Review

Issue: 1163

सा विद्या या विमुक्तये

FROM THE *Principal's* DESK

Dear Readers,

Every school has stories, uncountable, improbable and occasionally unbelievable. But few are fortunate enough to have a Fort to keep them in. This Founders' Day, Review celebrates its 1163rd edition with Fables of the Fort, a collection of tales so remarkable that "Really? Did that actually happen?" may be the most appropriate response.

I can neither confirm nor deny the authenticity of these stories. I can only observe that in a school as old as ours, even the walls have had ample time to develop opinions, preferences and perhaps, a few secrets. After careful consideration, I have decided not to question them. Some mysteries are best left where they belong : behind ancient stones, beneath battlements and safely within the collective memory of generations of Scindians.

In a legacy school, a newsletter is far more than a record of events. It is the keeper of memories. It remembers the triumphs, the adventures, the friendships, the unforgettable characters, the legendary pranks and even those moments we had sincerely hoped everyone would forget. Naturally, Review remembers them too.

So, dear readers, pour yourself a cup of your favourite tea, turn the pages and allow the legends to unfold. Savour every anecdote, smile at every embellishment and where necessary, exercise your own judgement about the boundary between fact and fable.

After all, the best stories, like the finest tea, become richer with time, and considerably more entertaining when shared.

Read on, enjoy the tales, and remember : should you have questions about their authenticity, please do not ask the ramparts to testify.

Happy Reading !

Mr. Ajay Singh
Principal
The Scindia School

LETTER FROM THE *Editors*

Dear Readers,

If you have been reading Review through the year, you probably know that every issue has its own little purpose. Sometimes, you read us for reports and information; sometimes, simply to spot your name somewhere in the pages; and sometimes, let's be honest, the wonderfully questionable memes from the Teachers' Day edition.

This time, however, we have something rather different in store for you.

The Fort has never been short of stories. Students hear them from old boys, teachers, members of the helping staff, and, of course, from one another. Over the years, these tales have travelled from one generation to the next, gathering new details, dramatic twists and the occasional exaggeration along the way. Much like Chinese whispers, a perfectly ordinary incident can become an extraordinary legend by the time it reaches the next person.

And that is precisely what makes them so fascinating.

As the school's newsroom, we thought it was only fair that you get to hear some of the good gossip, the stories that have lingered in conversations, corridors and memories long after the original events have passed.

For this year's Founders' Day edition, we present Fort Fables: a collection of stories gathered from old boys, teachers, helping staff and students, offering a glimpse into the many legends that have become part of life on the Fort.

Some will make you laugh. Some might leave you intrigued. A few may genuinely send a shiver down your spine and perhaps make you think twice before taking that late-night walk across the Fort.

After all, the Fort is more than its magnificent walls and ancient stones. It has witnessed generations of students, countless adventures, unexpected encounters, questionable decisions, and enough stories to keep us entertained for years to come.

So turn the page, wander through these tales, and allow yourself to get a little lost in the legends of the place we call home.

And if you happen to hear footsteps behind you after midnight...

Well, we never said it was just the wind.

Happy Exploring,

The Review Editorial Board

Ek Shaam Shahhedon Ke Naam

The Music Department staged Ek Shaam Shaheedon Ke Naam where a powerful play was portrayed honouring Birsa Munda's life and legacy. Akshat Singh portrayed Birsa Munda with confidence and depth, while Lakshya Sharma (Ex-JP, Batch of 2024) enriched the evening with a beautiful musical performance,

Mayo Football Tournament

The Scindia team finished fourth at the Mayo Football Tournament at Mayo College, Ajmer. Our boys displayed resilience and strong performances, qualifying for the knockout stage. A loss to Sherwood in the Eliminator, decided by a last-minute goal, brought their impressive run to an end.

J.T.M Gibson Debates and Quizzes

A team comprising Granth Mehta, Lakshya Tulsian, Chirag Raj Goel and Aadi Dev Goel represented the school at the JTM Gibson Quiz and Debate at Mayo College, Ajmer.

Aadi Dev Goel and Chirag Raj Goel secured second runners up in the Quiz. In the debating events, Granth Mehta was awarded Best Speaker in two debates, while Lakshya Tulsian won Best Speaker in one debate, making it a successful outing for the team.

HH Maharaja Madhavrao Scindia II Memorial Hindi Debate

The 25th HH Maharaja Madhav Rao Scindia II Memorial Hindi Debate Competition, held on 29-30 September 2026, brought together 10 schools for three rounds of debate in Oxford, Turncoat and Cambridge formats. The Scindia School emerged Winners, with Sant Atulanand Convent School as Runners-Up.

Chambal Talk Show

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Five students attended Chambal Stories at Jai Vilas Palace, on 12 September. Through dialogue's with archaeologist K. K. Muhammed, wildlife photographer Shivang Mehta,photographer Prashant Panjar and former dacoit Malkhan Singh, students

Fout

explored the Chambal region through the perspectives of archaeology, wildlife, photography, history and social change.

Shramjeevi Diwas

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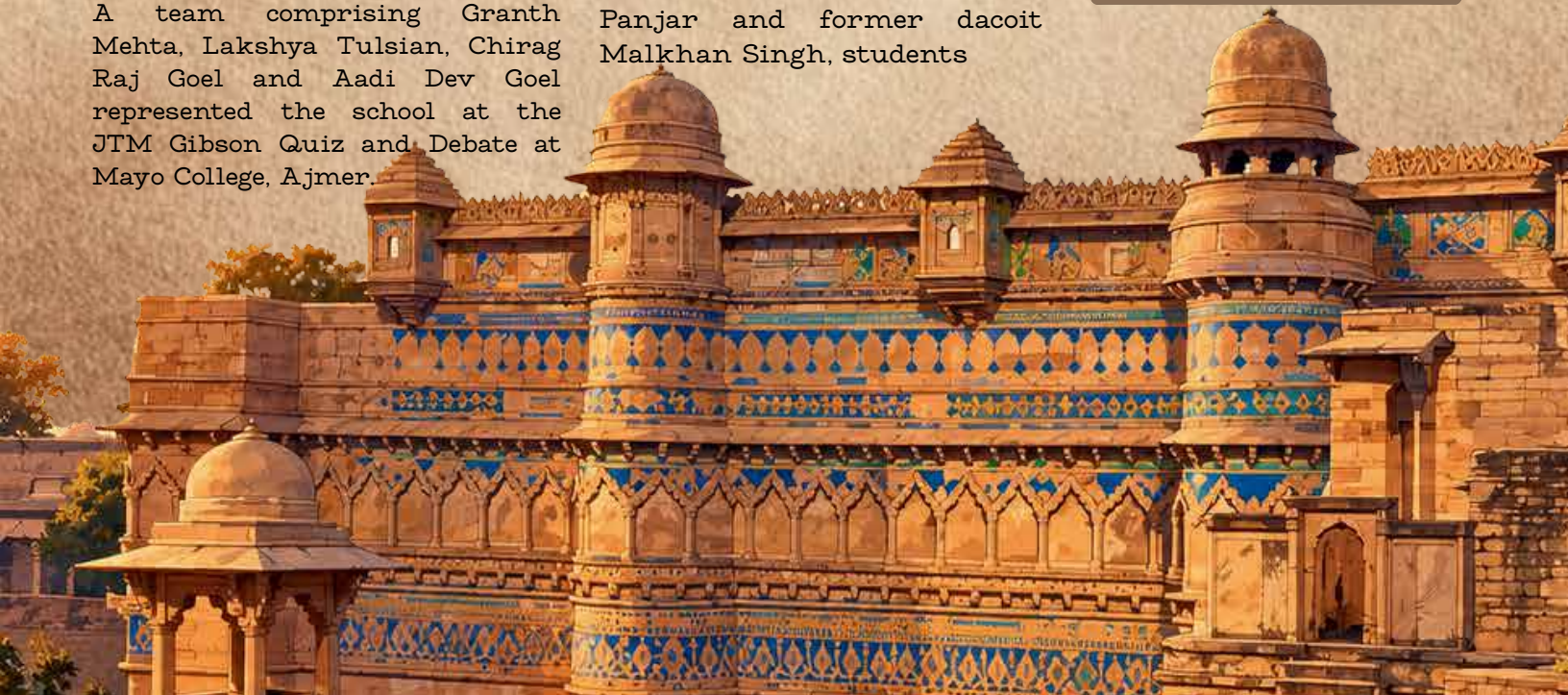
The Social Service League celebrated Shramjeevi Diwas on 2nd October bringing students, staff and the extended community together . 30 residents from our adopted Sonsa village also visited the school. Soulful Bhajans and tribute to Gandhi Ji were followed by a Bhandara where students served food.



News

A Day of Diplomacy

The Scindia School, Gwalior, collaborated with the Scindia Research Centre on 27th September 2026 , to host diplomats from Sushma-Swaraj Institute of Foreign Services. Students interacted with international diplomats, shared a meal, and gained insights into diplomacy, global perspectives and international relations.

RSIC Australia

Four students from our school participated in the Round Square International Conference 2026 at Barker College, Sydney, from 28 September to 3 October. Through cultural exchange, adventure and service, they developed leadership , global friendships and environmental awareness.

Best Teacher Award

Shri Manoj Kumar Mishra has been honoured with the "Best Teacher Award" by the Madhya Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sabha, Gwalior, in recognition of his dedicated contribution to education and the promotion of Hindi language and literature. The award acknowledges his efforts in nurturing young minds, encouraging creative expression and fostering a deeper appreciation of Hindi, literature and Indian cultural values.

Bronze In Fencing

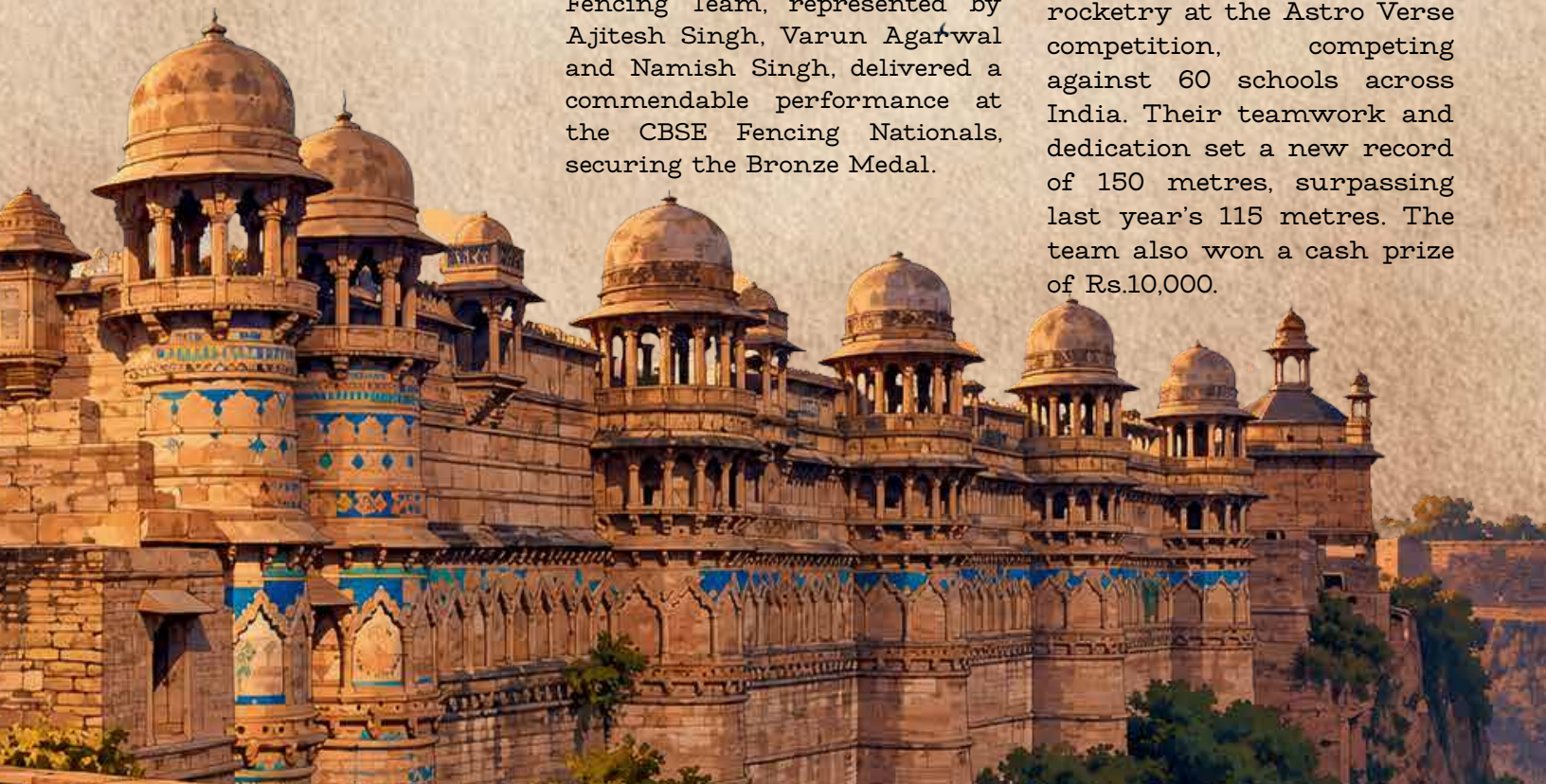
The Scindia School Junior Fencing Team, represented by Ajitesh Singh, Varun Agarwal and Namish Singh, delivered a commendable performance at the CBSE Fencing Nationals, securing the Bronze Medal. Their achievement reflects the team's skill, determination and competitive spirit on the national stage.

SOBA vs. Staff Cricket

The school conducted the SOBA vs Staff Cricket Match on 27 September 2026. It seemed as though the teachers and Old Boys had stepped back into their youthful days, full of energy and giving their all for victory. After a well-contested match, the SOBA team emerged victorious, proudly lifting the Balvir Dhir Cricket Trophy.

Aakashyaan Competition

The Scindia School team secured first place in hydro rocketry at the Astro Verse competition, competing against 60 schools across India. Their teamwork and dedication set a new record of 150 metres, surpassing last year's 115 metres. The team also won a cash prize of Rs.10,000.



Israel - India Cultural Dialouge

AN INTERVIEW WITH HIS EXCELLENCY REUVEN AZAR, ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO INDIA

Korougnanba Rajkumar: India and Israel have a long history of mutual respect and cultural interaction. How do you think this historical trust forms the foundation for modern, high-tech diplomatic cooperation between the two countries?

Ambassador: In diplomacy, governments can do a great deal, but ultimately, it is the people of the two countries who make relationships work. The more interaction there is between citizens, the stronger the relationship becomes. Jews have historically been welcomed in India, which has made Israelis feel comfortable visiting and working here. We have seen many Israeli university representatives visiting India and exploring research and academic cooperation. The same is true for Indians visiting Israel. When people feel welcomed and comfortable, there is a greater possibility of successful interaction. That is one of the secrets of our relationship, and I am confident it will enable us to achieve much more in the future.

Shaurya Pankaj Veer: Israel is known for its highly innovative and globally integrated technology sector, while India is increasingly focusing on building large-scale domestic technology and manufacturing capabilities. What lessons can India learn from Israel's technological journey?

Ambassador: There are several reasons why Israel developed such a strong culture of innovation. Our limited water resources forced us to develop innovative solutions in agriculture and water management. Our defence requirements also pushed us to develop advanced capabilities in intelligence, cyber security and technology.

Israel's compulsory military service allows young people with strong technological and analytical abilities to receive specialised training and work on advanced projects. When they complete their service, they already have considerable experience in technology, leadership and problem-solving, which they can apply to the civilian economy. This has contributed significantly to our start-up ecosystem.Today, we are trying to build similar cooperation with India, including projects between our defence establishments and India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Suraj Agarwalla: Looking at the world today, we see conflicts and tensions in many parts of the world. Many young people therefore wonder: where is the United Nations in all of this? Is the UN still relevant, or have important decisions increasingly shifted elsewhere?

Ambassador: I love this question. Throughout history, the international system has changed as the distribution of power has changed. After the Second World War, the United States emerged as the dominant power, while the Soviet Union transformed the system into a bipolar one. International rules were established, the United Nations was created, and institutions helped limit conflict.

Today, with the rise of Asian powers, particularly China and India, we are moving towards a multipolar world. The system is currently less stable, with many forces challenging established rules and institutions.

One thing India and Israel have in common is a strong tendency towards self-reliance. The United Nations can remain relevant if the international community gives it the authority and structure necessary to function effectively, but the system must also evolve and give appropriate representation to emerging global powers.

India, for example, is one of the world's largest economies and the most populous country, yet it does not have a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Countries therefore need to protect their interests by being self-reliant and building alliances with countries that share common values and interests. That is another reason why India and Israel have developed such a close relationship.

A Conversation Beyond the Stars

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. DON THOMAS (EX- NASA ASTRONAUT)

Aadi: Should we focus on solving problems on Earth before putting resources into space exploration?

Dr. Don Thomas: In the United States, we decide our priorities as a culture and as a country. Our government sets aside money for the military, some for space exploration, some for education, and some to support the arts. We make our priorities in different areas.So, if you said, "We cannot spend any more money on space; first we have to solve all these other problems," those problems probably are not going to get solved simply because we stopped spending money on space. It is not going to fix those problems.I think we are taking the right approach. We are not dismissing homeless people or hungry people. We still try to help them, and that is certainly a priority. But we also do other things. We support the arts, we support defence, and we support education.You cannot just drop everything about space and try to focus on one thing. I think what we are doing in going to space will ultimately be beneficial here on Earth.During the Apollo programme, I was about your age when we went to the Moon for the first time. There is a saying: we went to the Moon and discovered Earth.We went to the Moon to explore the Moon, but people also discovered how beautiful Earth was. The first pictures of Earth rising from behind the Moon came in 1968. Less than two years later, Earth Day was started.Those images really motivated people to look back at the Earth. So some of what we do in space is not just about spending our time up there. It benefits people on Earth.

Suraj: You have experienced about 70 years of life on Earth and witnessed an enormous amount of technological change. What do you think has changed between your generation and ours, and what important issue does our generation need to address?

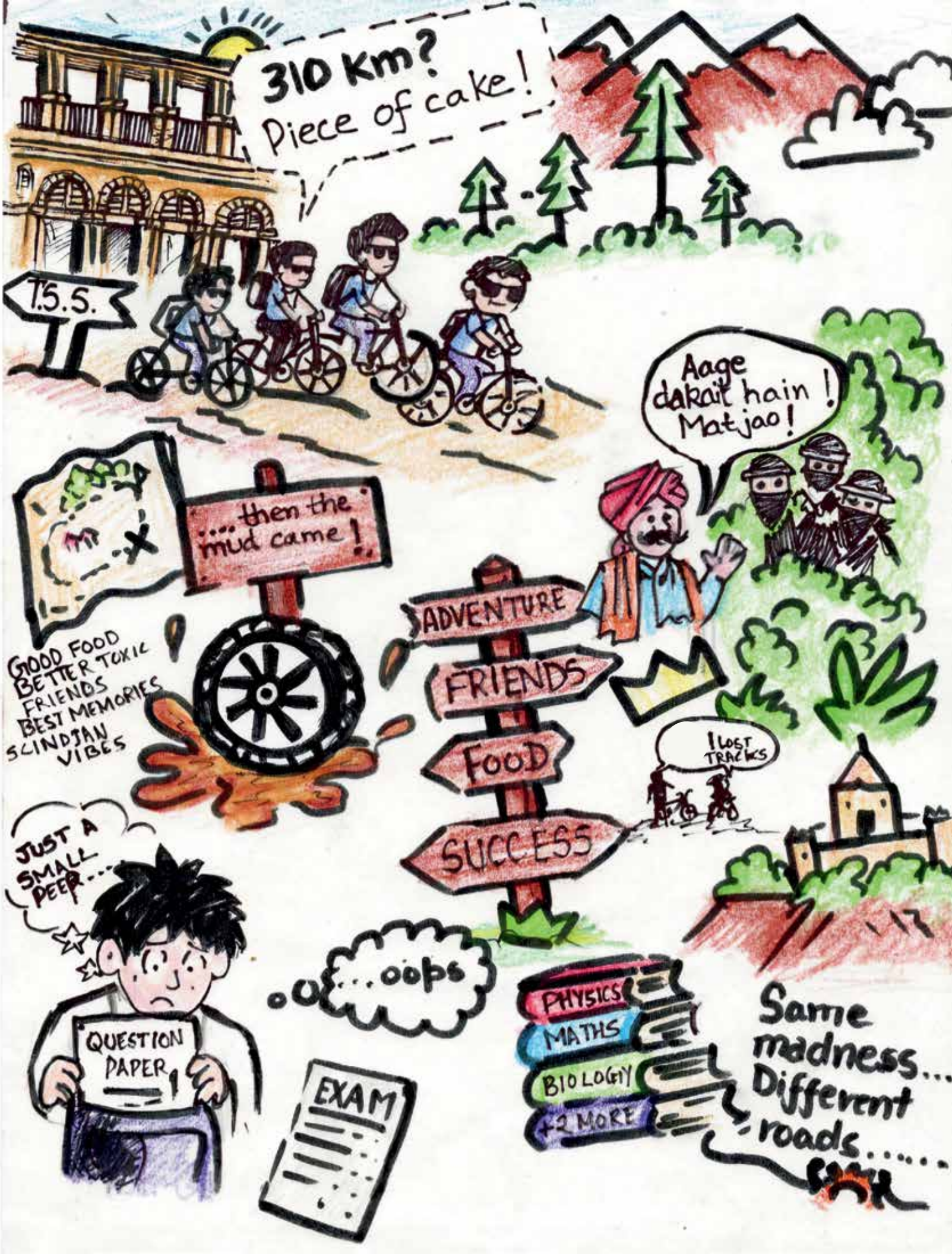
Dr. Don Thomas: Your generation has all these new technologies coming at you.When I was your age, perhaps a little younger than you, the first computers came out. We did not have computers before that, and then they started appearing. When I was maybe in university, laptops came out and things like that.I grew up with a slide rule. I did my physics homework using a slide rule.So we have had great technological advances, but even more of them have come during your generation.What you are going to have to deal with, and really get a grip on, is artificial intelligence. How does AI play a role in all of our lives? How can we use it for good and not for bad? Both possibilities are out there. You can use it to make people say thing they never said, or create things that were never created by the original person.It is two sides of the same coin.Your generation has therefore some great challenges

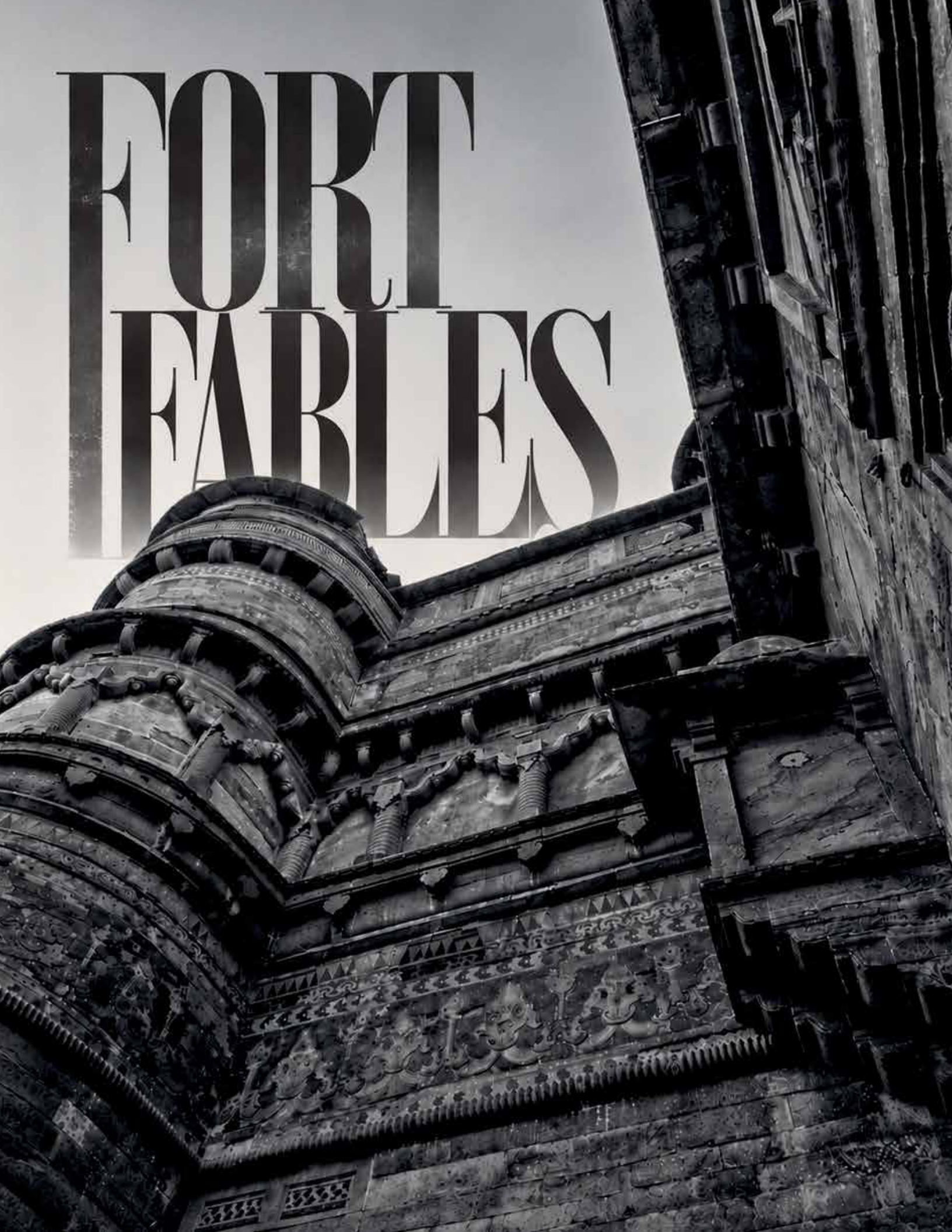
Lakshya: We started the interview by talking about going into space and doing a spacewalk. Coming back to Earth, imagine that your spacecraft was supposed to land in the United States but, by mistake, landed in India. Which place would you visit first, and what food would you want to try?

Dr. Don Thomas: Biryani would be high on the list, I'm sure. I would probably just be craving some spice and some really good food.I have been here for the last five weeks and have visited maybe 30 cities, from the southern tip of India all the way up north. I have enjoyed each of the different cities and the different cultures along the way.So, as long as I could get some masala somewhere, and some roti and naan bread, those are my personal favourites. I think any Indian food, anywhere I landed, would be great.I would simply be glad to be back on Earth. I would be thrilled that I had been able to land in India because I know how warm and welcoming the people are.What a great place to land and I know that if we landed here, people would come to our spacecraft bringing gifts and food for us. So it would not be panic. It would be more like, "Oh, this is great. I've got friends in India who will be there to see me."

Lakshya: If you had started your journey towards becoming an astronaut today, rather than 37 years ago, what would have been different?

Dr. Don Thomas: If I started today, I would not be thinking about going to the Moon. I would be thinking about going to Mars.


310 km?
Piece of cake!
T.S.S.
Aage dakait hain! Matjao!
....then the mud came!
GOOD FOOD
BETTER TOXIC
FRIENDS
BEST MEMORIES
SCINDIAN VIBES
ADVENTURE
FRIENDS
FOOD
SUCCESS
LOST TRACKS
JUST A SMALL PEEP...
QUESTION PAPER
...oops
EXAM
PHYSICS
MATHS
BIOLOGY
+2 MORE
Same madness... Different roads.....


FORT
FABLES

THE FORT JINN

It was the end of December, and the cold was merciless. I had travelled from Delhi to Gwalior on the Malwa Express, arriving around midnight.

I got off at the station, took an auto, and reached the gate at nearly one in the morning, what I remember as the first gate of Urvai Ghati. Only when I stepped out did I realise how bitterly cold it was. Until that moment, it had not even occurred to me what it meant to arrive at the fort at such an hour. Now, standing at the gate, I became painfully aware of it. There was absolutely nobody around. And I had to go up alone.

This was sometime around 1990, when I was a bachelor. With no other option, I began walking. After a while, I reached the stretch where the large Jain statues stand. It was there that I became aware of voices behind me. It sounded as though four or five people were coming up the road, talking amongst themselves. I could not tell whether they were walking or riding bicycles, but I had the distinct impression that a small group was following me. At the time, the school had three different messes, and the mess attendants often visited the city at night and returned quite late. I assumed it must be some of them. The thought was reassuring. “Let me walk slowly,” I told myself. “They’ll catch up, and I’ll have company.” So I deliberately slowed down, giving them every chance to reach me, and eventually made my way to the top. Where our checkpoint stands today, there was then only a platform beneath a neem tree. I sat down there to rest.

They would be along soon, I thought. Perhaps someone in the group lived near my house. If he had a bicycle, I might even get a ride home. I waited. Nobody came. At first, I was merely puzzled. I had walked so slowly—surely they should have caught up by now. Then a troubling thought crept in: had I imagined the whole thing? I tried to accept that explanation, but I was absolutely certain I had heard voices behind me. People talking to one another. People coming up the same road. Yet nobody appeared. As that realisation sank in, a shiver ran down my spine. I got up and ran, mindlessly, all the way home.

But two days later, something similar happened. I had to go into the city. When I reached the gate, I saw one of the school bus drivers. He stopped when he noticed me and asked me to get in. As we began coming down, he said, “Something very strange happened to my wife two days ago.” “What?” I asked. “My wife and our younger son were walking towards Urwai Gate,” he told me. “While they were walking, they felt that a woman and a child were following them, a short distance behind. They thought, ‘They’re going in the same direction,’ so they continued walking and came up the hill. But when they reached the very top, they looked back—and the woman and the child were gone. There was nobody there.” His words brought my own climb back to me: the voices behind the Jain statues, my deliberately slow pace, the wait beneath the neem tree. “This sounds very much like what happened to me,” I told him.

Then I remembered something my father had told me long before. When he was at the school, chaperones would sometimes accompany children on journeys to drop them off. People from the office would also go along to see them off. On one such occasion, after seeing the children off, my father and a colleague were returning late at night. At exactly the same spot, both of them heard something or sensed someone nearby. Neither spoke. Each feared that mentioning it might frighten the other. Both had felt it, and both had continued walking, keeping that uneasy feeling to themselves. My father had also told me that a jinn was said to be associated with that particular place; a jinn that, as people described it, helped those travelling alone at night. I had heard his story years earlier. Now, suddenly, it no longer felt distant.

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So I connected the three stories and wondered whether they were all related. My father and his colleague. The driver’s wife and her younger son. And me. Three experiences at the same place, each with the unsettling sense that someone else was there. Perhaps people still experience it today. Perhaps, as you walk up from the gate to the fort, someone quietly follows you. You slow down, grateful for the promise of company. You reach the top. And nobody comes.

Whatever the truth may be, the chill you feel is real…

Courtesy- Mr Jitendra Jawale
Faculty, Department of ICT

किले का रहस्यमय सवार

ग्वालियर का किला दिन में जितना भव्य दिखाई देता है, रात में उतना ही रहस्यमय लगता है। कहा जाता है कि इसकी पुरानी दीवारों में राजा मान सिंह तोमर के समय की कई कहानियाँ आज भी छिपी हैं। सिंधिया स्कूल के कुछ विद्यार्थी अक्सर किले की पुरानी इमारतों और दीवारों के पास से गुजरते थे। लेकिन स्कूल में एक पुरानी कहानी प्रचलित थी कि आधी रात के बाद किले में घोड़े की आवाज़ सुनाई देती है। अधिकांश विद्यार्थी इसे केवल डराने वाली कहानी समझते थे। लेकिन एक रात आरव ने उस कहानी को अपनी आँखों से सच होते देखा।

उस रात स्कूल के सभी छात्र अपने-अपने कमरों में सो चुके थे। आरव अपनी खिड़की के पास बैठकर पढ़ाई कर रहा था, तभी उसे दूर से घोड़े के दौड़ने की आवाज़ सुनाई दी। कुछ ही क्षण बाद तलवार के पत्थर से टकराने जैसी आवाज़ आई— "छन्न..." आरव ने खिड़की से बाहर देखा तो किले की दीवार के पास एक धुंधली-सी परछाईं खड़ी थी। उसके हाथ में तलवार थी और उसके पास एक घोड़ा खड़ा दिखाई दे रहा था। आरव ने पलक झपकाई, और अगले ही पल वह परछाईं अंधेरे में गायब हो चुकी थी।

अगली सुबह आरव ने अपने दो मित्रों को पूरी घटना बताई, लेकिन किसी ने उसकी बात पर विश्वास नहीं किया। तीनों ने उसी रात उस रहस्य का पता लगाने का निर्णय किया। आधी रात को वे चुपचाप किले की पुरानी दीवारों की ओर बढ़े। वहाँ उन्हें मिट्टी पर घोड़े के ताज़ा खुरों के निशान दिखाई दिए। निशान एक पुराने दरवाज़े तक जाते थे, जिसके ऊपर धूल में कुछ शब्द लिखे थे— "राजा अभी जाग रहा है।"

अचानक उनके पीछे किसी ने धीमी आवाज़ में कहा, "इतिहास को भूलना मत।" तीनों ने पीछे मुड़कर देखा तो एक बूढ़ा पहरेदार हाथ में लालटेन लिए खड़ा था। उसने कहा, "यह किला केवल पत्थरों से नहीं बना, इसकी दीवारों में कई राज़ दफ़न हैं।" आरव ने पूछा, "आप यहाँ कब से पहरा दे रहे हैं?" बूढ़ा मुस्कुराया और बोला, "जब से राजा की आख़िरी सवारी इस किले से निकली थी।"

इतना कहकर उसने लालटेन बुझा दी और घने अंधेरे में गायब हो गया। जब लड़कों ने टॉर्च जलाई, वहाँ केवल एक पुरानी तलवार पड़ी थी। अगली सुबह उन्होंने स्कूल के एक पुराने कर्मचारी से उस पहरेदार के बारे में पूछा। कर्मचारी का चेहरा अचानक गंभीर हो गया और उसने कहा, "यहाँ ऐसा कोई पहरेदार वर्षों से नहीं है।"
आरव के हाथ-पाँव ठंडे पड़ गए और उसे पिछली रात की घटना याद आने लगी। उस रात जब वह अपने कमरे में लौटा, उसकी मेज़ पर एक पुराना कागज़ रखा था। उस पर केवल एक वाक्य लिखा था— "जब तक कोई इतिहास को याद रखेगा, मैं इस किले की पहरेदारी करता रहूँगा।"

बाहर फिर वही घोड़े की आवाज़ सुनाई दी और ग्वालियर किले की दीवारों के बीच एक तलवार की आख़िरी खनक गूँज उठी।

सौजन्य — राजेंद्र भैया (दौलत सदन)

THE MAN ON THE STEPS

It was well past midnight during the time of Founders Day practices when a teacher, who had been in charge of dramatics, finally made his way home towards Surajkund after a long day of rehearsals. It was around half past one when he passed the Teli ka Mandir. That was when he noticed someone high up on the steps of the temple, apparently cleaning it.

The teacher was not the sort to simply pass by. Years of teaching dramatics and directing had made him accustomed to interrupting people, questioning them, and involving himself in things that might have been easier to leave alone. Fortunately, he also happened to be carrying a torch. He pointed it upwards and called out, "Raat ke dedh baje itni unchayi par kya kar rahe ho, pagal ho kya?"

The man replied that he had to work. He said there was an inspection by the Archaeological Survey of India the following day, and the temple had become overgrown with plants. He had been sent to clear them.

The teacher was not convinced. "Agar tum fisal gaye to?" he chided. "Tum girke mar jaoge. Kal jo bhi ho, ye koi mandir saaf karne ka samay nahi hai, niche aa jao." But the man insisted that he had to finish his work.

By now, the teacher was irritated. In a fit of annoyance, he asked the man his name. "Ramu," he replied.

The teacher left and continued home, thinking little more of the strange encounter.

The incident might have ended there, but the teacher had a habit of going for a morning walk every day. The next morning, while he was out for his usual walk, he happened to pass the ASI office near the Mann Singh Palace. Remembering the previous night's encounter, he stopped to ask an official why their workers were being made to clean the Teli ka Mandir at one-thirty in the morning.

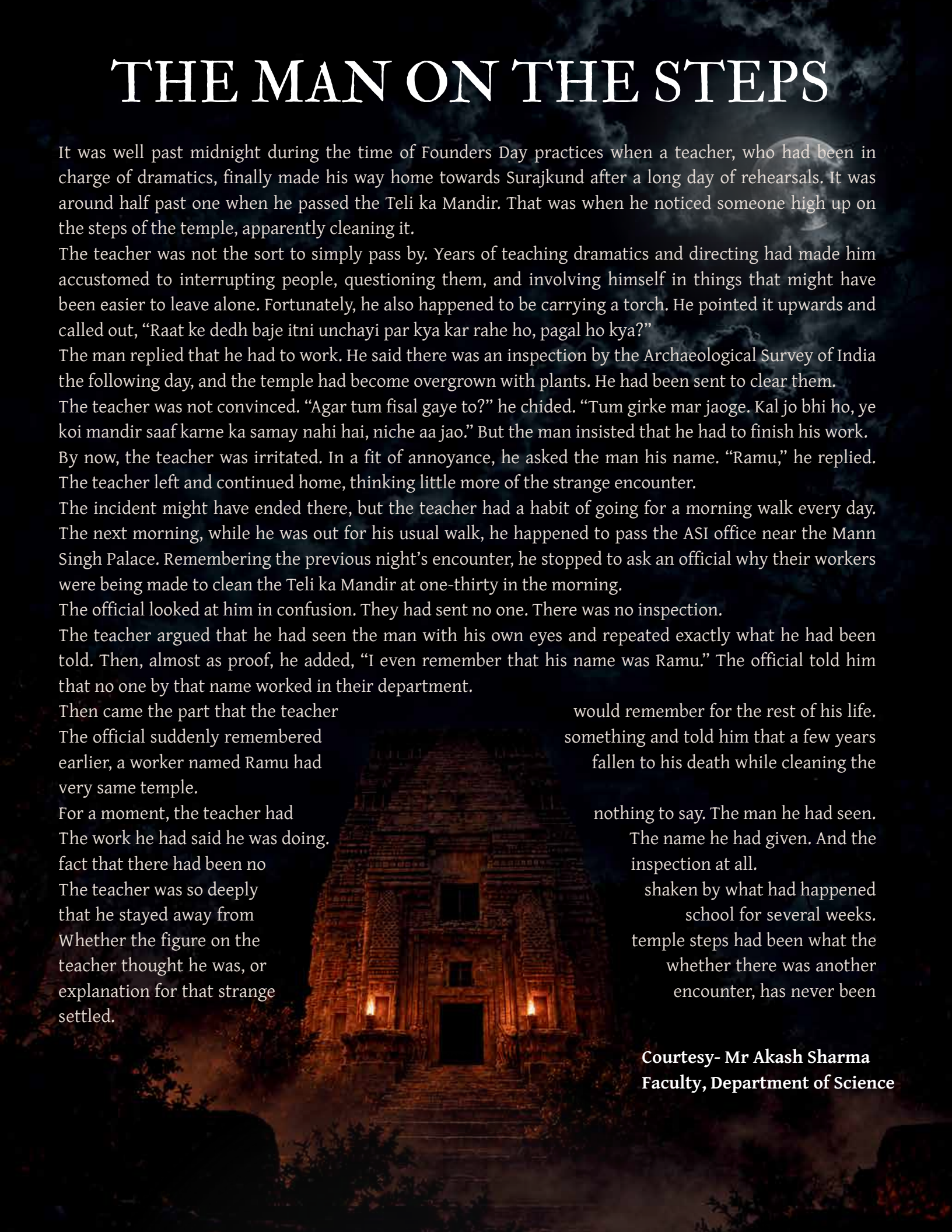
The official looked at him in confusion. They had sent no one. There was no inspection.

The teacher argued that he had seen the man with his own eyes and repeated exactly what he had been told. Then, almost as proof, he added, "I even remember that his name was Ramu." The official told him that no one by that name worked in their department.

Then came the part that the teacher would remember for the rest of his life. The official suddenly remembered something and told him that a few years earlier, a worker named Ramu had fallen to his death while cleaning the very same temple.

For a moment, the teacher had nothing to say. The man he had seen. The work he had said he was doing. The name he had given. And the fact that there had been no inspection at all.

The teacher was so deeply shaken by what had happened that he stayed away from school for several weeks. Whether the figure on the temple steps had been what the teacher thought he was, or whether there was another explanation for that strange encounter, has never been settled.



Courtesy- Mr Akash Sharma
Faculty, Department of Science

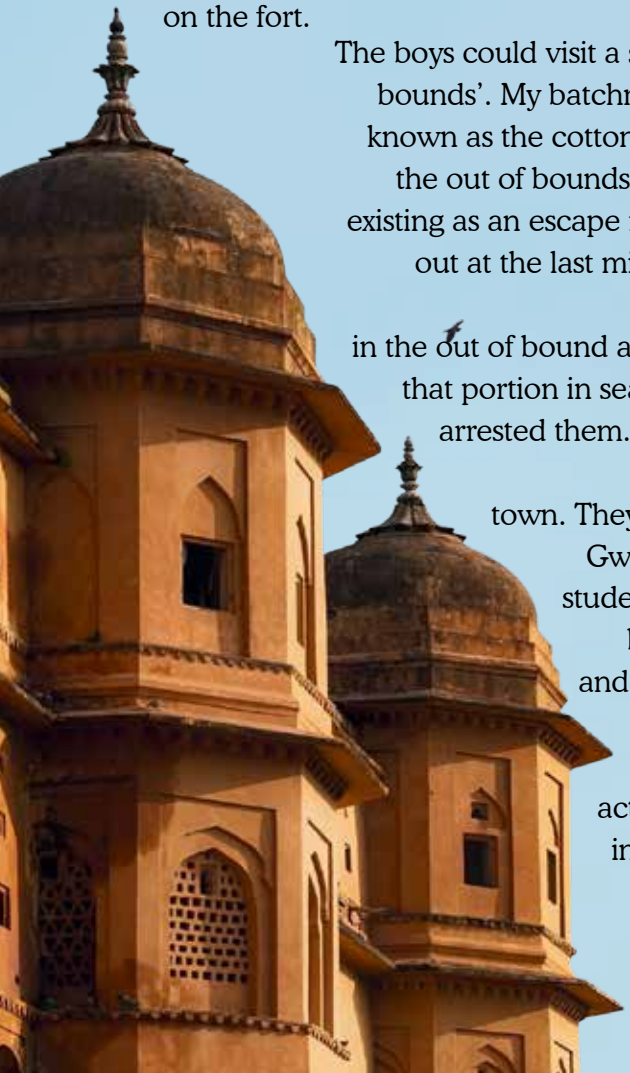
The Fort's Good Boy

I joined school in 6th class in 1950 and left school after 12th in 1957. It was an era when most of you were not born ; when panthers and leopards used to dwell in Urvai ghati and the ramparts of the Fort. It was the platinum era of the 7 Gurus (teachers) remembered by the students for the rest of their lives. The SaptRishi were Mr KC Shukla, Principal, RB Pawar, Vice Principal, NG Thakkar, Former Vice principal, JL Dhar, Former Principal, NL Khanolkar, The Classic English teacher, JN Dhar, Geography teacher, Swami Sharan Srivastav succeeded by Devender Narain Verma, notable Hindi teachers.

My first lesson in managing supply chain logistics of seriously banned stuff were learned at school under the cover of being rated a star performer by the saptrishis in different areas.

I was a role model of a good student in academics; always first for 7 years in debates and elocution ; 7 silver stars and two gold stars (gold star was awarded in the 3rd consecutive year of a silver star); a prominent drama artist in hindi and a participant in junior school dance troupe at Republic day celebrations in national folk dance festival in 1953.

The best part ofcourse was that I remained a good boy doing the bad things with the mischief makers. In earlier 50's Gwalior, Bhind - Morena and Shivpuri were infested with dacoits. Daku Man singh was also alive. Putli bai was a junior. It was said that these dacoits many a times would hide in 'Man Mandir' on the fort.



The boys could visit a small portion of Man Mandir on Sundays. The rest was strictly 'out of bounds'. My batchmate Ram Swaroop Sakseria (Sakseria hall was donated by his father known as the cotton king of India) approached me with proposal that we would slip into the out of bounds Man Mandir to hunt for underground tunnels which were said to be existing as an escape route out of the fort. For an unexplained reason I dropped out at the last minute whereas Ram Swaroop and 3 other boys donned the mantle of Christopher Columbus to explore the tunnels in the out of bound area. To their ill luck a police party was also simultaneously combing that portion in search of the dacoits in that area. They spotted these 4 youngsters and arrested them. Any amount of pleading without disclosing their identity fell on deaf ears. They were hand cuffed and taken to the headquarters in the town. They ultimately had to disclose their identity and on hearing it, the SP of Gwalior telephoned the Principal Mr KC Shukla to identify and take the students back. Shukla ji went to bring these boys in his Chevrolet car and brought them back. He stopped his vehicle in front of Jeevaji House and thereafter gave each one of them a thrashing 'left, right and center' with boys of Madhav House and Jeevaji House as witnesses . It was possibly the Sakseria hall under construction which saved further action. My first lesson in constructive leadership also came when I was in the 8th class . The famous Prithvi theaters of Prithviraj Kapoor with Raj kapoor, Shami kapoor and the Kapoor clan came to Gwalior to perform in Regal cinema at the Bada, Gwalior.

The school decided that students of classes 9th to 12th may go and see one of the plays being performed by the troupe. A few drama artists like me were excluded from that privilege. A word with Mr Swami Sharan and Mr Thakar did not break any ice. Hope was turning into despair when I gathered courage to go to the Principal Shukla ji. I was first given a sermon that the whole school could not go and watch and a line has to be drawn somewhere.
Spontaneously I told sir 'on one side you are sending everyone from classes 9th to 12th irrespective of their interest in dramatics and on the other hand leaving out those who are already recognized as drama artist of the school but are in junior class'. This possibly made him think and it was decided that all who participated on stage in school of the junior class between 6th and 8th will also be allowed see the play performed by the Prithvi theatres !

Sports was the most popular avenue to be known in the school. It was my weak spot . Carrying a big bulk, I could somehow manage the essentials of participation but nothing more . The big problem came in athletics where everyone had to run the non competitors marathon if he was not participating in any competitive track or field activity. There were a few heavy weights like me who were forced to run. One of them was Adarsh Kumar of Jeevaji. We reluctantly started on a 5 mile circuit by plucking and eating wild berries on the way , not bothered of how the others were doing . The two of us were the rear guards but we kept on trotting to finish the race. The race used to end at Kutia Mahal. There was no Gurudwara in its present shape. When every other runner was in the stables the two of us would run the final 100 meters putting in our best. To everybody's amusement a separate red tape was put for the winner. Till date I tell Adarsh that I could always beat him in the marathon.
Times passed. We moved classes and dared to do bigger adventures with full confidentiality. My friend Raja Phalke who holds the record of studying for 12 years in school to pass six classes was pushed by some of us to leak the final internal exam paper from the locked cupboard of the Vice Principal Mr RB Pawar. He succeeded but the next morning Mr Pawar the Vice principal learnt of it and was furious but none gave the secret away. In any case he changed the question paper and hence all the effort went in vain.
1956-57,was the final year when my friend Jayant Dey and I were school prefects. so we had the opportunity to adventure more. One of my friends, Md Khusru, son of Shree Saheb the royal muslim priest of the Scindias had arranged for his house helper to visit him by the peripherial roads of the Gwalior Fort to bring anything and everything as needed by us. Once in a while we would get delicious food in tiffin carriers through this route and have a party on the Shivaji parapet with a select group. Who all ? that is still a secret……

Courtesy- Mr Surendra Malhotra (Ex-MD, 1957)

1973

Bobby

As I switch on my cable connection, Tata Sky bombards me with an advertisement of Raj Kapoor's 'Bobby'. The visual instantly tickles a crevice in the Hippocampus and soon, a vibrant memory has crawled all its way up to the cerebral cortex.

We're in the twelfth grade and are spending our winter vacations at school. This is preparation for the Board exams. Ranoji house has been bundled with Jayaji and we've been made to move in into their dormitories. One Sunday, we get to hear that Doordarshan - god bless it's antiquated soul - will be airing the movie 'Bobby' that evening. Someone brave from amongst us approaches the housemaster, Mr. Balvir Dhir, and asks if we can be allowed to watch the movie. It's not as if we're great fans of that movie's music, or that we appreciate its significance as the comeback vehicle which saved the Kapoor clan from financial doom. All we're interested in is the eponymous lady in abbreviated dress. In full colour.

Mr. Dhir assents. The afternoon is spent in a Winnie-the-pooh bliss ("I love bread and honey, but what I love even more is the moment just before I'm about to eat it."). Finally, evening arrives and all of us take our seats in Mr. Dhir's drawing room. Mr Dhir himself takes a seat too; on his easy chair, a bit to our left and a bit ahead of us. The movie soon reaches the scene where Rishi Kapoor's roommate at his boarding school is instigating him against his parents. "पैदा तो कर देते हैं । पर पाला नहीं जाता। तो भेज देते हैं किसी महँगे boarding school में।"

And this, dear friends, is the moment Mr. Dhir chooses to do a number. Slowly, he swivels his neck and bestows a comprehensive survey upon the assembled company behind him. Then, equally slowly, but with an unmistakable twinkle, he smiles. Thus having delivered his silent onslaught, he turns back to the television and goes on to watch the movie as if nothing has happened. For all of us though, his smile keeps lingering like the Cheshire cat's grin.

When teachers secure a victory over their pupils, they generally do so by brandishing the blunt instrument of authority. Very seldom does that victory come riding on wit alone.

Dhir sahab: Ten. Students: Nil. Well played sir!

Courtesy - Sachin Jha
(Ex- Ranoji House, 1989)

THE FORGOTTEN AMULET

I remember him as an ordinary boy living on the Fort. He was not a remarkable student, nor was he someone who particularly stood out. He studied hard, worked diligently, and prepared for his examinations like everyone else. Yet, whenever he entered the examination hall and the question paper was placed before him, something strange would happen. Everything he had studied for hours seemed to disappear. His mind would go blank. No matter how much he knew before the examination, he simply could not recall it when he needed it most.

Before the Diwali break, he came to me and told me about his problem. I could see how frustrated he was. It was not a matter of laziness or a lack of effort. He was genuinely trying, yet something seemed to hold him back. I listened to him patiently and told him that I would think of a solution.
The next day, I asked him to bring a tabeez with him the next time he went home. He did exactly that. When he returned after the Diwali break, he came to me and handed it over. I took the tabeez to the Hanuman temple near what was then Jyotiba House, where the Soba Guest House now stands. There, I prayed for the boy and placed a small piece of paper inside the tabeez. On it, I wrote, **"ओम, इस बच्चे पर कृपा करे।"**

The next day, I returned the tabeez to him. He wore it. I did not know what would happen next. Perhaps I did not expect anything extraordinary at all. I simply hoped that it would give him some confidence and reassurance that he was not alone in his struggle.
Then came his next examination. I watched him sit down with the question paper in front of him, just as he had done countless times before. But this time, something was different. He remembered. The answers came to him one after another, and he went on to ace the examination. From that day onwards, he never faced the same problem again.

What happened afterwards was even more remarkable. The boy who had once thought of himself as an average student slowly began to excel. His confidence grew, and so did his ambitions. Eventually, he became a Prefect of the school. Years later, I learnt that he had gone on to build a successful life of his own, even working with some of the most recognisable personalities in the country, including Amitabh Bachchan.

Sometimes, I wonder what really changed that day. Was it the tabeez? Was it the prayer? Was it faith? Or was it simply that, for the first time, the boy believed that he could succeed? I may never know the answer. But I do know this: I once met a boy who believed that his mind failed him whenever he needed it most. I gave him a small tabeez, a little faith, and perhaps a reason to believe in himself.
The boy who once sat before an examination with a blank mind eventually became a Prefect of the school—and went on to become much more besides. And perhaps that is the real mystery of the story.

Courtesy- Mr Akash Sharma
Faculty, Department of Science

The Night the Cyclists Disappeared

I had been taking boys on cycling expeditions for quite some time. In those days, an expedition was never just about cycling from one place to another. It meant adventure, uncertainty and often having to deal with situations that could never have been planned for.

One such expedition took us from Gwalior to Bharatpur.
Somewhere along the route, a few villagers suddenly stopped us. They warned us not to proceed any further. There were dacoits on the road ahead, they told us, who would stop travellers, take away their belongings and could even hurt them. With a group of schoolboys in our care, we decided there was no reason to take the risk.
We stopped and found a nearby dharamshala where we could spend the night. It was hardly comfortable or suitable for a group of boys, so we asked the people there to arrange some khatiyas outside. Soon, the boys were settled on the cots, their bicycles beside them, and eventually fell asleep under the open sky.

What we did not know was that, back at school, our absence was causing considerable anxiety.
In those days, there were no mobile phones or GPS. There wasn't even a PCO nearby from where I could inform the school that we had been stopped. Meanwhile, the delegation failed to reach Bharatpur. As the hours passed, the school began to wonder where we could possibly be.

The concern soon turned into panic. By the following night, the Principal and the Board of Governors were involved. Around midnight, a school minivan set out to search for us. They retraced our route, questioned villagers and stopped at places where we were believed to have been seen, but there was no sign of the boys.
Fortunately, one of the school's former students, who was then serving as the Chief Secretary of Rajasthan, helped bring the police into the search. A search operation was launched across the region, and slowly, through enquiries with villagers, the police were able to identify the village where we had stopped.

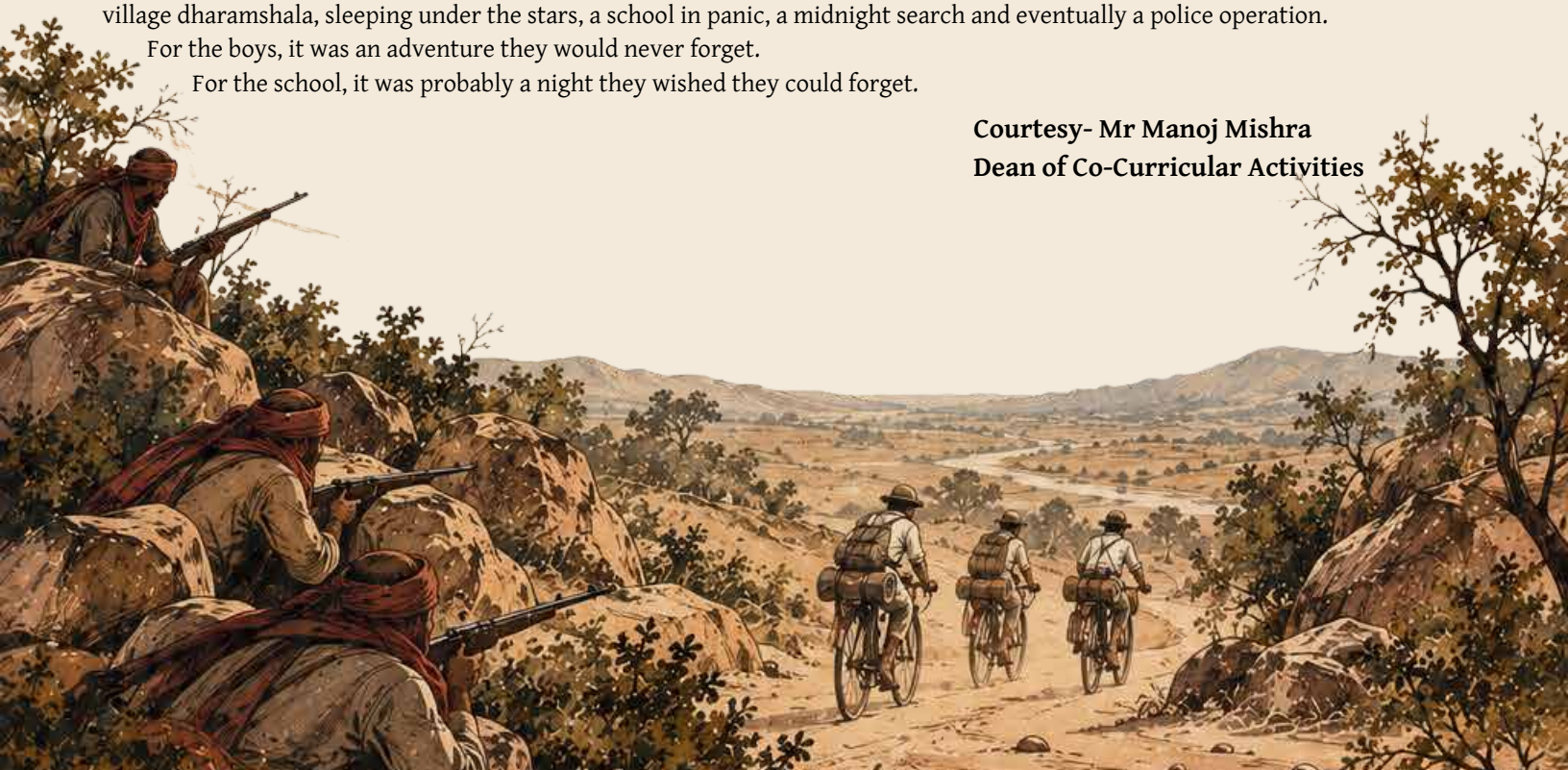
When the search party finally reached us, we were perfectly safe—sleeping peacefully on our khatiyas, completely unaware of the commotion our absence had caused.
We were brought safely back to Gwalior.

Looking back, what began as a routine cycling expedition had turned into quite an adventure: dacoits on the road, a night in a village dharamshala, sleeping under the stars, a school in panic, a midnight search and eventually a police operation.

For the boys, it was an adventure they would never forget.

For the school, it was probably a night they wished they could forget.

Courtesy- Mr Manoj Mishra
Dean of Co-Curricular Activities



दुर्ग की रोमांच भरी दुनिया

मुझे याद है, वह घटना जब तेंदुआ किले पर आया था शायद 1992-93 की बात होगी । तब हम के.डी . हाउस में रहते थे और सर्दियों की छुट्टियों के दिन थे ।
एक शाम प्रिंसिपल डॉ . एस. डी. सिंह का संदेश आया कि अपने दोनों डॉबरमैन कुत्तों को घर के अंदर ही रखना है। उस समय कारण समझ नहीं आया पर धीरे-धीरे पता चला कि स्कूल में कोई जंगली जानवर घूम रहा है।

उस समय स्कूल आज जैसा व्यस्त नहीं था । चारों ओर खुला इलाका और शाम के बाद कई जगहें बिल्कुल सुनसान हो जाती थीं । एक शाम जूनियर स्कूल के मैदान के पास से एक व्यक्ति स्कूटर पर जा रहा था , तभी उसके सामने से एक जानवर सड़क पार करके निकल गया । दो दिन तक किसी को पता नहीं था कि वह क्या था ? फिर किसी ने मैदान की बाउंड्री के पास उसकी चमकती आँखें देखीं और पूरा जानवर दिखाई दिया —वह तेंदुआ था । उसके बाद शाम को बाहर निकलने पर रोक लगा दी गई। डर के साथ एक अजीब-सी उत्सुकता भी थी कि आखिर वह कहाँ -कहाँ घूम रहा है, क्योंकि उसे दो तीन जगहों पर देखा गया था। वन - विभाग को सूचना दे दी गई थी , उन्होंने उसे पकड़ने के लिए काफी प्रयास किए पर असफल रहे। छुट्टियों के बाद आकर पता चला कि जिस प्रकार वह यहाँ अचानक आया था उसी प्रकार गायब भी हो गया।

सीरिया सर बताते हैं कि जब वे 1981 में स्कूल आए थे, तब स्कूल में और भी ज्यादा वन्य जीव दिखाई देते थे। साही (PORCUPINE) बहुत थे और बड़े-बड़े साँप दिखना भी आम बात थी ।
एक बार साँप पकड़ने वाले लोग भी स्कूल आए। वे किसी जड़ी -बूटी जैसी चीज को उस जगह डालते थे जहाँ साँप देखा गया हो और दावा करते थे कि उसकी गंध से साँप बाहर निकलते हैं। यह सही साबित हुआ और देखते-देखते एक के बाद एक कई साँप निकलने लगे और वे उन्हें बोरों में भरकर ले गए। महादजी हाउस के पीछे तो एक बेहद पुराना और असामान्य साँप भी निकला , जिसे देखकर वे सब पीछे हट गए और उन्होंने उसे पकड़ने से इंकार कर दिया ।

शायद यही सिंधिया की पुरानी घटनाओं की खूबसूरती है। कभी यहाँ तेंदुआ आया कभी मगरमच्छ और कभी जमीन से दर्जनों साँप निकले। यह सिर्फ इमारतों और कमरों का स्कूल नहीं था —यहाँ प्रकृति हमारे बीच रहती थी , कभी डर बनकर, कभी रोमांच बनकर और कभी एक ऐसी कहानी बनकर,जिसे वर्षों के बाद भी सुनाया जा सके।

सौजन्य — रक्षा सीरिया
विभागाध्यक्ष -हिंदी विभाग

The Fable I Never Meant to Write

Four years now, I have been making the Review as an Editor. Every year, I publish one of my own articles, but this year our Staff Editor thought it worthy of the Founders' Edition. Thank you, Sir.

I have some rather odd aspirations in life, for example, driving Principal Sir's car to our batch's Valedictory. Unreal aspirations aside, this year's Review is themed around Fort Fables, so I thought I would write my very own fable.

The Fort has shaped me in ways I could never have imagined. Somewhere between morning assemblies, debating competitions, interviewing ambassadors of countries I once wanted to have a visa of, MUNs, editorial meetings, impossible deadlines and being told that something was due "five minutes ago", this place quietly became home.

When I first arrived, I thought school would be fairly straight forward: study, make friends, play some sport and eventually graduate. Four years later, I have somehow become an Editor, spent an unreasonable amount of time debating fonts and commas, learnt that "just one small correction" is never actually small, and discovered that teachers have an almost supernatural ability to appear precisely when you are doing something you probably shouldn't.

But that is the strange thing about the Fort. It has a way of turning ordinary moments into memories. Conversations outside classrooms, laughing during house meetings, running across campus because you are late, sitting with friends long after you were supposed to leave, or simply watching the sun disappear behind the walls during astachal, none of these seem particularly important when they happen.

Yet these are the moments I suspect I will remember most.

Perhaps that is why a fable is the perfect way to tell this story. Fables are rarely about what they appear to be about. Somewhere beneath the story is a lesson, a memory, or, occasionally, a completely unnecessary talking animal.

So here is mine.

Once upon a time, on a very old Fort, a chubby boy (I still am) arrived with a suitcase, a school uniform and absolutely no idea what he was getting himself into.

He thought he was coming to school.

He did not know he was coming home.

And somewhere between deadlines, detentions, friendships, failures, victories and far too many stories, he realised that perhaps the Fort had been writing his fable all along.

Lakshya Tulsian, Class XI

The Other Side of the Screen

I want to begin with an admission that may sound strange for an essay about social media: I am not on it very much. Where I study, screens are rationed almost like water in a dry season. For a long time, I thought this made me the wrong person to speak about it. Then I realised—the fish is the last creature to describe water. Sometimes, you understand a current best from the bank.

And from the bank, what I see is this: an entire civilisation leaning towards a glow. We call it a global village. The phrase is true, but generous. In a village, people know each other. Here, everyone is speaking, and almost no one is listening. We have never been more connected, yet we have never been more alone in a crowd.

Every coin has two sides, and this particular coin spins so quickly that we have stopped knowing which side is facing up. So what exactly is social media? It is not a place, a country, or even simply a technology. It is something stranger: a mirror that answers back. We put something into it, and it returns it to us—magnified, multiplied, and moving faster than we intended.

It has no taste and no conscience. It cannot distinguish a warning from a rumour, friendship from performance, or an idea from a lie dressed as one. It follows only one law: whatever travels fastest, travels furthest.

And this is where I believe social media becomes a force to reckon with: precisely when we set aside our morality and ethics.

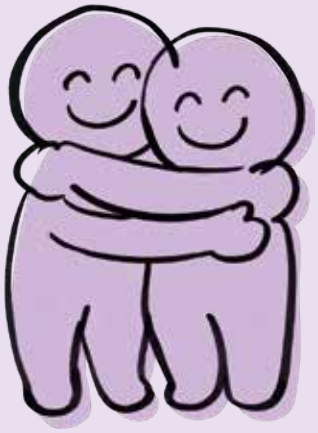
Turn the mirror towards generosity, and generosity travels further than ever before. A stranger's need is answered by another stranger's hand. A question asked in one language is answered in another. Knowledge once locked behind money, distance, or privilege becomes available to anyone willing to reach for it. That is no small thing. It may be one of the most democratic developments of our lifetime.

But turn the mirror the other way, and the same machinery works just as efficiently. A falsehood is shared without being checked. A cruelty is typed by someone who would never say it to a person's face. A private moment is shared because someone thought it was funny. And the machine, indifferent and faithful, does for cruelty exactly what it does for kindness.

Falsehood has always had a head start in this world; we have simply handed it a faster vehicle.

Granth Mehta, Class XI

मोह की माया



क्या लेकर तू आया मानव,
और क्या लेकर तू जाएगा।
ये जीवन है सिर्फ मोह की माया,
तेरी कमाई का सारा धन
सब यहीं पर रखा रह जाएगा।
घमंडी रहता हो या मानव,
सब एक दिन मिट्टी में मिल जाएंगे।
एक मानव का दूसरे मानव के प्रति
किया गया उपकार ही
उसके साथ में जाएगा।
बाकी मानव का धन, शक्ति, बल,
मोह-माया,
एक दिन सब यहीं पर रखा रह जाएगा।
हे मानव! इस जगत में
अकेला ही आया था,
अकेला ही जाएगा।

कवि :– मंगल सिंह तोमर

गाँधी जयंती: सेवा से समरसता की ओर .....

विगत वर्षों की भाँति इस वर्ष भी राष्ट्रपिता महात्मा गाँधी की जयंती हमारे विद्यालय में श्रद्धा, उत्साह और सामुदायिक सहभागिता के साथ मनाई गई। प्रातःकाल से ही विद्यालय परिसर में उत्सव का वातावरण दिखाई दे रहा था। सोंसा गाँव के ग्रामवासी निर्धारित समय पर विद्यालय परिसर में पहुँचे, जहाँ उनका आत्मीय स्वागत किया गया। सभी अतिथियों के लिए जलपान की व्यवस्था की गई।

इसके पश्चात सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रमों का सिलसिला आरम्भ हुआ। विद्यार्थियों और ग्रामवासियों की प्रस्तुतियों ने कार्यक्रम में विशेष रंग भर दिया और उपस्थित श्रोताओं को मंत्रमुग्ध कर दिया। स्वराज संतोष द्वारा प्रस्तुत भजन को विशेष रूप से सराहा गया। इसके बाद सोंसा गाँव के स्थानीय गायकों ने अपने मधुर स्वर में पुराने लोकप्रिय गीत प्रस्तुत कर समाँ बाँध दिया। उनकी प्रस्तुतियों ने पूरे वातावरण को उल्लास और आत्मीयता से भर दिया।

कार्यक्रम के अगले चरण में महात्मा गाँधी के जीवन, उनके विचारों और उनके संघर्ष से जुड़े प्रेरणादायी एवं रोचक प्रसंग साझा किए गए। इन प्रसंगों ने विद्यार्थियों एवं ग्रामवासियों को गाँधी जी के सत्य, अहिंसा, स्वच्छता और सेवा के आदर्शों को समझने तथा उन्हें अपने जीवन में अपनाने के लिए प्रेरित किया।

इसके पश्चात सोंसा ग्रामवासियों के साथ विद्यालय के गाँव के विकास में योगदान पर सार्थक चर्चा हुई। ग्रामवासियों ने विद्यालय द्वारा गाँव के शैक्षिक एवं सामाजिक विकास के लिए किए जा रहे विभिन्न प्रयासों की भूरि-भूरि प्रशंसा की। उन्होंने इस बात पर विशेष प्रसन्नता व्यक्त की कि आज गाँव के अनेक युवा शिक्षा प्राप्त कर आगे बढ़ रहे हैं और देश के विकास में अपना योगदान दे रहे हैं। उन्होंने विद्यालय और गाँव के बीच वर्षों से चले आ रहे इस आत्मीय संबंध को क्षेत्र के समग्र विकास के लिए अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण बताया।

समापन अवसर पर प्रधानाचार्य महोदय ने सभी ग्रामवासियों के प्रति हार्दिक आभार व्यक्त किया। उन्होंने विद्यालय और सोंसा गाँव के बीच स्थापित इस आत्मीय एवं विश्वासपूर्ण संबंध को भविष्य में और अधिक सुदृढ़ बनाने की प्रतिबद्धता व्यक्त की। उन्होंने कहा कि ऐसे अवसर केवल उत्सव मनाने तक सीमित नहीं होते, बल्कि वे समाज के विभिन्न वर्गों को एक-दूसरे के निकट लाने और सहयोग की भावना को मजबूत करने का माध्यम भी बनते हैं।

कार्यक्रम के अंत में विशाल सामुदायिक भंडारे का आयोजन किया गया। विद्यालय के प्रत्येक छात्र ने भोजन वितरण में उत्साहपूर्वक भाग लिया और सेवा-भावना का परिचय दिया। ग्रामवासियों, शिक्षकों, सुरक्षा कर्मचारियों और विद्यार्थियों ने साथ बैठकर भोजन का आनंद लिया। इस अवसर ने विद्यालय और गाँव के बीच आत्मीयता एवं अपनत्व की भावना को और गहरा किया।

इस प्रकार गाँधी जयंती का यह आयोजन सेवा, सद्भाव, सामुदायिक सहभागिता और आपसी सहयोग का प्रेरणादायी उदाहरण बनकर सम्पन्न हुआ। कार्यक्रम ने एक बार फिर यह संदेश दिया कि शिक्षा का वास्तविक उद्देश्य केवल ज्ञान प्राप्त करना नहीं, बल्कि समाज के प्रति संवेदनशीलता, सेवा और जिम्मेदारी की भावना विकसित करना भी है। सभी ने भविष्य में इस आत्मीय परंपरा को और अधिक व्यापक एवं प्रभावी रूप में आगे बढ़ाने का संकल्प लिया।

अखंड प्रदीप राय, कक्षा 12

the ink transitions...

I still remember how I spent Class 9 hovering behind Mr Chetan Bhatia, the staff editor of the day, until he let me join Review. I suspect he agreed purely for his own peace of mind. My first role was as an illustrator, along with two of my friends, which was a polite way of saying we were allowed to draw things while the real editors did the thinking. But thanks to Chetan Sir, I was part of the legendary 125th Founder's Day special Review, which I will happily mention at every opportunity for the rest of my life.

Then Chetan Sir left the school, and Saptarshi Sir took over as the staff editor. Somehow, against all odds and probably against several better judgements, I was made Senior Student Editor. After countless editions, it is now strangely time to say goodbye. It feels unreal to think that I am leaving behind midnight deadlines, chasing people for reports and photographs they swore they had already sent, hunting for the tiniest typos, and discovering brand new ones five minutes before printing. Truly, a glamorous life.

Review came with its privileges, my favourite being the chance to interview visiting ambassadors at the Fort. This served two purposes. It fed my rather ambitious interest in diplomacy, and, more importantly, it gave me a chance to prove myself to the Principal.

Some context is needed here. Over the years, the Principal had been generously informed by certain teachers that I was a terrifying, short-tempered senior who disciplined his juniors with an iron fist. To this day, Sir still greets me as an "Angry Young Man." I have accepted this title with the dignity of a man who has no other choice. So what better stage than an ambassador's interview to show him that I can speak, think and string together full sentences without raising my voice? Consider it a long-term image rehabilitation project, with Review as my PR agency.

One such experience appears in this very edition. Having watched enough Israeli espionage films to develop an unreasonable fascination with Mossad, I was particularly thrilled to interview the Ambassador of Israel to India, Reuven Azar. I got the interview, the diplomacy, and, if my extremely questionable observations are anything to go by, possibly even a glimpse of actual Mossad officials. I maintain that they were Mossad. I have absolutely no evidence, which is exactly how a good conspiracy theory should work.

But it is the little moments I will remember most. Review gave me stories, opportunities, friendships, and more midnight panic than any publication should reasonably require.

Looking back, I realise I joined Review hoping to get my name into its pages. I leave with something far better: the memories of the people and stories that filled them. (My name in the pages is still nice, though. Please do not remove it.)

Ink undergoes transition, but the stories remain.

For the pages, the people and the privilege: thank you, Review. Always.

-Suraj Kumar Aagrwalla

Astachal Talks

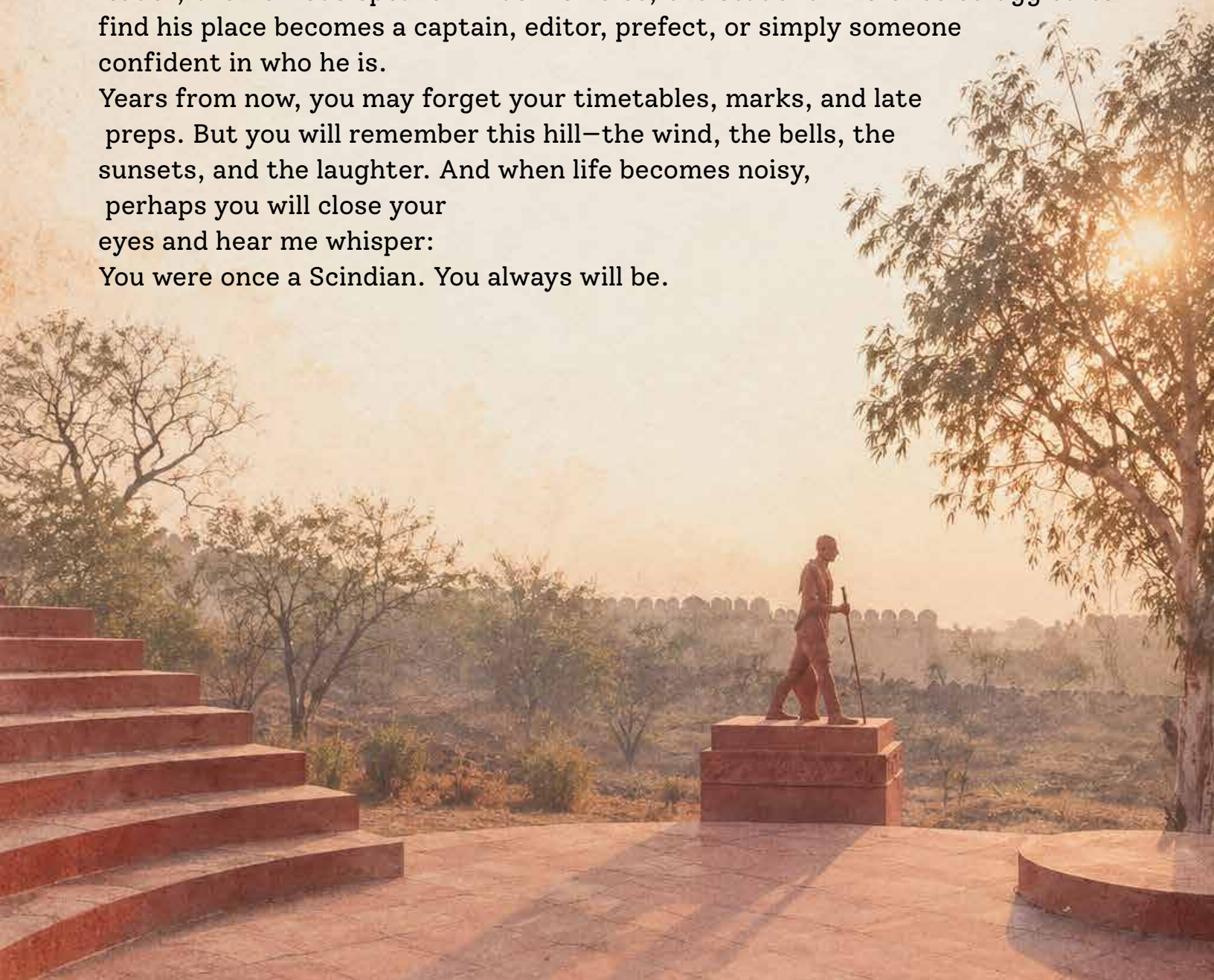
I have watched generations of Scindians arrive—some nervous, some excited, and some already convinced they would conquer the world. I have watched you grow, change, stumble, laugh, compete, and eventually leave, carrying memories you never realised you were making.

I am Astachal. I stood here before your houses had names, before smart boards and smartphones, and I have witnessed friendships born over punishments, rivalries on the field, laughter echoing across the Fort, and the occasional hurried walk to the Headmaster's office.

What fascinates me most is how quickly you change. The quiet boy becomes a leader; the nervous speaker finds his voice; the student who once struggled to find his place becomes a captain, editor, prefect, or simply someone confident in who he is.

Years from now, you may forget your timetables, marks, and late preps. But you will remember this hill—the wind, the bells, the sunsets, and the laughter. And when life becomes noisy, perhaps you will close your eyes and hear me whisper:

You were once a Scindian. You always will be.



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