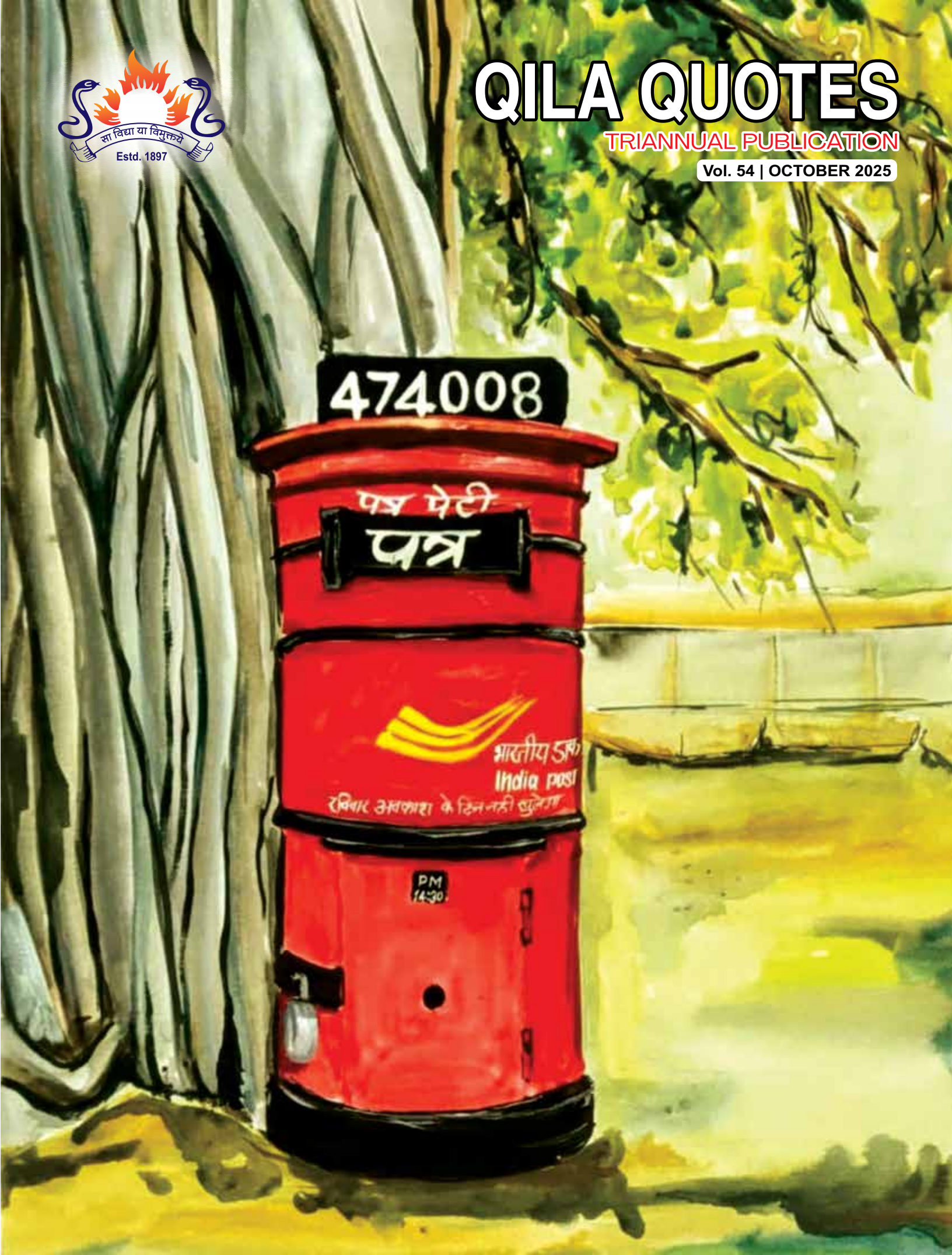




QILA QUOTES

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THE SCINDIA SCHOOL

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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



We take immense pride in being recognised as India's No. 2 Boarding School - an honour that belongs as much to our students and teachers as it does to our alumni and parents. I feel deeply humbled to receive the Inspiring Edu Leader Award 2025 by Cfore and the Lifetime Achievement Award at Samavesh in Bhopal. These honours are not mine alone but a reflection of the support, trust, and spirit of the

Scindian community. I remain grateful to all.

But beyond the awards and accolades, what truly makes this year remarkable are the stories of people-of students who debated passionately on national issues, who sang with all their hearts, who dived into pools and sprinted across fields with courage and determination to prove their mettle and bring laurels to their school.

Of teachers who stepped away from classrooms for a while to immerse themselves in learning anew, and honing their skills, proving that growth has no finish line. Of alumni who returned to the Fort not only to revisit old memories but to pass on their wisdom and warmth to the next generation.

The presence of global voices on our campus - ambassadors, thinkers, artists, and innovators - has reminded us that education is not confined by walls or borders, but is a dialogue with the world. And our young impressionable students have gained new perspectives and global exposures through these interactions.

And in our alumni, whether launching a new chapter in Goa, gathering by the Hudson, or earning laurels in film, sport, or business, we see the living proof of what it means to be a Scindian - to carry the spirit of the Fort across continents and careers. To bring pride to their cherished alma mater.

As we hold these moments together, one fact shines through: The Scindia School is not just about producing achievers; it is about nurturing human beings who lead with empathy, who question with courage, and who live with purpose to make this world a better place. That is our greatest legacy.

This issue, like every Scindian story, is about continuity and change, roots and wings. May it inspire us all - whether within the Fort's sandstone walls or far beyond - to keep striving, to keep learning, and above all, to keep the Scindian spirit alive.

With warmth and gratitude,

Ajay Singh

Principal, The Scindia School



The Editorial Team



Lifetime Achievement Award for Mr Ajay Singh

EDITORIAL

Every edition of Qila Quotes is a pause - a chance to step back, reflect, and celebrate the many ways in which our Scindian journey continues to unfold. This term has been no different; it has been a tapestry woven with achievement, tradition, and the quiet yet powerful moments of growth that define us. Accolades came to us in abundance, much like the rains this monsoon - and we received them with the same spirit of gratitude.

Awards

We're delighted to share that The Scindia School has been ranked No. 2 in India's Boarding School category by Cfore School Rankings 2025, a testament to our students, faculty, alumni and parents who make our Scindian community exceptional.

We are delighted to share that our Principal, **Mr. Ajay Singh**, has been honoured with the Inspiring Edu Leader Award 2025 by Cfore. This prestigious recognition celebrates his vision, dedication and tireless efforts to nurture young minds and uphold the ethos of The Scindia School.

Our Principal, **Mr. Ajay Singh**, was invited to Bhopal as an eminent speaker at Samavesh by Artemis Edusolutions on the topic "Education in the Times of Innovation and Technology." As the guest of honour, he shared the stage with **Mr. Vikas Agrawal**, Regional Officer, CBSE Bhopal, and was felicitated with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Academic Excellence Awards celebrated the 2024-25 top-performing students. Principal **Ajay Singh** lauded their commitment and the teachers' role. Scholars joined the Scholars' Club and received distinctions like the Scholars' Tie and Badge. Subject toppers from Class XI were also honoured.

Celebrations

The school celebrated Independence Day with patriotic fervour at the Madhav Pavilion. Chief Guest **Maj Gen Guljeet Singh Jamwal** (Ex-1984) reflected on values instilled at Scindia. **Principal Ajay Singh** emphasized freedom as responsibility. Highlights included the parade, brass band, 1985 Old Boys' march, patriotic readings at *Astachal*, and sapling plantation.

Ganesh Chaturthi was celebrated on August 27 with devotion and community spirit. Festivities included traditional puja by Principal **Ajay Singh**, devotional song renditions, and prasad distribution. A vibrant procession with music and dance led to idol immersion at *Suraj Kund*.



On the way to Ganesh Visarjan at Surajkund

Teachers' Day was a day of role reversals, laughter, and heartfelt tributes. The celebrations began with a solemn morning assembly dedicated to our former principal **Late Mr. N.K. Tewari**. The afternoon was dedicated to fun games and engaging activities designed especially for the teachers, filling the campus with cheer. In the evening entertainment programme, students showcased their creativity and gratitude through music and performances.

Nine schools competed in the 52nd Platinum Jubilee Inter-School English Debate from August 29-31. The finals of the debate featured The Scindia School and Vasant Valley School debating on the topic- "This house believes that unconventional perspectives are undervalued in society". The Scindia School won but passed the trophy to the runner-up, upholding tradition as the host school.

On August 23, The Scindia School, with EIACP TERI, hosted the Mission LiFE Awareness Programme on healthy lifestyle. Experts shared insights on sustainability, wellness, and responsible living. Students pledged to adopt eco-friendly habits, and interactive sessions inspired them to embrace healthier, sustainable practices in daily life.

On August 27, the Inter-House Orchestra Competition in the assembly hall showcased the theme of "Western Notes" with performances of iconic songs like "Hotel California" and "Shape of You." Jeevaji House won, Madhav House was placed second, and Shivaji House secured third place in this spirited contest.



Jindal Art Fest



Dance Performance by students on Teachers' Day

The 3rd Quasquicentennial Entrepreneurial Summit 2025 opened on August 1 with cultural performances and addresses. Nine schools competed in events like Bidding War, Financial Faceoff, and Business Quiz, testing strategy and knowledge. Vivek High School emerged winners, with The Scindia School runners-up.

At the Jindal Art Fest 2025, the Scindians excelled, winning first in Classical Instrumental, second in Cubist Canvas, and third in Street Rock Band. Their creativity and discipline, supported by mentors, exemplified how passion drives artistic excellence, bringing pride to the school through outstanding performances in a prestigious event.

On August 17, the Youth Parliament-2025 event simulated a lively debate on the Uniform Civil Code. Students assumed roles of national politicians, debating passionately and responsibly. The exercise fostered leadership, critical thinking, and democratic values, reflecting the institution's commitment to preparing future changemakers through experiential learning and civic engagement.

A Debating Workshop on July 17–18, led by **Mr Anshul Verma** and **Mr Chetan Bhatia**, engaged students in argumentation and rebuttal techniques. The innovative "Scindian 1.0" competition involved student-led adjudication. In the final debate on "This House believes that Residential Schools should introduce mobile phones", the opposition narrowly won, fostering confidence and debate skills.

On July 21–22, students of Grades 6–8 attended a MUN and research skills workshop led by **Mr Rahul Menon**. Sessions emphasized public speaking, argumentation, and global awareness. The second day featured a Mock MUN debating climate change and social media impact, enriching critical thinking and global perspectives among 177 students.

On September 10, The Scindia School's Assembly Hall buzzed with energy during the Senior Inter-House Singing Competition. Each house displayed musical talent, teamwork, and discipline, delighting the audience. Jeevaji House won 1st place, followed by Jayaji House in 2nd, and Shivaji House in 3rd.

As part of school's READ Programme, students of Grades 6 to 8 had an enriching book reading session with celebrated author **Archana Garodia Gupta** on August 24. Her engaging storytelling brought alive lesser-known tales from India's history, sparking curiosity and inspiring a deeper love for reading among our young Scindians.

During Suicide Prevention Week (September 10 to 16), the school focused on promoting mental well-being, resilience, and self-worth through workshops, interactive activities, and mindfulness practices. Counselor **Ms. Jaya Sahdev** led sessions on the science of happiness and exam stress management, offering practical tips like gratitude, positive thinking, and time management. The "I Matter Because" activity encouraged positive affirmations from

students and teachers. Class 8 students explored the link between physical health and mental well-being through presentations and creative charts.

Sports



The school Games Captains for the year 2025-26 are as follows: Athletics- **Ryan Batra**; Basketball - **Akshay Pratap Singh**; Cricket- **Shresth Agarwal**; Chess - **Yuvraj Sethia**; Cross-country- **Rituparn Singh**; Horse Riding- **Madhav Nath Kaushal**; Hockey - **Kavin Singh Chhatwal**; Tennis- **Vishith Venkatesh**; Swimming- **Nimit Agarwal**; Shooting- **Harsh Daruka**; Squash - **Arnav Joshi**; Table-Tennis - **Yatharth Agarwal**; Archery - **Ishan Garg**; Skating- **Shivaansh Patwari**.

National Sports Day was celebrated on August 29, honouring hockey legend **Major Dhyan Chand**. The event began with a special assembly paying tribute to his contributions. A Staff vs Students hockey match followed, ending 2–1 in favor of the Staff.

Jankoji House triumphed in the Junior Inter-House Football Tournament, defeating Dattaji House 8–0. Displaying dominance from the first half and overwhelming power in the second, their performance showcased relentless offense and solid defense.

The Senior Inter-House Football Tournament (July 15–22) followed a league-cum-knockout format. Mahadji House won overall trophy. Individual awards went to **Sanahal Meitei** (Best Player B) and **Yuvraj Singh** (Best Player A).

School Basketball Team competed at Raj Express Inter-School League in Gwalior (August 1–3), achieving Second Runner-Up among 20 schools. Their performance reflected hard work and dedication.

The SGFI District Swimming Championship on July 27 saw The Scindia School clinch the Overall Championship with 46 medals: 18 Gold, 15 Silver, and 13 Bronze across U-14, U-17, and U-19 categories. Their outstanding discipline, determination, and passion culminated in a spectacular performance and well-deserved recognition.

The Scindia School made a mark at the All India IPSC Archery Championship 2025-26, clinching an impressive 9 medals – 3



HH Maharaja Jyotiraditya M. Scindia and HH Maharani Priyadarshini Raje Scindia



H.E. Mariano Agustín Caucino, Ambassador of Argentina with his wife

Gold, 3 Silver and 3 Bronze. In the U-17 Indian Round, **Amay Kumar Agrawal** swept Gold in 30m, 20m and Overall, while **Saharsh Singh** secured Bronze in 20m and Overall. Together with **Abhyuday Pratap Singh**, they also bagged the Team Silver. In the U-19 Indian Round, **Pranjal Sharma** won Bronze Overall. Adding to the pride, **Amay Kumar Agrawal**, **Saharsh Singh** and **Pranjal Sharma** have been selected for the SGFI Nationals.

The school participated in the IPSC Under-17 Hockey Tournament at L.K. Singhania Educational Centre, Gotan. The boys showed resilience and secured third place with a 3–1 win against RKC Raipur. Adding to the achievement, Leitantham Sanahal Meetei was named Best Midfielder.

Our footballers shone at the U-14 Football Championship organized by DD Sports Academy & Gwalior District Football Association! With big wins against Jiwaji Club (5–0), DRDS Academy (5–0), and Air Force Academy (3–0), our team proudly secured the Runner-up position. Special mention of **Arnav Jain** – Best Striker and **Khoirom Surjakanta Singh** – Man of the Series.

Workshops

The Faculty Development Programme at *Orchha*, led by **Mr. Sounak Chakraborty**, equipped 19 teachers with advanced pedagogical, research, and technological skills. Held at a serene resort, the off-site format encouraged immersive learning through games, interactive modules, and talent showcases. Collaboration, assessments, and light-hearted activities fostered growth and camaraderie.



FDP at Orchha

The Scindia School launched its Faculty Development Programme (FDP) with a Town Hall on August 6, highlighting excellence, collaboration, and lifelong learning. Board members shared their vision for enhancing teaching, values, and accountability. Principal **Ajay Singh** emphasized teachers' transformative role, while **Mr. Sounak Chakraborty** stressed investing in students' futures. Three core academies - Subject Mastery, Innovation & Learning Design, and Values, Leadership & Culture - were introduced, marking a landmark step in education.

A French Spell Bee Workshop was held on August 21 in



Townhall to Launch FDP

collaboration with Le Frehindi, New Delhi, coordinated by **Ms. Mahima Nanda**. Facilitators **Ms. Devangi** and **Ms. Shrishti** engaged around 50 students from Classes 6–9 with mock rounds and games. Four winners received Vincent Van Gogh fridge magnets.

On July 27, a Dreamcatcher Making Activity for Classes 6–8, led by **Ms. Sagarika Pradhan**, blended creativity with cultural learning. Students crafted dreamcatchers using wool, beads, and feathers, gifting them for *Raksha Bandhan*. The session enhanced fine motor skills, creativity, and emotional expression, leaving participants joyful and proud.

Visits

Our President of the Board of Governors, **HH Maharaja Jyotiraditya M. Scindia**, along with **HH Maharani Priyadarshini Raje Scindia** visited the school on the evening of September 14. They interacted with the students during dinner in the Dining Hall. The royal couple also visited the kitchen to engage with the mess staff, paid a visit to the swimming pool, and admired the Academic Building from the Madhav Pavilion.

The Serbian Ambassador to India, H.E. Mr. Siniša Pavić, graced the assembly on July 25, and was warmly welcomed by Principal **Ajay Singh**. In his inspiring address, he emphasized resilience, ambition, and treasuring school life, reminding students that inner strength ensures success and that knowledge, ambition, and memories shape a fulfilling life.

We were honoured to host **Dr. Arvind Gupta** (Retd. IFS, former Deputy National Security Advisor of India & DG, IDSA, Ministry of Defence), Director, Vivekananda International Foundation at our campus. He shared his valuable perspectives on education, careers in civil services, vocational opportunities, and international relations, inspiring Scindians to think beyond classrooms and aspire to contribute meaningfully to the nation and the world.

On September 3, **H.E. Mariano Agustín Caucino**, Ambassador of Argentina to India, and his wife were warmly welcomed. His discussion with Principal **Mr. Ajay Singh** focused on promoting cultural and sports exchanges, faculty collaborations, and the importance of learning Spanish to strengthen ties with top Argentine institutions. Ambassador Caucino is a distinguished lawyer, historian, diplomat, professor, and columnist.

OLD BOYS' NEWS

The Teachers' Day assembly began with the felicitation of the family members of the **Late Mr. N. K. Tewari**, former Principal and Chemistry Faculty. Principal **Mr. Ajay Singh** welcomed them and highlighted Mr. Tewari's contributions. A special presentation honoured his role as Mahadji House Master and Principal. Suryodaya IT Fest trophy was instituted in his name by SOBA, recognizing his efforts in initiating the school's journey into the field of Information Technology. **Mr. Rahul Kulshreshtha** paid tribute to him.



Batch of 1985 Marching on Independence Day

Reunion of Batch of 1985: On 14th August 2025, The Scindia School warmly welcomed the Batch of 1985. A highlight was their engaging talk show, anchored by **Mr. Sanjay Moolji**, featuring accomplished alumni who reflected on how The Scindia School shaped their character, empathy, adaptability, and critical thinking. The evening continued with *Ek Shaam Shaheedon Ke Naam*, a musical Independence Day tribute. On 15th August, the Old Boys joined the Independence Day parade, visited their houses, and joyfully engaged in activities with students.



TEDx Talks

On 13th August, 2025, the TEDx Talk at The Scindia School, organised by SOBA in the Assembly Hall, opened with a soulful musical performance, setting the stage for a remarkable lineup of speakers. From eco-innovator Saji Varghese's coconut leaf straws to Bollywood actor **Raj Zutshi's** (ex- Vivekanad, 1974) call for humility, activist Yogita Bhayana's fight for justice, and art teacher **Alok Ghosh's** inspiring resilience, each story carried courage and wisdom. Skydiver **Rudra Bhanu Solanki** (Scindian), entrepreneur **Gaurav Jain** (Scindian), and cyclist **Gagan Khosla** (Scindian) shared powerful life lessons. Senior Prefect **Ayaan Agarwal** emphasised inner strength, while the Principal concluded by highlighting leadership rooted in empathy, resilience, and humility.

On 2nd August, 2025, SOBA Central & SOBA Delhi organised Musical Evening. Legendary singer **Nitin Mukesh** (Ex-Ranaji, 1967), lit up the Siri Fort Auditorium in New Delhi. A magical evening of Scindian spirit, where he evoked Mukesh's legacy with soulful nostalgia, energy, and humility, captivating the audience through melody and connection. The venue was packed to its full seating capacity. The evening was made even more special by the presence of over 300 Scindians, whose warmth, camaraderie, and spirited participation reflected the enduring bond the Scindians share.



Launch of SOBA Goa Chapter

The Scindia Old Boys' Association proudly announced the launch of its Goa Chapter, marking a significant milestone in expanding the Scindian network. Bringing together a vibrant alumni community, SOBA Goa aims to foster connection through cultural events, intellectual exchanges, and community initiatives, while celebrating the shared heritage and enduring Scindian spirit.

A SOBGA gathering in New York on 23rd August 2025 was attended by Scindians and their spouses. The evening brimmed with warmth,



SOBA, New York

friendship, and cherished memories, made even more memorable by the breathtaking Jersey City waterfront at Lokal, featuring panoramic views of the Manhattan skyline.



Anubhav Sachan

Anubhav Sachan (Ex-Jayaji, 2023) has made history as the 1st Indian ever to win the UK University Polo Championship (SUPA Nationals)!



Mr Atul Takle

Mr Atul Takle (ex-Ranoji, 1973) has been featured in a book called 'Surge: Stories and Highlights from India's leading Chief Communications Officers'. The book was launched on 11th September 2025.



Vedanga Nag with the poster of his film 'Where The Stars Rest'

Vedanga Nag (ex-Madhav, 2021) created "Where the Stars Rest" as his graduation film from UPES, School of Design, Animation and VFX. The 5-minute animated short revolves around a 10-year-old boy who, grieving the loss of his brother, imagines himself traveling through space in a toy rocket. The film sensitively explores themes of grief, imagination, and acceptance. The film has been selected by 21 international film festivals. It won Best Animated Film at The International Independent Short Movie Award (IISMA) 2025, Kolkata, and The Golden Lion International Film Festival, Kolkata, and was a finalist at The Nebrodi International Film Festival (Italy) and The Funartt Film Awards (USA).



Mr Prashant Prabhu

Mr. Prashant Prabhu (Ex-Madhav, 1968), textile and polymer scientist, visited the school in August 2025 under the SOBIR programme. With vast experience at Michelin and beyond, he engaged warmly with students and faculty through interactive sessions, sharing insights on science, business, and life lessons.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS



Athul Shankar Prasanna and Chirag Raj Goel

Athul Shankar Prasanna and Chirag Raj Goel participated in the prestigious Doon School Quiz 2025. They shared the stage with the top six teams out of seventeen, and clinched an impressive third place overall. The auditorium echoed with applause as they earned special recognition for being the youngest competitors on stage.



Best Delegation at IPSC MUN

Represented by a team of 10 students across 9 diverse committees, the school team won the Best Delegation Award, underscoring both individual brilliance and collective excellence. Accolades included Best Delegate Awards for Suraj Agarwalla (FBI), Keshav Rathour (AIPPM), and Shaurya Jain (FIA), and Lakshya Tulsian (UNCTC), while Vedang Goenka received the Best Position Paper Award. Krish Agarwal and Neil Agarwal earned Verbal Mentions.

The Scindia School made a mark at the All India IPSC Archery Championship 2025-26, clinching an impressive 9 medals – 3 Gold, 3 Silver and 3 Bronze. In the U-17 Indian Round, Amay Kumar Agrawal swept Gold in 30m, 20m and Overall, while Saharsh Singh secured Bronze in 20m and Overall. Together with



Winners at IPSC Archery

Abhyuday Pratap Singh, they also bagged the Team Silver. In the U-19 Indian Round, Pranjal Sharma won Bronze Overall. Adding to the pride, Amay Kumar Agrawal, Saharsh Singh and Pranjal Sharma have been selected for the SGFI Nationals 2025-26.

Divit Gangwal (Class 8, Jankoji House) will represent Madhya Pradesh in the U-15 National Chess Championship. Ranked 1597 by FIDE, Divit's strategic brilliance and determination highlight his exceptional talent.



Divit Gangwal

Korounganba Rajkumar, a Class 11 student, has published The Error through Notion Press. The book explores a dystopian future where authoritarian control suppresses individuality, memory, and truth, while highlighting how ordinary people can resist by reclaiming history and their freedom.

COMING OF AGE IN FILM AND MEDIA

The theme of coming of age has long fascinated audiences. It is a narrative of growth, identity, and the challenges that shape us into who we become. In film and media, this idea is often portrayed through characters who confront uncertainty, search for belonging, and learn how to connect with the world around them. What makes these stories powerful is that they don't simply mark the end of childhood; they signal the beginning of an ongoing journey of self-discovery and transformation.



AI Generated Image

Most coming-of-age narratives center on teenagers caught between childhood and adulthood. Their struggles may be personal-facing insecurities or inner conflicts-or external, as they grapple with social pressures and shifting worlds. No matter the scale, the theme remains constant: change. By the end of the story, the character may reach a milestone or epiphany, yet the journey of becoming their true self is only just beginning.

What makes these stories so meaningful is their universality. Growth and self-discovery do not end with adolescence; they continue throughout life. The lessons learned in youth become the foundation for adulthood, but each new stage-whether starting a career, entering relationships, or redefining one's purpose-offers fresh chances for transformation. In this way, we come of age not once, but many times.

In *Percy Jackson & The Olympians*, Percy's journey perfectly captures the essence of coming-of-age. Initially an outsider, Percy struggles with his identity but gradually learns to embrace his flaws and strengths. Through his battles and relationships, he discovers the importance of loyalty, bravery, and self-acceptance. His story reminds us that coming-of-age is about more than just finding

your place-it's about continual growth and transformation.

These narratives remind us that identity is never fixed. As the world around us shifts, so too do we, uncovering new sides of ourselves with every challenge and opportunity. Each obstacle, whether large or small, becomes a chance to adapt and to show a different version of who we are.

Dead Poets Society powerfully reflects the idea that coming-of-age stories are about growth, identity, and continual transformation. The students at Welton Academy struggle with personal insecurities, strict social expectations, and the uncertainty of charting their own paths. Their journeys do not mark a simple end to childhood but the beginning of lifelong self-

discovery. Neil's tragic struggle with autonomy, Todd's emergence from shyness to confidence, and the group's collective awakening all show that identity is never fixed-it is shaped and reshaped by choices, challenges, and courage.

Ultimately, coming-of-age stories resonate because they mirror the lifelong process of becoming. They invite us to see that every day can be a new beginning-a moment to grow, to understand ourselves better, and to connect more deeply with others. Just like the characters on screen, we are always changing. The specifics of our struggles may differ, but the feeling of growth-of learning, adjusting, and moving forward-returns again and again.

The beauty of the theme lies in its honesty about life as a continuous journey. It shows that we are constantly shedding old layers and discovering new ones. Coming-of-age moments, whether small or profound, stay with us as reminders to embrace change and remain open to the next stage of our personal evolution.

Ayaan Chintan Shah
Class XII, Madhav House

AT THE RAINBOW BRIDGE: FINDING UNO

Not everybody shares the same feelings for a pet (a dog, in my case). It may be apprehension, fear, or any other reason. But know this: they simply spread love. Unconditional love. Yes, they are animals and have their instincts, but at heart they remain babies. They may age, but they never really grow up. They can't talk, but they communicate. And for some of us, they spread joy all around. "Duniya ki badsoorti ko kum karte hain." Once you've had them, you can't imagine the house without them. Your children grow up with them. As an adult, a part of your daily life revolves around them. And apart from the terribly tough part of eventually losing them, all the memories are happy ones.



We lost our Uno the day before yesterday. Out of the blue, his heart gave out. It wasn't his time, but maybe after giving us so much love (and receiving love too), his heart just wanted to rest. His 10.5-year-long journey came to an end. We still have family in the house, but home feels very quiet without that one family member. We miss his routine: his lazy morning walk to our room, followed by the restless

wait for my wife to take him down for his business, and then soaking up the sun in the garden, where he was happiest. We miss the sound of his paws on the wooden floor. We miss his bark-telling us either to give him food (being a lab, he was always hungry) or to take him down for a walk. His Jughead nose went into overdrive whenever I took out watermelon from the fridge, and he'd park himself in front of me, saying with his eyes, "Where's my share, buddy?" His playful body language when he held his toy in his teeth-daring us to pull or running across the flat with that look of "Come get it, sucker!"—still plays in my head.

We had a pecking order in the house. Uno couldn't see beyond my wife-mother superior. After all, she attended to all his needs. She spoke to him, and he understood. She fed him from the table (something we all disapproved of). She cared for him when he was unwell. He was a son to her, and he adored her. A dog doesn't have to be only man's best friend. They're smart enough to sense where love comes from—and they are gender agnostic.

My girls were next in queue. He considered the elder one, Devika, his "*barabar ka*" (equal, peer). He would let her take liberties with him. She would irritate him, and he would allow it. Being the hypochondriac that she is, she was always checking him for hidden signs of illness or hygiene issues. She would bother him when he rested on his bed, and he would give a fake growl—he was possessive about his bed, almost territorial, and he sent the message through his eyes. When Devika left for college in January, she never thought it would be the last time she saw Uno. She is devastated, and there's nothing one can do except console her from a distance.

The younger one, Schauna, always thought Uno would listen to her commands. But if he could, he would have shown her otherwise. There was a time when Uno was bigger than Schauna, so he didn't

see her as his equal; she was his subordinate. Yet Schauna adored him and could never be separated from him (she has thousands of pictures and videos of Uno). Her tears dried only yesterday, only to return this morning as I was leaving home. She said she missed her Uno and didn't know how to deal with it. And how do I make that okay for her?

I was always the disciplinarian with Uno in his early years. I made him stop climbing the bed. I would show him my hand if he wouldn't stop barking. I told him to go away when he stared at our meals. But that was just a smoke screen. I was his biscuit guy. I always got a huge welcome when I reached home from work. At times he would rest his head on my foot, just to make contact. Maybe by default, but in those moments, I rose in the pecking order.

Another person he shared a special bond with was my brother-in-law. At times I thought it was just because of the 24/7 AC in his room whenever he visited us (Uno loved the AC). Calling him spoiled would be unfair, but whatever Uno wanted, Rahul would do—Uno had him wrapped around his paw. I also thought Rahul secretly wanted to dethrone the queen (his sister) from the pecking order. But they were happy together, and that's all that matters. He has lost Uno too. Devika has decided to visit Rahul, and together they're getting through this.

There are so many people who loved Uno in their own special ways. Our household staff, who never showed explicit affection but cared for him deeply. The building kids, who would run toward him to pet him. My brother and his family, who would always begin a conversation with, "How is Uno?" And my parents, who, though measured, would always feed him a biscuit with their morning tea.

Uno came to us in a cardboard box as a small puppy. Yesterday, I had to wrap him in a sheet to take him to the crematorium. That, in some way, sums up his 10.5-year journey—but it was so much more than that. In that time, he filled our hearts with joy and gave us a whole lotta love that will last a lifetime. Life would be incomplete without Uno.

So long, Uno. As your mother says: See you at the Rainbow Bridge...

(Written in March 2021)

Amitabh Malhotra (ex-Madhav, 1986)



मेरी फोर्ट बायोस्फियर यात्रा

हम अभी फोर्ट बायोस्फियर गए थे वहाँ पर हमने बहुत सारी चीजे देखीं, हम जब वहाँ पहुँचे तो हमें लगा कि हम जंगल में आ गए हैं हम जब आगे चले तब हमने एक फल देखा जिसे बेल कहा जाता है। फिर हमने आगे तरह-तरह के पेड़ - पौधे देखे और हमें पर्यावरण के अलग-अलग रूप देखने को मिले।



हम आगे बढ़े तो हमने खंभा ताल देखा। अभी बारिश का मौसम चल रहा है तो वहाँ बहुत कीचड़ था पर हम सावधानी से चल रहे थे। हमने देखा कि खम्बा ताल में बहुत पानी भर चुका था। फिर हम चलते-चलते आगे बढ़ रहे थे। पर्यावरण की खूबसूरती और उसकी शांति से हमारा मन प्रसन्न हो गया था। हम आगे चमड़ी ताल की तरफ बढ़े तो हमने देखा कि वह तो खंभा ताल से भी ज्यादा गहरा है। हम वापस अपने रास्ते की ओर चले, वहाँ पर हमने कई प्रकार के कीड़े देखे। वहाँ पर हमें बहुत मजा आया, हमने पर्यावरण के बारे में काफी सारी चीजे सीखीं। हमने कई प्रकार के फूल देखे। वहाँ पर थोड़ी देर बारिश भी हुई, हमने छाते रखे थे इसलिए हम भीगने से बच गए। हमने वहाँ ग्रे - हार्न बिल भी देखा जो कि पहली नजर में दिखाई नहीं दी पर ध्यान से देखने पर वो हमें दिखी। फोर्ट बायोस्फियर में जो घास लगाई गई है वह कार्बन को सोखती है जिससे वातावरण शुद्ध होता है। यह सभी जीव जंतुओं को काफी लाभ देता है। वहाँ पर ग्वालियर के स्थानीय पेड़ - पौधे लगाए गए हैं। स्थानीय पेड़-पौधों को अपने स्थान पर पैदा होने में अधिक लाभ मिलता है क्योंकि वे इस स्थान से परिचित होते हैं, उनका जीवन इसी वातावरण के लिए बना होता है इसीलिए उन्हें इस स्थान पर उगने में आसानी होती है। उन्हें उगने में कम पानी लगता है, वह इस स्थान में आसानी से और लंबे समय तक जीवित रह सकते हैं। यहाँ पर ऐसे बहुत सारे पेड़-पौधे लगाए गए हैं और जो पौधे यहाँ

के नहीं हैं तथा अन्य पौधों को नुकसान पहुँचा रहे हैं उन्हें यहाँ से निकला जा रहा है।

अलग अलग तरह के पौधे और घास तथा जंगल होने के कारण यहाँ कई तरह के पक्षी भी देखने को मिलते हैं। हमने वहाँ पर काफी प्रकार के पक्षियों को देखा जैसे कि मैंने पहले बताया है। वहाँ पर बहुत सारे मोर घूम रहे थे। हमने वहाँ कई अलग - अलग प्रकार के कीड़े देखे, मुझे उनके नाम तो नहीं पता पर किसी का रंग लाल-काला, किसी का नीला, पीला, सफेद एवं कुछ रंग-बिरंगे भी थे। वहीं पर काफी सारी चीटियाँ भी थीं। जैसा कि वहाँ पर भिन्न प्रकार के जानवर, पक्षी, कीड़े, फूल, पत्ते व घास देखी। अब मैं क्या ही बताऊँ, यह एक ऐसी जगह है जहाँ मन की शांति के लिए भी जा सकते हैं। वहाँ जाकर दिल में सुकून मिलता है और मन भी अच्छा लगता है।

अब आखिरी में हम हमारे विद्यालय में स्थित छः तालों की बात करेंगे जो हैं - रानीताल, चमड़ीताल, खम्बाताल, कटोराताल, धोबीताल और चेरीताल। ये सभी ताल इस समय पानी से पूरे भरे हुए हैं जैसे कि अभी वर्षा का समय है, तो किले पर सारे ताल भरे हुए हैं, एक कुंड है जिसका नाम सूरज कुंड है आज के समय इस कुंड में भी काफी पानी भरा हुआ है। सूरज कुंड के बीच में एक शिवलिंग है जो इस समय पानी के नीचे डूबा हुआ है।

सबसे पहले हम समझेंगे कि ताल का इस्तेमाल कैसे किया जाता था और किस चीज के लिए किया जाता था ? तो सर्वप्रथम मैं आपको यह बताऊँ कि यह ताल इसलिए बनाए जाते थे कि मान लीजिए कि दुश्मन ने आपके किले को घेर लिया है और आप किले के ऊपर फँस गए हैं तो इस समय आपको सबसे ज्यादा जरूरत खाना और पानी की पड़ेगी तो ताल इसीलिए बनाए गए थे और जब बारिश होती थी तब इन तालों में पानी जमा हो जाता था और हमारे पीने के लिए नहाने के लिए खेती तथा अन्य तरह के उपयोगों में आता

था और आज भी आ रहा है। तो उस समय ताल से राजाओं को पीने का पानी तो मिलता ही था इसके साथ ही इस पानी को खेती के लिए भी उपयोग में लाते थे जिससे उन्हें खाना - यानी अनाज मिल सके। इन तालों से निकले पत्थरों से किले की दीवार बनाई जाती थी या उनकी मरम्मत भी की जाती थी।

पूरे विद्यालय में जो पानी सिंचाई तथा इस प्रकार के कामों के लिए इस्तेमाल किया जाता है वह इन्हीं तालों का ही होता है। पर आप सोचेंगे कि यह ताल तो खुले रहते हैं तो इस का पानी तो गंदा हो जाता होगा। हाँ, पर इन तालों में जल शुद्ध करने का एक उपकरण लगा हुआ है, तो जो जल हमारे पास आता है, यह वही जल है। ये सभी ताल बायोस्फियर के क्षेत्र में ही थोड़ी-थोड़ी दूर पर स्थित हैं। हम जब वहाँ गए तो हमने देखा कि फोर्ट बायोस्फियर के बाहर बहुत सारे अध्यापकों के घर मौजूद हैं जो प्रकृति के बहुत नजदीक रहते हैं।

यह एक सफल यात्रा थी जिसमें हमें बहुत सारी चीजे सीखने को मिलीं। हमारे साथ चार-पाँच अध्यापक भी गए थे। उन्होंने हमें सारी चीजों का ज्ञान कराया। फिर हम वापस स्कूल आ गए। इसके दो दिन बाद हमारे हिंदी के अध्यापक मनोज मिश्रा सर हमें घोबी ताल दिखाने लेकर गए और उन्होंने हमें बताया कि कैसे ये तालें अब बदल गई हैं पहले इसमें मछली-पालन भी होता था। सर ने हमें बताया कि शायद घोबी ताल में कपड़े धोए जाते होंगे इसी लिए इसका यह नाम हो। फिर सर ने हमें यह भी बताया कि ताल, कुंड और बावड़ी के बीच क्या अंतर होता है। ताल वह होता है जिसमें हम नहाते हैं। कुंड का जल पूजा पाठ में काम आता था और उसमें स्नान करके लोग अपने आपको बहुत पवित्र मानते थे। बावड़ी का पानी पीने योग्य होता था क्योंकि यह ढँका रहता था और ताल का पानी अन्य कार्यों में प्रयुक्त होता था।

पर एक बात तो है, अगर आप पर्यावरण से प्यार करते हैं या आपको पर्यावरण-संरक्षण में दिलचस्पी है तो फोर्ट बायोस्फियर आपके लिए एक बहुत अच्छी जगह है वहाँ पर आपको ऐसा लगेगा कि आप संसार के अलग-अलग रूपों को देख रहे हैं। आपको वहाँ जाकर अंदर से प्रसन्नता होगी और शरीर में मानो एक अलग-सा जोश आ जाएगा। आप अपने सारे दुख-दर्द भूल जाएँगे। अंत में, मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि एक बार फोर्ट बायोस्फियर जरूर आइएगा और वास्तव में यहाँ आकर इसे देखने का एक अलग ही अनुभव आपको मिलेगा।

अनय खंडेलवाल
कक्षा ८ ब, दत्ताजी सदन

माता का पत्र: छात्रवास में रहने वाले पुत्र के नाम !

मेरे अंश ! बहुत खूबसूरत हो तुम,

कुछ सत्तर दिनों के बाद फिर स्कूल भेजना थोड़ा भारी है, तुम्हारी कमी का खलते रहना अभी जारी है, कभी-कभी डरती हूँ कि चूँकि तेरी वहाँ लोगों से बड़ी यारी है, कहीं भूल न जाओ तुम वह बातें जो मुझे अति प्यारी हैं, तुम्हारा वहाँ रहना तुम्हें मजबूत बनाएगा, तुम्हारी खूबसूरत पंखों को उड़ाने की ताकत दे जाएगा। उड़ते समय हमेशा मेरी वह सीख याद रखना, अपने आसपास वालों को भी उड़ते समय साथ रखना। तुम्हारे गणित के अंक जरा कम रहे तो मुझे चलेगा, पर आसपास वालों में, मुस्कान बिखेरने से ही तू फूले-फलेगा। जीतने की कोशिश करना पर याद रखना, खुद की जीत के लिए किसी को भी न हराएगा। जीतना जरूरी है पर हारने की चाहत से तो तू खुद ही हार जाएगा। जीतना दिलों को बेटे ! जीतना दिलों को क्योंकि वहाँ बहुत से दिलों के टुकड़े हैं तेरे साथ, जैसे तुझमें जान अटकी है मेरी, वैसे ही सारे बच्चे हैं किसी की आस, इस अल्हड़ बढ़ती उम्र में शांत, संयमी और संस्कारी रहना, कभी फिर भी कुछ गलत हो जाए तो चिंतन करना, और हमारे प्रेम के अधिकारी रहना। हम तुम्हारे हैं और हर पल तुम्हारे साथ हैं, बस, तुम अपने आस-पास के लोगों को और खुद को, मनः शांति की चार दीवारी में बनाए रखना, बेटा, तुम शांति फैलाना, सुकून फैलाना, कोई परेशान हो तो उसके पास बैठ जाना, उसके दिल की सुनना, वो कुछ न कहना चाहे, तो यँ ही बस उसके हाथों में हाथ रख देना, उसको यह बताना कि तुम साथ हो उसके, क्योंकि परेशानी कभी तुमको भी आ सकती है, कभी उसको भी आ सकती है। बेटा! हमेशा जितना संभव हो, अपने पर विश्वास करना, इस अशांत दुनिया में केवल दूसरों के लिए शांति बनने का प्रयास करना।

श्रीमती पूजा अग्रवाल (माँ)
सार्थक अग्रवाल,
कक्षा 11 जयाजी हाउस

IN CONVERSATION WITH

MAJ GEN (RETD.) GULJEET SINGH JAMWAL

Maj Gen (Retd.) Guljeet Singh Jamwal, AVSM, SM (ex-Vivekanand, 1984) graced the fort with his wife as the Chief Guest for our Independence Day celebrations. He joined the Indian Army in 1988 and retired in 2025 with 37 years of service. While in Army, he held diverse command, staff, instructional, and UN assignments. Decorated with Ati Vishisht Seva Medal and two Sena Medals, Maj Gen Jamwal has contributed significantly across India's key operational fronts.



Maj Gen (Retd.) Guljeet Singh Jamwal and Mrs Jamwal

Aryan: Good afternoon, Sir. It is an honour to speak with you. Sir, what inspired you to join the armed forces, and how did The Scindia School influence that decision?

Maj Gen Jamwal: I come from a village that has produced 11 retired generals and many more officers. Growing up around such people gave me a first hand look at the honour and fulfilment that comes with military life.

As for school, it played a pivotal role-through sports, discipline, spiritual grounding, and resilience training. Everything from swimming to debates to morning PT helped build habits that stuck with me in the Army. The school instilled a balance of mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual strength-qualities you can't do without in the armed forces.

Aryan: Sir, were there any personal turning points during your school years that helped you realise your potential?

Maj Gen Jamwal: Definitely. One moment I remember vividly is when my music teacher sat me down one evening and helped me understand a subject I was struggling with. That moment shifted my entire approach to academics. Later, I went on to become

electronics engineer and completed multiple postgraduate degrees.

Another turning point was on the sports field-scoring a goal from an almost impossible angle during a hockey match. It taught me that we all have hidden potential, just waiting for the right moment to surface.

Ranveer: Sir, did you have any mentors or role models in your early life who shaped your leadership style?

Maj Gen Jamwal: Absolutely. Many of my teachers and staff in school were strong role models. You don't have to look far for inspiration-it's often right around you.

In the military world, Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw deeply inspired me. He had extraordinary conviction, clarity of thought, and a magnetic personality. As a leader, he was bold and empathetic at the same time-an ideal I always looked up to.

Aryan: In high-pressure situations, how do you maintain clarity of thought and inspire confidence in your team?

Maj Gen Jamwal: Leadership, especially in crisis, rests on a few core values. First is knowledge-a leader must be situationally aware and informed. You can't guide others if you yourself are unsure.

Second is empathy-understanding what your team is going through, and standing in their shoes. And third is patience-a hasty decision can cost lives. In the military, decisions at the leadership level often make the difference between life and death.

But this clarity doesn't come overnight. It's developed through exposure, practice, and resilience built over years. Some people are natural leaders; others grow into it. You'll see classmates who seem quiet today become powerful leaders tomorrow.

Ultimately, leadership is about decisive thinking, calm under pressure, and emotional maturity. Your environment, like your school, plays a big role in preparing you for that.

Ranveer: As someone who is deeply interested in international relations, I was particularly intrigued by your two UN assignments-one in Lebanon and the other in South Sudan. What was your most memorable experience while working in such a multicultural, high-stakes environment?

Maj Gen Jamwal: Both my UN tenures were deeply enriching. In Lebanon, I worked with multinational forces under a structured UN command. But South Sudan was something else-it was volatile and emotionally charged. I served as a military liaison officer and had to mediate between the South Sudanese Army, the local authorities, and international forces.

A particularly intense memory comes from the second year after South Sudan's independence when riots broke out. Violence erupted, many were killed, and I had to lead a protection force, including Kenyan peacekeepers, into a conflict zone. Our very presence saved lives, especially of the minority community that was under threat. I truly believe that moment - when our intervention made a tangible difference - was one of my most meaningful contributions to peace keeping.

In such moments, you face death up close. And those who aren't afraid to die often become the most dangerous-and the most decisive-in such environments.

Ranveer: Life in the Army demands extreme physical and mental endurance. How did you maintain personal discipline during tough missions and postings?

Maj Gen Jamwal: I have served in every possible terrain-from Siachen Glacier to dense jungles. At 18,000 feet in freezing conditions, with no connectivity, minimal shelter, and constant danger from avalanches or enemy fire-you develop spiritual resilience. In places like Siachen, we relied on faith and brotherhood to survive.

Routine and discipline were non-negotiable. Even in a small space, I'd do my exercises-because health is your only asset. No excuses. And yes, long separations from family were tough, but I used that time to read, reflect, and grow intellectually. I've completed multiple advanced degrees during my service-engineering, strategy, social sciences-because mental strength is as important as physical endurance.

Aryan: Thank you so much, Sir. We've learned a lot today-from the importance of empathy and discipline, to the power of thought and resilience. We truly appreciate your time and insights.

Maj Gen Jamwal: Thank you, Ranveer and Aryan. It was a pleasure interacting with young minds like yours. Your curiosity, thoughtfulness, and drive are heartening. Remember - never stop thinking, stay grounded, and pursue your passion with discipline and empathy. You are the future, and I am confident that you will lead with excellence.



Chief Guest Independence Day

AN UNREMARKABLE DAY IN THE LIFE OF JANKOJI HOUSE HM

It is 5.30 am in the morning. 3/4th of the world is in deep slumber. Not mine! My world is alive and kicking. Between pushing an unwilling dog out of the house and waking up two unwilling kids, I rush to make tea and while the tea is boiling, I do my breathing exercises (I need an overdose of oxygen to last me the whole day).

After fixing up the breakfast, I rush to take a quick bath since it is already 6.30.

Knock, knock, knock.

"Who's there?"

"Aditya."

"Aditya who?"

"Adityavardhan Shukla!"

(There are four Adityas in my house. Don't ask.)

Three pre-teens stand there, indignant, looking ready to sue each other.

"He called me Shukla-Dukla!" complains one.

I scold the culprit, who's totally failing to hide his smirk. No time for drama. Onward.

Roll call time.

After the inspection, 35 pairs of hands rush to touch my feet. With 20 'god bless you', I take the support of the table behind me for balance.

I gingerly touch my new car. The dash board resembles that of an airplane. Blue light at the brakes makes me nervous. I feel claustrophobic with the power windows and central-locking system and a sensor for reverse gear. They seem to have a mind of their own. I distrust intelligent machines (Comes out of watching too many science fiction movies). I start the car, all the while missing my simple, creaky and loud old loyal Alto. 30 seconds into the drive and my windows lock in. The one-mile journey ends. Thank God, the car did not take off! But the key refuses to come out of the ignition. I panic (Comes out of reading too many newspapers and death due to asphyxiation). I look around and see no one. I estimate the time in which all the oxygen will finish inside the car (Applying Physics to most of my real life situations). I see the bus driver and wave at him. He opens my door and takes the key out. I feel foolish.

Assembly is the time to catch a breath and I do so with deep breathing. The child in the front turns his head to look at me. I give up trying to nourish my lungs. After two classes in the Science block, I am heading back to the main building. The teacher's lounge with its two split ACs beckons me.

Cue drama: Phone booth guy holding a ₹50 note, looking deeply offended (the photocopy room used to be the phone booth then). He is followed by Pratham, looking like he's just committed a crime.

Apparently, Pratham tried bribing the booth guy to call home.

I call Pratham's father, who's contrite enough to apologize for his kid's "black money business."

Another class; I give a quiz on chemical symbols. Harshit thinks that students will cheat since I have not done any special seating arrangement. I tell him that I trust everybody not to cheat. If they do so it is their problem, not mine. I will not stop trusting. Not a single child lifts his head from the paper during the test. I am basically a trust guru now!

Next class in the Physics lab. I have sent message to the boys to report. Communication to teens can be full of paradoxes - 'transmission and distribution losses' between what is said and what is purportedly understood. Amusingly, the outcome is often very student - friendly. Here's what can happen-

Some are so confused they sleep off the trauma in class.

Some land in the Computer Lab instead.

Some detour via the scenic route through washroom, water cooler, and only then the lab.

Some weren't even present when the message was delivered.

And a couple race each other towards the Physics lab at a snail's pace.

Irony is- the moment you say "Computer Lab" - miracles! Attendance hits 100% in two minutes.

The ride back to the house is blissfully quiet... until I hit the brakes in front of Jankoji house, and get mobbed by Jankojians reporting every minor tragedy and travesty:

“Varun ate only one chapati!”

“Pratham got scolded by Science teacher!”

“Harshit skipped breakfast!”

I juggle roles as judge, counselor, and family therapist.

Then comes Hardik’s bombshell:

“Aditya Ranjan is missing!”

Cue mass search party, me hyperventilating... until Hardik remembers Aditya went to the Health Centre for a nosebleed.

I glare so hard, I would have scorched anything!

By the time I reach my door, the phone rings. Ritvik’s mother is wanting to know if Ritvik is OK. Conversation. Hang up. Ring again. Aditya’s Father. Conversation. Hang up. Ring again.

Beauty sleep, siesta? That’s a myth now and highly overrated.

The evening brings Astachal, prep and dinner duties. 9pm. After the roll call, I sit down to edit the story written by Hiteshwar for ‘Footprints’. Hiteshwar, I am sure will grow up to become a novelist because he writes stories which never end. He has this exasperating habit of writing, ‘to be continued’ at the end of each story. I forced

him to kill the hero ‘Johny Flame’ of his story and in his ire, he did that very abruptly. I give a new lease of life to Johny Flame and impart some solemnity to his death. His story is ready to be published in ‘Footprints’. (How Vedanga Nag hijacked the whole magazine once will be a material for another article someday)

I peep out of the mesh door. My two friends- the owls are perched on the ceiling fan of the verandah. One of them rotates his head clockwise to glare at me. I wave. The quiet owls are my soul birds. The wise owl sees all but says nothing.

Last round in the dormitory.

Kids are organizing uniforms. Grievances fly in like projectiles. I mention my article.

“Oh, put my name in your article, Ma’am!”, shouts collectively brings the Matron to the dorm.

By the time I enter my home, tidy up the kitchen, tie up the clothes to be ironed and put dirty laundry in the washing machine, my kids are fast asleep. I will talk to them tomorrow. 11 pm. My head hits the pillow. Spondylitis has denied me the simple pleasure of reading in the bed. Tomorrow holds the promise. Tomorrow will be another beautiful day.

(Written in September 2014)

Niharika Kulshresth

Head of Communications and Editor of Qila Quotes



THE MOMENT THAT STAYED— ECHOES FROM THE FORT

Every Scindian carries within them a treasury of moments—some joyous, some challenging, but all unforgettable. These experiences shape them even after they have left the Fort. We asked the following question from them:

“Can you share one unforgettable incident at Scindia that left a lasting impact on your life?” Here are the responses:

Scindia is truly a land of opportunities. I learned more there than in any other school where I have worked. In 2000, the then Principal kindly allowed me to start an Eco-Club, which quickly became a hub of enthusiasm and action. We initiated several important activities—water harvesting, solid waste management, and cleanup drives.

Both my interest and that of the students grew steadily. In 2004, boldly and with great excitement, I enrolled the school in the National Level Volvo Award for Young Environmentalists. A dedicated team of students and teachers conducted a waste audit by going door to door, distributed garbage bins, and helped set up compost pits. We also performed a street play and gave a presentation at *Surajkund*, and compiled a comprehensive report that was sent to Volvo.

We missed first place by just one (!) mark, but were declared Runners-up and awarded a cash prize. The joy and pride we felt were indescribable!

My passion for environmental activities continues to this day, and I hope it still inspires the teachers and students who were part of that remarkable journey.

Ms. Sujata Aslam
Former HOD English

It was the year 1967, and I was in Class 8 when my house master, the late **Mr. Sharif Ahmed**, encouraged me to participate in an elocution competition. I was overjoyed to receive this opportunity and immediately began searching for good material in our school library.

After some browsing, I found a hilarious article about human snoring. Its humour and relatability seemed perfect for the occasion. I prepared thoroughly, and my Hindi teacher, the late Mr. Dixit, kindly guided me on important details—especially voice

modulation and the emphasis on certain words.

When the big day arrived, my heart raced as my name was announced. I walked onto the stage and began delivering my speech. To my delight, the audience responded with hearty laughter and generous rounds of applause several times during my performance. Their reaction filled me with happiness and pride.

After the competition, I excitedly asked my friends, “Was my article that good?” They smiled and replied, “The article was fine—but we were more impressed by your shaking legs!”

Vimal Jhaharia (ex-Scindian, 1971)

A lasting memory from my years at The Scindia School (1962–70) is the extraordinary dedication of our Junior School Headmistress, **Mrs. Lakdawala**. At a time when boarding schools rarely offered extra classes, she broke convention by personally tutoring me in Mathematics every Sunday for nearly a year. Her blend of stern discipline and genuine care not only strengthened my ability but also instilled deep confidence. **Mrs. Lakdawala** truly embodied the spirit of Scindia—nurturing excellence in academics, discipline, and character. Her legacy endures as a reminder that true education lies in unlocking the potential within every child.

Mr Rajan Sejpal (ex-Mahadji, 1972)

This incident is from the mid 70's, when I was in Class VIII, and my sisters were studying in SKV. We were allowed to visit the girls' school to celebrate this joyous occasion. On reaching SKV, our group of boys observed that the girls present there, far outnumbered us, the reason for which would soon unfold.

No sooner had my own sisters tied the *Rakhi* on my wrist, than at least twenty more girls from their class followed suit, enthusiastically tying *Rakhis* on both my wrists, up to the elbows!

This is something I fondly recall on each *Rakshabandhan* day, from my years in Scindia.

Sandeep Agarwal (ex-Shivaji, 1980)

I remember one afternoon, during project preparations for Founder's Day, I encountered both my teachers **Mr Tandon (Biology)** and **Mr Kapoor (Physics)** on either ends of the corridor stopping me and literally pulling me towards each other and asking to complete their projects first. Their arguments went on in loud voices for several minutes, until I had a smile on my face as I loved both of them for their enthusiasm, involvement in their projects and encouragement. Seeing me smile, both of them broke into laughter. I worked extra hours to complete both projects in time. Most importantly I felt wanted and appreciated with a sense of accomplishment.

Dr Manosh Phookan (Ex – Jeevaji, 1977)

If I had to choose one unforgettable experience, it would be the release of the inaugural edition of Qila Quotes on Founder's Day, 2008.

Perhaps this memory stands out so vividly because, at the time, I was driven purely by a sense of purpose, working with sincerity, just as the Gita teaches: "*Karmanyevadhikaraste, Ma phaleshukadachana*" do your karma without attachment to the results. I had no idea that something I poured my passion and intent into would go on to shape me so profoundly, both personally and professionally.

My journey with publications had begun at Scindia, and within just a year, I found myself entrusted with the responsibility of launching what was to be a quarterly newsletter. Qila Quotes (a name we effortfully arrived at) had to be ready for release on the 111th Founder's Day i.e. 21st October 2008. I still remember the emotional whirlwind I went through: feeling overwhelmed, stretched too thin, even a bit self-pitying. At times, it felt like I was unfairly burdened. But through it all, it was **Mr. Tewari's** unwavering trust in me that kept me going.

And then there was the mischievous, high-energy editorial team—a group of student editors more motivated by the promise of a post-release treat at Kwaliti than by deadlines. We toiled away on content, poured over photos, and managed the coordination with the designers in New Delhi. As a complete novice, I often feared we wouldn't meet the deadline. So, when the hard copy finally arrived on the morning of the 21st, I don't really remember feeling elated—I was simply relieved. There was no way I could have imagined that QQ and by default I had got stamped into history.

But something beautiful was quietly unfolding. **Mr. Tewari** acknowledged our efforts during the Founder's Day special assembly, offering heartfelt congratulations to the entire team. That moment of recognition, simple yet profound, still glows warmly in

my memory. I vividly recall walking around with my student editors, distributing copies, watching people's reactions, and trying to read their thoughts in their expressions.



Puja with the QQ Team

When you are in Scindia you acquire the zeal to leave an impact which outlasts you and it is through Qila Quotes that this opportunity came my way. That experience gave me a confidence I carry with me to this day. Even after leaving Scindia, publications have remained a central part of my journey in every school I've been part of. And it all began with this first big leap, wrapped in sincerity, trust, and the quiet magic of believing in something greater than the outcome. Perhaps this is why it remains my most abiding memory.

Ms. Puja Pant

Vice Principal Ecole Globale International Girls School
Founder Editor – Qila Quotes

The postbox near Jayaji house was very liberal - a true guardian!

In junior school, when our letters were checked before posting, this was our only way to send our real and heartfelt feelings to our parents.

We would sneak out during the Saturday movies and quickly drop our letters into this box. What a relief it was to let them go!

And on that walk back to the assembly hall, for a brief moment, I would feel light and free of all tensions, imagining the joy my mother would feel when the letter reached her.

Aditya Sahu (ex- Jeevaji)



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