques I observed at Scindia into my own classroom. My approach is quite different, but I believe it could be strengthened by what I've learned here.

How do you think students benefit from having exchange programs like this?

Neil: The best way to learn about people and the world is through travel and firsthand experience. If travel isn't possible, then meeting and learning from visitors through exchanges is the next best thing.

Kate: It's been wonderful to see our St. Mark's students making new friends and experiencing a very different school life. They're

leaving with a broader understanding of the world and a renewed enthusiasm to learn more.

How do you think this exchange will shape your approach to fostering global citizenship in your students?

Neil: Exchanges like this give students new lenses through which to view the world. They learn to consider different perspectives. To truly be a global citizen, one must step out of their comfort zone and be willing to challenge their own ideas, thoughts, and beliefs. This exchange offers that valuable opportunity.

Kate: I hope the success of this exchange encourages more interest in future programs from our school community. The benefits are enormous and well worth the 45-hour journey it took to get here! Thank you so much for this opportunity.



TEENAGE: A SNAPSHOT OF GROWING PAINS AND GROWTH

Teenagers are emotional time bombs—from sudden dramatic outbursts of laughter to tears—often gripped by moods they do not understand. A crisis of identity and a sense of insecurity remain constant in their psyche.

The primary task of a teenager is to answer the question: Who am I? This quest can be exhilarating, but more often, it feels like being tossed in a storm without a compass. It is a passage of life full of contradictions: euphoria and despair, rebellion and dependence, the search for self-worth and conformity.

There is no doubt - it is chaotic, messy, and disorganised. Teenage years are a cocktail of hormones, hopes, fears, and dreams - daunting and intense. They can hardly strike a balance between the cacophony outside and the orchestra within, as they are exposed to various layers of socialisation and public attention. It is the phase when deep bonds with parents become strained, as teens seek independence but still crave safety. This journey is an adventure unique to every individual. There is no template or set pattern to navigate this chrysalis phase in the human experience.

But beyond the chaos, there is hope - a deep, often silent evolution that transforms a questioning teen into a grounded adult.

Teenage life, through no fault of their own, is burdened today with the pressure to perform. A mountain of expectations, career planning, and constant comparisons can cause early damage. To add to that, weapons of sarcasm, taunts, body-shaming, and bullying are hurled at them, testing their inner strength. There's also the invisible but heavy burden to "fit in." They are often clueless about how to resist or avoid these situations. Even when they try, they struggle to measure how far they should go to avoid harmful or conflicting consequences. They live in a world tilted between a superiority complex and an inferiority complex. They try, they fail, they hurt, they heal. And through this process, they grow.

They pull away from their families and seek meaning through peer relationships, mentors, role models, and increasingly, through online communities. This can lead to both connection and fragmentation. The story of trauma, loneliness, and the desire to be accepted shapes the teenage psyche. At the same time, it also shows how friendships-even fragile and flawed-can become a lifeline.

While teenagers navigate chaos, adults-parents, teachers, mentors-are often the calm they desperately need, even when they reject it. The role of a responsible adult is not to "fix" teens but to be there: to listen without judgment, to guide without imposing, and to trust the process of growth.

As Maya Angelou wisely said, "People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but they will never forget how you

made them feel." Teenagers remember those who made them feel safe, seen, and heard. Even a single adult who believes in a teenager can alter the trajectory of their life.

In Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist*, Santiago's journey is about discovering that "when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it." This message resonates with teenagers, who often feel powerless. The story reminds them that their dreams are valid and achievable, even if the journey is difficult.

So, where is the hope in all of this? It lies in the very chaos that seems so daunting.

Teenagers are not broken. They are becoming. Every awkward conversation, every slammed door, every silent cry is a part of their story. They are shedding old skins, testing boundaries, dreaming big, failing hard, and learning what it means to be human. The chaos is real-but so is the calm that comes afterward.

As poet **Rainer Maria Rilke** wrote in *Letters to a Young Poet*:

"Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves... Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

This quote is a gentle invitation to every teenager-and to the adult they are becoming-to trust the journey.

Teenage life is not a problem to be solved but a mystery to be honoured. It is chaotic, yes-but in hindsight, also deeply transformative. It is a jugglery of doubt and discovery, pain and potential. It is the forging fire where character is formed, empathy is awakened, and dreams are born.

Teenage chaos is not a failure. It is a sign of movement. Teenagers must be assured they are not alone. They are not wrong to feel what they feel. Somewhere in the storm, there is calm. Somewhere in the confusion, there is growth. And somewhere in the growing pains, there is a becoming.

We, as adults, can be the shelter. We can only act as a mirror that reflects not what they are, but what they can become. Teenage life is not just a phase. It is the fertile soil where the future begins.

Sankha Chakraborty
Faculty of English

MEMORIES ETCHED IN STONE

The moment I walk through the majestic gates of The Scindia School in my memory, a wave of nostalgia washes over me-sunlit mornings on the ramparts, the sounds of laughter and discipline echoing through the corridors, and the comforting familiarity of Vivekanand House, which I still fondly call home, even though it has since been renamed Daulat House.

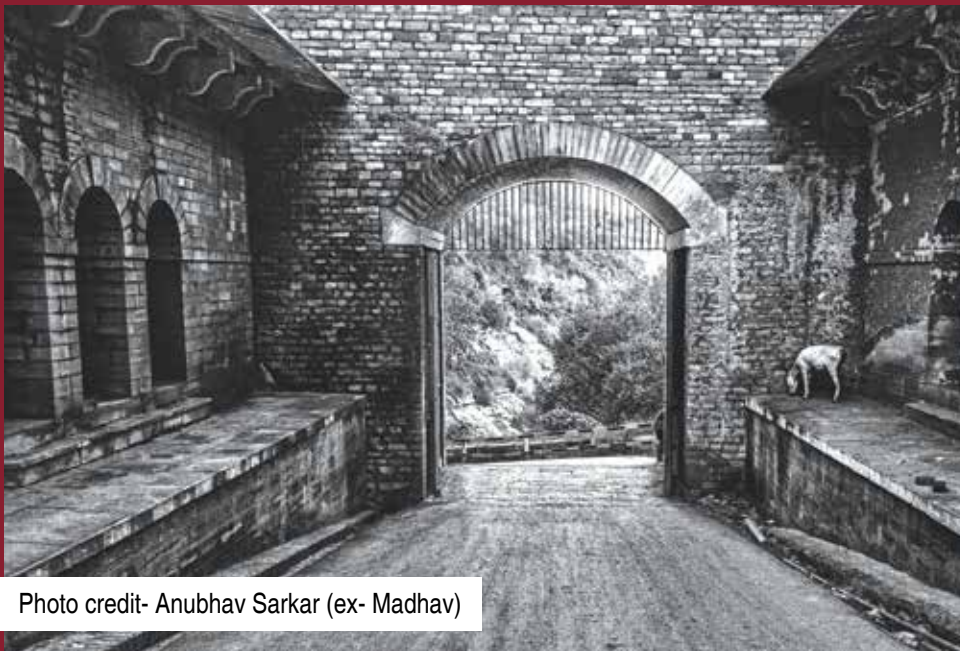


Photo credit- Anubhav Sarkar (ex- Madhav)

From 1977 to 1983, I spent six defining years within the fortress of Gwalior, and every corner of the campus holds a memory, a lesson, or a friendship that has withstood the test of time. Back then, we were young boys, far from home, learning not just algebra and grammar, but also resilience, camaraderie, and the quiet strength of discipline.

Vivekanand House was led by our Housemaster, **Mr Atma Ram Sharma** - our Sanskrit teacher, a scholar with a heart of gold. He was a strict disciplinarian, yes, but also deeply caring and large-hearted. Even when pulling up boys for mischief, his affection was unmistakable. His trust in us shaped our sense of responsibility more than any rulebook ever could.

Hostel life was a colourful blend of structure and spirit. There were always a few boys with a mischievous streak, ready for a bit of fun - a prank here, a merry-go-round of harmless tricks there. Once, in Class VII, we got caught throwing stones to pick tamarind (*imli*) from a tree that abounded on campus. In the confusion, the guilty got away and the innocent onlookers were punished!

Another time, in Class XI, we slipped off to the city for a movie and

returned to find Atma Ramji pacing up and down anxiously. We cooked up the best excuses we could. Still, it ended with a thorough dressing-down-more out of concern for our safety than anger.

We rose with the ghanti (hand bell), took quick baths-sometimes just a kauvasnan ("crow bath," more like a dry clean) under the tap - and rushed off to share meals in the mess. We played till dusk, and later sat under the stars, talking about dreams, ambitions, and the mysteries of life. The fierce but friendly house rivalries added energy to every match, and the pride of wearing house colours is something only a Scindian can truly understand.

The teachers were more than instructors-they were mentors, often parental figures

during our formative years. Whether it was the firm presence of our Housemaster or the quiet encouragement from classroom teachers, each one left a lasting imprint.

The fort itself-with its ancient stone structures, open skies, and historical grandeur - felt like a living part of our education. It made us feel part of something enduring, something greater than ourselves.

The Scindia School didn't just prepare us for exams; it prepared us for life. The values of discipline, humility, leadership, and lifelong friendship are lessons I carry with me to this day. The bonds formed in those years remain some of the strongest in my life.

To the current students, I say this: soak in every moment - whether it's the morning routine or *Astachal*. One day, you'll realize these weren't just school years; they were the foundation of who you would become.

And to my House - whether known as Vivekanand or Daulat - you'll always be home.

Subodh Agarwal (1977–1983, Vivekanand / Daulat House)

REMINISCENCES OF A JAYAJIAN

Traditions are shaped over generations and passed down effortlessly. Friendships are forged for life. Ask any alumnus, and they will say-the School still beckons.



Boxing Match- Once upon a time in Jayaji House

I joined The Scindia School in January 1970 and was allocated to Jayaji House. I was in the 7th grade. My father and I met the Housemaster, **Mr. D.V. Behere**, whose residence was on the ground floor, flanked by the preps. My father left for Delhi, and with that, I was, for the first time in my life, 'alone'. Not for long, and not ever again. Within five minutes, my trunk, hold-all, and I were escorted up the stone steps to the junior dormitory upstairs.

The stencil-painted poem on the stairwell landing wall caught my eye then and is forever etched in my heart, as it is for all Jayajians - past and present. The poem - *Where the Mind is Without Fear* - was written by Rabindranath Tagore in 1900 or 1901. I don't know when it became part of every Jayajian's ethos, but it did. It shaped our character, strengthened our spine, and allowed us to hold our heads high. This facet was not limited to Jayajians alone but extended to every Scindian, irrespective of which house they were from.

The house block on the first floor comprised dormitories, a baggage room, prefects' rooms, a common room, a table tennis room, a night toilet, and huge matkas for drinking water. The high ceilings were stone slabs supported by stone beams, with long-rod ceiling fans futilely beating the summer heat. In winter, low clouds would occasionally roll through the dorms. At the front of the first floor was a wide corridor with big potted plants in shiny brass containers. At the stairwell landing stood a wooden dresser on elegant legs, with a wide mirror for spruced-up boys to have a fleeting glance as they raced down for the attendance lineup. This mirror also served as an unofficial shaving station for one or two of the 'overgrown' seniors who had begun to sprout distinct facial hair. They were the envy of 98 percent of their batch and stood out as giants (laths) to us juniors.

The front end of the barrack had two small turret rooms, which served as the much-prized quarters for the House Captain or School Prefect. In 1973-74, I had the honour, as House Captain, of occupying one. A poster of Che adorned one wall, with a desk, chair, stool, a low takhat bed, and a small immersion rod for making a late-night mug of tea - my keep-me-awake companion before mugging up equations for exams.

This write-up would be incomplete without mentioning the 'rear of the house'. A wide stone staircase between Jayaji House and Ranoji House led from the first floor to our respective nahanis (bathing cubicles) and sandaas (toilets). Hot water in winter (half a bucket each, if lucky) was generated through a wood-fired boiler called a garma. The toilet mugs, called tamlots, were empty 1 kg Kissan jam tins with crude riveted handles. We didn't have the luxury of toilet paper then. Inevitably, these tamlots were rusted and leaked, leaving us in precarious circumstances on more than one occasion. Let me just say—here, at the 'back of the house', exposed to the elements, we were shorn of all pretenses.

I must mention our dhobis and their efficiency. From the time a student joined the School until he passed out, the dhobi would mark his clothes with a unique ID consisting of dots and dashes in indelible ink. Clothes never got mixed up. That level of efficiency always awed me - and still does.

Our dining hall then was located on the ground floor, using portions of Mahadji and Jeevaji Houses. Suffice it to say, the school did its best to replenish the calories we burned daily - but there was always room for that elusive 'more'. A forgotten recipe from those days was the iconic sada - scarce potatoes swimming in an ocean of thin masala curry. I loved it then, and if served again, would forsake all other menu offerings. Nostalgia does that to one. Today, the students have sumptuous meals overseen by a nutritionist and access to a well-stocked tuck shop too.

Our school gym was located on the ground floor, sharing space in Jayaji House. It was reasonably well-equipped for its time and also served as our boxing ring. Ranoji House housed the tuck shop, indent room, and School Council room in its barrack block.

Life as a student, besides academics in the imposing administrative block, revolved around the sports fields, exploration of the out-of-bounds sections of the fort, collecting ber from wild shrubs, infrequent raids on the guava trees in teachers' residential quarters,

the tranquility of *Astachal*, annual camps, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, horse riding, social service in *SONSA* village, labour camps, NCC, arts and craft workshops, debating society, plays, and inter-house sports. All of these helped us develop our individuality and deep bonds of friendship. We came from all walks of life and from nearly every corner of India, knitting a canvas of secularism, tolerance, and respect that had no room for class, caste, or religion-based differentiation.

Without realizing it, our illustrious teachers - our foster parents, in a sense - shaped our identity in ways worthy of The Scindia School and its ethos. This recollection started with me being a boarder in Jayaji House. Through its long history, the House has been led by Housemasters with the vision, dedication, temperament, and personality to instill values that have stood us in good stead throughout our lives - as did Housemasters of the other houses.

Much of our growth came from the discipline imparted - sometimes necessarily - by the Housemasters. I daresay now, the reprimands were both deserved and warranted. One small outcome: I am punctual, my shoes shine, and my fingernails are always trimmed. Also - I never lie. The larger outcome: I am the man I wanted to be, and wouldn't have been, but for their guidance.

Last but not least were the 'house servants' - an inappropriate term today, but they were the backbone of the house. Many served through generations of students. They were selfless in their service. I daresay some seniors had their first smoke by bumming a bidi from them!

Today, having passed out of school 51 years ago, this write-up wrote itself. We alumni owe our upbringing in all facets to our alma mater, The Scindia School.

Devendra Bhatnagar (ex- Jayaji, 1974)



A BREEZE OF MEMORIES

"Woosh", the spring breeze comes gushing in;
To bring forth an eternal storm.
In the depths of our hearts it shall reside,
The memories of the times to come.

Mine humongous gates open: lotuses bloom in my regard.
From lads to men have they become,
And from lasses to ladies in rave;
All of these have I witnessed in tranquility;
Through the ages that has gone by,
But felt like a blink of an eye.
" A reminiscent to your heart's euphoria...."

Mine humongous gates open: embraces scholars from afar.
The scribbling on my walls remain immortal,
Just like the echoes of children's chortle.
From the sweet taste of happiness aloft,
To the resentful taste of sorrow,
My existence ablazes every inch of your heart till morrow.
" Never to be extinguished again...!"

A paradise of first encounters: Never forgotten!
The glittering eyes of pupils in love,
Is lodged in every corner of each room.
Friends of every sort reside here;
Either to turn yer life upside down,
Or make every moment more blissful.
" Always a part of you...! "

A paradise of first encounters:
Ached in every muscle of your body!
Behind this vile of deceptive optimism,
Sleeps the 'Satan' deep in slumber;
Students who are devil incarnates,
Always ready to bring hell in a poor child's life.
That's where a teacher comes in smiling,
Like a shining beam of light from God,
Our guardian angels in flesh are they,
To relieve us from this calamity today.
" An indestructible shield...!"

"Woosh ", the winter breeze came lingering in;
To bring forth an eternal storm.
In the depths of our hearts it shall reside,
The memories of the times gone by.

Korounganba Rajkumar
Class XI, Jayaji House



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