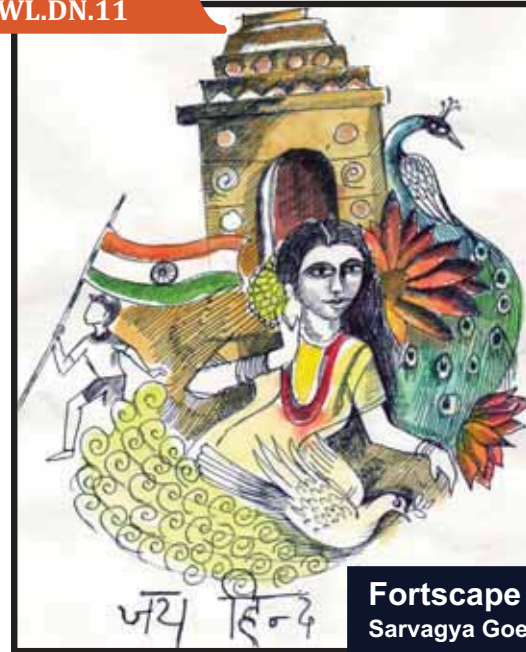


THE SCINDIA SCHOOL, FORT GWALIOR

REVIEW-19



THURSDAY, 15 AUGUST 2019 | WPP : REGN.NO.GWL.DN.11



Fortscape -
Sarvagya Goel | XII D

EDITORIAL

Mr Devendra Bhatnagar
Guest Editor (Ex Jayaji, 1974)

The resplendent sun sets a crimson orange and then a pale pink on the western horizon of the 1300 year old Gwalior Fort. We, young boys of the Scindia School, dressed in crisp white kurta-pyjamas, feel one with the magnanimity of this ancient setting as we sit in daily reflection at the time of sunset (Astachal).

This fort, its ramparts, its history has seen many custodians come and go. These guardian stone rampart walls had protected their existence but had also given birth to dreams of outward expansion. How many vibrations of intent would have passed through its ridges- and how many dreams would have manifested or perished right here. What remains is the same Sun, which rises without fail giving life as we know it and sets without seeking its due- a silent, non-judgemental witness to all that makes history. What a humbling gesture!

Today and over the past 122 years this School within, has hosted and shaped the destiny of hundreds of students.

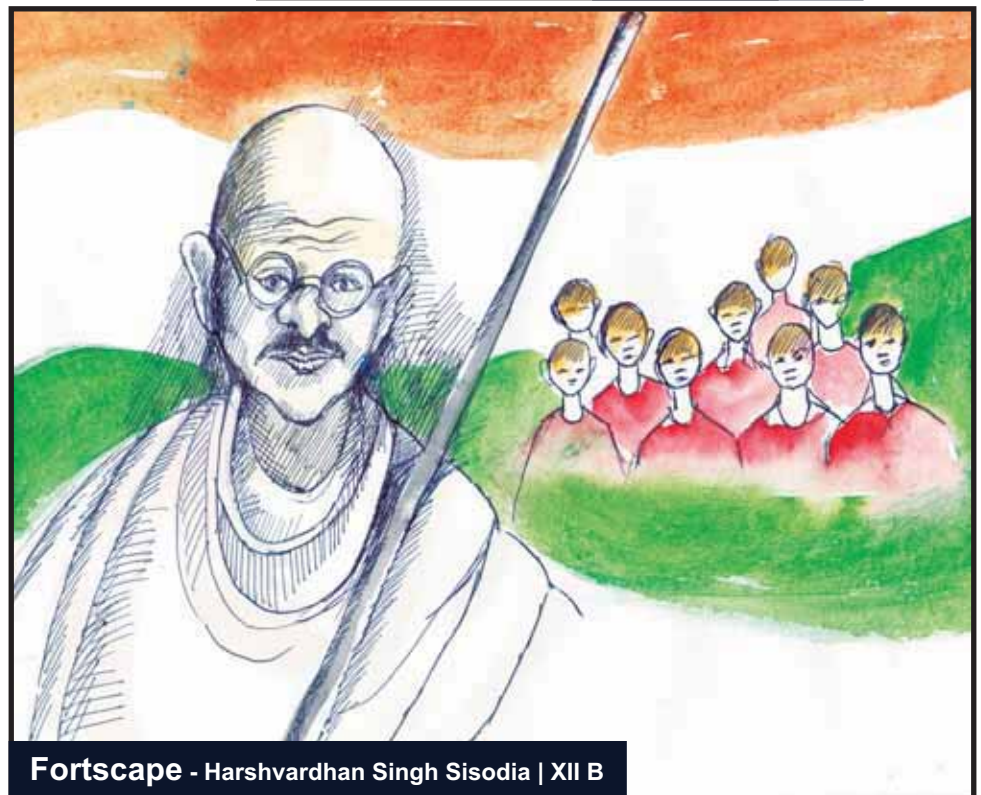
I was 17, when I passed out of the Scindia School in 1974 and had seen that same sight daily for the previous past 5 years that I had been in this amazing setting. And yet it never fails to move me- the solemnity of the moment. It would leave me with a paradoxical feeling- of knowing how tiny we are in the larger scheme of things but also how we are a part of Creation itself, a comforting feeling both.

I recall my stint as the Student Editor, 1973-74, of this very School Review. Indeed it is a great honour to be invited back to be the Guest Editor 45 years later for this Independence Day Review.

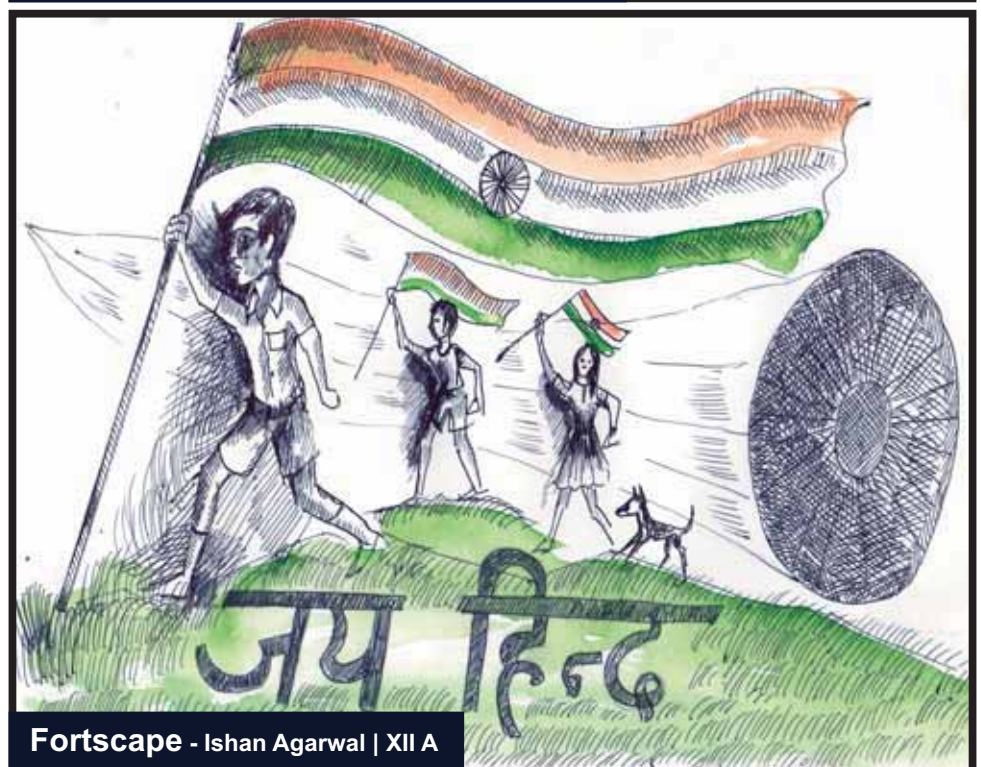
Having matured in age and life, I must leave but one thought with you today. Independence is hard fought and gained in all arenas of life. The soldiers are the guardian of our borders and a fine job they continue to do. As citizens, you and I must contribute towards keeping our internal strife in check by upholding the institutions that define our lives. Education and awareness are the cornerstones for a rational mind. And rationality and tolerance is the requirement of the day.

My journey of enquiry was instilled in this very fort, within and outside the classroom. We were never bounded by constraints of space and neither was our freedom of thought curbed. Surely it was channelized for that is the role of teachers. I always found solace in books both fiction and non-fiction. A lifetime is not enough to explore the realm of possibilities, places, adventures and point of views that this Earth has to offer. Books help in that exploration. And one is able to increase the frontiers of one's vision and personality. I found my independence within those pages and learnt to step out and cherish that independence.

Sustain the Independence from within. And that is my message this Independence Day.



Fortscape - Harshvardhan Singh Sisodia | XII B

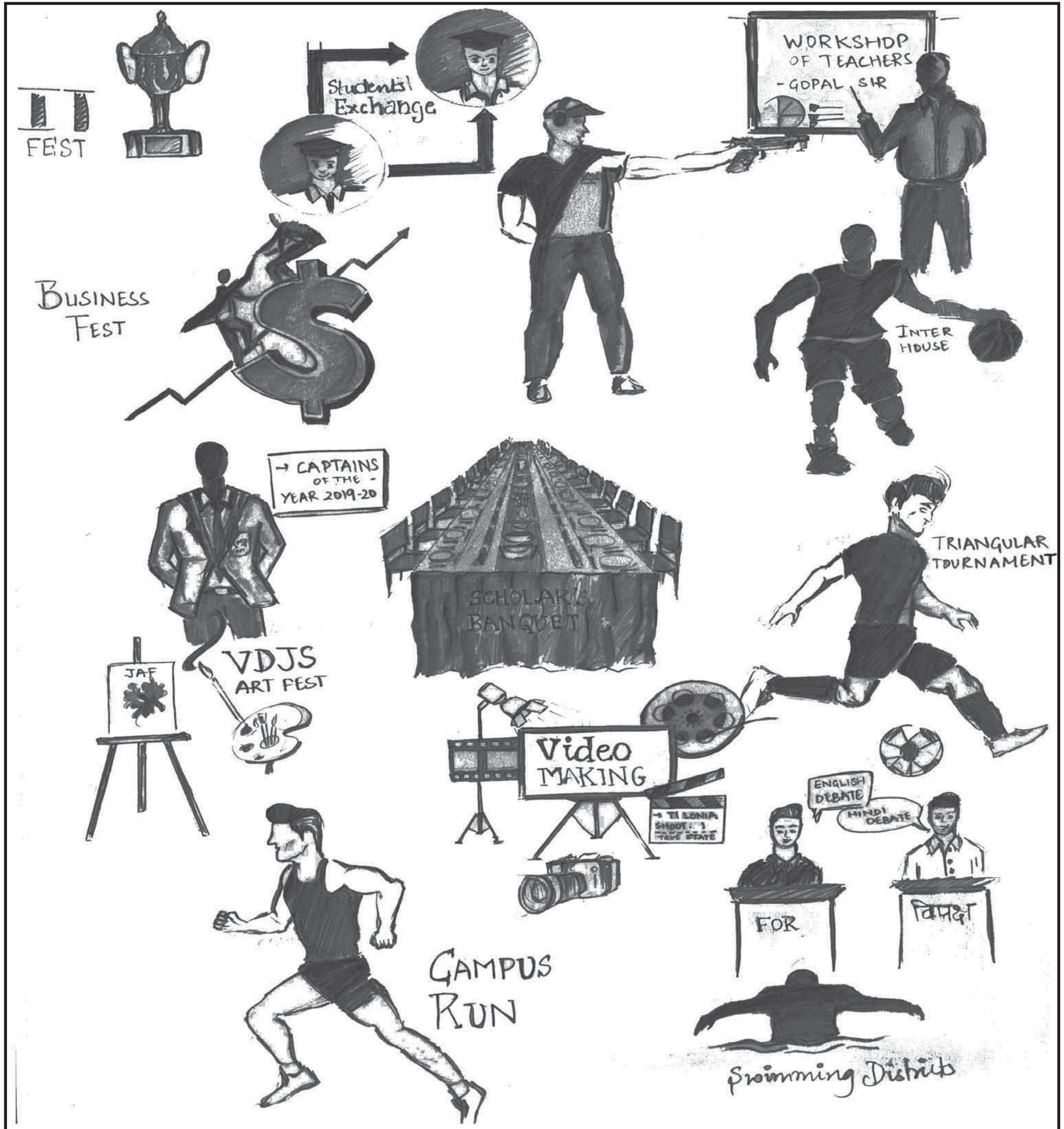


Fortscape - Ishan Agarwal | XII A

FORT NEWS

Art Illustration

Abhey Khanna



The Rain Gods have been rather benevolent to the otherwise, humid weather in the rainy season. After bouts of humid weather, it has rained during the last fortnight. The magnificent, ancient citadel has received a few good showers of rain, though the record of the previous rainy season is yet to be broken. The lush and green grass stands tall at many places on the Fort, rich with the sprinkling of wild flowers. The continuous chirping of birds can be heard from morning till twilight.

A group of 8 students and two escort teachers, namely, Mr Gopal Chaturvedi and Mr Jitendra Jawale, went to the Assam Valley School for a Community Service Project from 11th May to 18th May 2019, for aiming to observe and learn the new practices followed by the school under the Community Service Project.

The Ramanujam Inter House Math Olympiad was held in the school from 19th July to 21st July 2019. For the final round- Jayaji, Shivaji, Madhav and Daulat House contested. Jayaji House became the winners and Shivaji House the runner-up.

Overall House positions are as follows:

I Jayaji	II Shivaji	III Madhav	IV Daulat
V Jeevaji	VI Mahadji	VII Ranoji	VIII Jayappa

17 Students of our School Shooting Team participated in 22nd M.P. State & 18th M.P. State Inter School Shooting Championship 2019, held at Emerald Heights International School, Indore, from 20th July to 26th July 2019. All participants qualified for the Pre-National Shooting Competition. The following students won medals:

Air Pistol Event	Toshan Aggarwal	Gold Medal, Bronze in Air Pistol Event
Air Pistol Event	Angad Sahni	Bronze Medal (Air Pistol ISSF Event)
Air Pistol Event	Manas Parashar	Bronze Medal

The Air Pistol Team won a Bronze Medal in Youth & Senior category and a Silver Medal in the M.P. State Shooting Team Event.

Vrushank Malhotra, Utsav Jain, Aikansh Choubey, Prathvi Mishra and Pranav Wadhwa participated in the Business Fest held at Wynberg Allen School, Mussoorie, from 26th July to 27th July 2019. Prathvi Mishra won the award for the best performance in the events entitled-Vine Video and Ennuncio.

The Club of 90s Breakfast was held at Principal's Residence on 28th July 2019.

Abhey Khanna, Lav Asrani, Krishnam Purwar, Ujjwal Malik, Aditya Parashar, Pratham Agarwala, Tushar Gupta, Vishnudeep Tyagi, Ayush Agarwal, Mridul Singhi, Shivam Suri, Aayush Yadav and Ujjwal Mehrotra participated in the COSTACH Enclave held at Mayo College Girls' School, Ajmer, from 26th July to 28th July 2019. Four students stood fourth in the event- Film making: Tilonia in its True Essence. The names of the boys are- Krishnam Purwar, Ujjwal Malik, Vishnudeep Tyagi and Ujjwal Mehrotra.

The result of the Senior Group Inter House English Debate is as follows:

Runner Up (Closing Opposition): Jayaji
Winners (Opening Government): Madhav
Best Speaker (Government): Deputy Prime Minister- Chirag Rathi
Best Speaker (Opposition): Member of the Opposition - Suyash Bansal
Chairperson's award for the Most Promising Speaker: Member of the Government- Irish Rohra
Best Adjudicator Award- Nitya Mehra
Overall House Positions:

I Madhav	II Jayaji	III Ranoji	IV Daulat
V Jayappa	VI Jeevaji and Mahadji	VIII Shivaji	

Deep Singhal, Yash Singh, Arya Adhikari, Arnav Khandelwal, Shantanu Yadav, Arihant Jain, Yashwardhan S Jain, Yuvraj S Solanki and Ansh Jaiswal participated in the 6th Gwalior Open and Selection Chess Tournament, from 26th July 2019 to 28th July 2019, at Krishnayan Garden, Thatipur, Gwalior.

The Freshers' Evening was held on 27th July 2019. The event started with the



Freshers' Evening

School Orchestra sounding sonorous notes. Thereafter, a Group Song followed- *Kam jyada batein kam*. Our faculty member, Ms Mrinal Bhatt sang a *bhajan* which was followed by the English Play entitled-The Three Questions. A solo guitar and solo tabla recital followed. The Hindi play entitled- *Jal Chakkar*, enthralled the audience. Thereafter, a solo dance performance by our faculty member, Mr Rahul Bhardwaj, came next. Lastly, the Choreography Society of the school named Chorean Souls, put up a dance performance and a farewell song followed. The Vote of thanks was delivered and the event came to a close. The Principal, Dr Madhav Deo Saraswat, profusely appreciated the efforts of the faculty and the students for putting up such a grand show.

Aryan Yadav and Satwik Goyal participated in The National Health and Wellness Quiz 2019, conducted by CBSE at Scindia Kanya Vidyalaya on 27th July 2019.

The XIX Scholars' Banquet for the academic year 2018-2019, was held on 30th July 2019. The Chief Guest for the same was Mr Anurag Chaudhary, IPS-2009 Batch. He is a graduate from IIT Kanpur and as an IPS he is presently posted as the Collector of Gwalior city. His focus, presently, is on reviving historical water bodies and creating awareness about health and education. The Principal, Dr



The Chief Guest addressing the scholars

Madhav Deo Saraswat, greeted him as a 'man of perseverance'. He asked the cohort of academically accomplished students to imbibe the values that he has inculcated in his life.

A workshop for faculty on new teaching tools was conducted by Mr Gopal Chaturvedi in the Salve Lab on 30th July 2019.

Harsh Jain, Parth Thapar, Vishnudeep Tyagi, Aaryan Nagpal, Rakshit Malhotra, Anmol Mohanka, Abhimanyu Bhushan Mudgal, Suryansh Gupta, Surya Gandra, Akshat Karwa, Samarjith Nalvade, Nitya Mehra, Prajas Sharma, Mayank Choudhary, Dharmender Singh, Stefan Konjengbam, Sumedh Potdar, Rudra Pratap Tyagi and Amogh Bhargava participated in the District Swimming Championship held at Bhartiya Vidya Niketan, Gwalior, from 30th July to 31st July 2019.

The result of the Senior Group Inter House Hindi Debate is as follows:

Individual Positions

Best Speaker of the first round- Abhishek Mahour, Aditi Joshi

Best Speakers of the final round-

I Abhishek Mahour II Aditya Parashar III Akshat Karwa

House Positions:

I Madhav II Jayaji III Daulat IV Ranoji

IV Jeevaji VI Mahadji VII Jayappa VIII Shivaji

Abhishek Mahour, Shishir Pandey and Adwait Sharma went to Vasant Valley School, Delhi to participate in the Aaj Tak Debate on 31st July 2019. In total, 36 schools participated in the Debate Competition.

Mr P M Sreekumar, Principal, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Morena, visited the school on 31st July as the CBSE Inspector. He interacted with the faculty and expressed his pleasure on the work done by the school. He also emphasized upon vigilance to be observed with regard to the security of students.

Campus Run for A & B group was conducted on 1st August 2019.

Aadi Raj Dewan, Ayush Jain, Arpit Mittal, Yash Jain, Krish Gupta; Krishnam Purwar, Prashant Agrarwal, Ketan Singhal; Keshav Agarwal, Nischay Agarwal, Mridul Anand Singh and Pranav Gupta participated in the Under 15, Under 17 and Under 19 categories, respectively, in the District Open Table Tennis tournament held at Padma Girls School, Gwalior, from 3rd August to 5th August 2019.

Students and faculty members of Army Public School, Gwalior, visited the Fort on 5th August 2019. The students interacted with the faculty members and also took lessons in the classes along with our students. They also visited the *Astachal*.

Memoy Mishra, Pranav Wadhwa, Toshan Agarwal, Satwik Goyal, Vedanga Nag and Vishnudeep Tyagi participated in the Technack - IT Fest 2019 held at Maharani Gayatri Devi School, from 5th August 2019 to 8th August 2019.



The Scindia School lifting the Winners' trophy

The result is as follows :

Website Designing - Vedang Nag and Memoy Mishra - I

Cartoon Making - Satwik Goyal - I

Multimedia Presentation - Toshan Agarwal and Pranav Wadhwa - II

Video Making - Vedang Nag and Vishnudeep Tyagi - I

Overall Winners - The Scindia School

The result of the Inter House Football Tournament 2019 is as follows:

Overall Positions:

I Jayappa II Daulat III Mahadji IV Ranoji

VI Madhav and Jeevaji VII Jayaji VIII Shivaji

Individual Positions:

Group	Position	Name
A	Best Defender	Prabal Phaguna
B	Best Defender	Lalit Kumar

A Best Goalkeeper Mridul Singhi

B Best Goalkeeper Aditya Kumar

A Highest Scorer Jai Sharma

B Highest Scorer Binay Chettri

Trophy for Inter House A Group Football went to Mahadji House.

Trophy for Inter House B Group Football went to Daulat House.



Football Tournament

Shishir Pandey, Aryan Yadav, Somesh Kumar, Bhavesh Goel, Sukhyog Singh and Chewang Bhutia participated in a series of art competitions held at the Vidya Devi Jindal School, Hisar, from 7th August to 8th August 2019. 13 schools participated in the Clay Modelling art competition. The Scindia School secured the first position in it. Sukhyog Singh and Chewang Bhutia represented the school in this competition. 13 schools participated in the Art Quiz competition. The Scindia School stood 4th and received a consolation prize. Shishir Pandey and Somesh Kumar participated in the quiz.

Shivansh Bansal, Chirag Rathi and Aaryan Nagpal; Svastik Arora, Suyash Bansal and Vidit Gupta, participated in the 43rd Brother C J Bergin Gold Medal Inter School English Debate and 41st Brother J G Masterson Silver Medal Inter School English Debate, respectively, held at St George's School, Mussoorie, from 9th August to 10th August 2019.

OBITUARY

It is with immense grief that we inform you of the demise of Ms Sushma Singh on 22nd July. Ms Singh taught Music and Hindi in the school. She was the Housemistress of Kanerkhed House and had also served as the Principal of AMI Shishu Mandir. May her soul rest in eternal peace.

OLD BOYS' NEWS

Nitesh Thakuri (Ex-Sh, 2017) has started an association named Scindian Old Students' Association (SOSA) under which old students from The Scindia School and Scindia Kanya Vidyalaya are working together. On 3rd August, as their first initiative, they cleaned a tourist spot in Sikkim, named 'Namnang View Point'. They are also giving free coaching till class X, to students of a small village called 'Dikchu', which is located in East Sikkim.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Please note that this year, Parents' Day and the Old Boys' Day will be held on 20th October 2019. The Founder's Day will be celebrated on 21st October 2019.

Adventure Course at the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports, Manali

Sachin Chaudhary and Ujjwal Mehrotra | X C

17 students and 2 escort teachers participated in the 10 days' adventure course held at Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Mountaineering in Manali from 11th May 2019 to 20th May 2019. The objective of the course was to bring awareness among the youngsters about mountaineering and ecological travelling in the mountains. The adventure course was completed successfully and all the 17 students were awarded the course certificate.

The course entails rock climbing, river crossing, high altitude trekking, and rigorous physical training for toning the body and the mind. *Scindian* boys proved their mettle from day one. A normal day at the institute would begin at 5:30 a.m. with arduous morning fitness training for an hour. After breakfast, the trainees were taken through the basic mountaineering activities. 'Knot tying' became a popular activity among the students. The day's training would culminate at 7:30 p.m. after which the students were given self-time till lights off.

Morning fitness regime helped the boys to tone up for a 13 kms. uphill trek to Solang Valley. It is a scenic and a popular tourist destination, well known for



In triumph after trekking

organising of the winter games. The boys trekked beyond the last village in the valley, and also came across an enormous glacier. Some trainees saw snow for the first time and their excitement level was beyond imagination.

At the end of the camp, all the trainees came out with a better understanding of the mountains and ecology. Rigorous physical training and trekking for miles created an everlasting impact on each trainee. Some of the boys have pledged to aspire for the next level of the course.

The Goblet of Three Wishes

Rohan Asrani | VII C

It was my birthday. My family and I went to a restaurant to eat and enjoy. After I had cut my cake I asked the waiter- "Where is the washroom?" He said that I had to cross a street and there I would find one. On the way to the washroom, I saw an old lady with a golden purse and her hair were like- as if she had just received an electric shock! She asked, "Young man, would you please help me carry my cat?" I saw a cat standing on a wall. It was very weird. I went ahead and helped the strange lady. But coming to think of it now I shouldn't have done that and helped the old lady because that was the last good thing I ever did....

Hello, my name is Jack Andrews and I am from New York, USA. I am twelve years' old. I am a thin boy with big eyes, small ears, small nose and a scar on my head. I am going to tell you my story. It is like fantasy but it is real. After I had helped her, she said "Thank you, here is my card." I saw the card. Nothing was written on it! I stared at it in bewilderment. She said, "You will see my address when you are in need." I kept the card in my pocket. Then she went away with her cat and after that I threw the card away somewhere which I cannot recollect. I thought she was kind-of mad.

Two days later, a boy named Andy Stork was teasing me continuously- "Birdie" because I have the voice like that of a bird. I just ignored him. We are like fire and ice. I don't say or do anything to him for he has multiple friends, except Rowley Jefferson (my only friend). If one were to ask for a fight between 32 children versus 2 children, it would be a one sided answer! After that in the Mathematics period, I looked into my geometry box. I found the card. It read- 32, Hudson Street, New York

I felt an electric shock pass through my body! Hudson Street? That is just two blocks away from my home. I threw away the card and forgot all about it. In the recess time, I went to the canteen to buy something. I reached for a one dollar in my pocket, but found the same card- 32, Hudson Street, New York

Now I was going to find out who is keeping the card and why and how! I hung around during recess time. Later, in the English period I found five cards in my pencil box. I told this all to Rowley. But he is a jerk! He is afraid all the time. He had become totally frightened himself by telling me a long name of some ghost thing and ghostbusters! I am not like Rowley; I had to go and find out who it was and so after the school I went to the address written on the card. It was the

haunted house for which the children would challenge each other to go inside but nobody ever had the heart. I went inside and saw the same old lady whom I had seen that night. "So you are keeping cards in my boxes?" I said. My voice brooked no denial. The lady didn't say anything but snapped a finger and the cat came and sat on the table by her side. She snapped it once again and the cat turned into a goblet! "Are you a magician kind of something?" I asked. "You helped me by carrying my cat. I am so old and lonely... so I am returning the benevolence. You there- you just have to say the three wishes now or any time that you are in need of." After the cat had turned into a goblet...I believed it was magic. I believe in magic so I blurted, "Let Andy Stork find in me the greatest human of all times. "

I blinked and found myself in my bedroom. Oh! So, this was just a dream. A thought came into my mind. I went downstairs and freshened up. My day had started and I went to school and attended the same. When the classes started that day, Andy Stork came and said, "May I come and sit with you, Jack, please!" I pinched myself so as to know if what was happening was real. But it was real! Stork coming to me and asking me to sit with him! I said with a little snobbery, "Okay". "Rowley, can you please go and sit somewhere else?" Rowley went away after some argument.

I continued, "Stork your handwriting is very good. Mine is worst in the class!. Will you please help me to solve this equation?"

$$X=12$$

$$Y=2$$

$$X \times Y = Z$$

$$Z=?$$

Although I was a failure at Math, I knew that the answer was 24. Was this a dream or a reality? Was my wish coming true? In my dream, I had asked that old lady to make Andy Stork bow to me...but do I have to live like this for the rest of my life. Many questions raced in my mind. The last period began. Andy was copying even my hand movements!

"I wished Stork was dead" I said to myself. The moment I said these words, Andy started coughing very badly. After five minutes his nose started bleeding. He was admitted into the hospital. His heartbeat stopped. ANDY WAS DEAD. I was horrified when I learnt this news. How could I bring Andy back to life! My two wishes had already been wasted. But I still had a third and last wish. I wished Andy was not dead... I wished we could exchange places! In an instant I found myself on a road. I saw the lady and Andy Stork standing and talking on the other side of the road. I started flying in the air and everything down was very beautiful! I wondered what Andy Stork would have said...

The Bhutan Cycling Expedition

Aaryan Nagpal and Chirag Rathi | XI A

The country of Bhutan is a Buddhist kingdom on the Himalayas' eastern edge. It is known for its monasteries, fortresses (or dzongs) and dramatic landscapes that range from subtropical plains to steep mountains and valleys. In the high Himalayan peaks such as the 7,326 m Jomolhari, are popular trekking destinations. Paro Taktsang monastery (also known as Tiger's Nest) clings to cliffs above the forested Paro Valley.

An enthusiastic group consisting of 14 students and two escort teachers, boarded a flight from Delhi to arrive at Bagdogra. After an exhaustive journey by road, we reached the Indo-Bhutan border at Jaigaon. We booked a hotel and rested there for the night.

On the second day, we woke up, ate our breakfast and went to receive a permit from the immigration office at Phuentsholing. After this process, we started for Paro by bus. Paro (Dzongkha) is a town and seat of Paro District, in the Paro Valley of Bhutan. It is a historic town with many sacred sites and historical buildings.

The third day started at 7:30 in the morning with a sumptuous meal after which we got ready for the city tour. We visited the Paro museum where we learned about the religion, culture and tradition of the Bhutanese people. Then, we went off to visit the Dzong (fortress) which is the functioning unit of the Dzongkha (state) and explored the buildings. There was a temple and its administration office. After a long tour we went back to the hotel for a well deserved rest.

In the evening, we went to explore the local market. Later in the evening, we had an enriching and entertaining briefing session on the next day's journey, thus we became pretty familiar with the journey ahead. After a good dinner, we rested for the day.

The next day started at 9:00 am because of the climatic conditions due to the cyclone- Fani. The acclimatization exercise of cycling for that day was put to rest. Instead, we moved for Chelela pass, which is 4000 meters above the sea level. On the way, eight kilometers short of our destination, we got down. This was an exercise in acclimatization. We trekked the trail until the Pass to get acclimatized. After arriving at the Pass, we moved to Haa Valley, where we were put up in a homestay. Later in the evening, we were given our cycles. After the practice, we went to sleep.

The following day, we woke up at 4:00 am- excited for our first ride from Haa valley to Thimpu. We started at 6:00 am. First, we had 26 Kms uphill climb to Chelela Pass, gaining an elevation of nearly 2,500-2,800 m. From Chelela Pass, we had 36 Kms downhill ride to Bondey, where our bus was waiting for us. The ride was successful as everybody had completed the journey. By 4:00 pm, we all reached the bus and retired for the day.

The next day was ruled out of the schedule in favour of a rest day for the upcoming ride. The day was primarily utilized for checking equipment, restoration for any wear and tear of the previous ride and to explore around. We visited the Buddha Dordenma, the 169 ft tall statue, and had a lot of fun there.

On the seventh day, we took a heavy breakfast and rode to the Dochula Pass, which was on the way from Thimpu to Punaka. A 16 kms. uphill ride made the students jump in zeal whilst a 33 kms. downhill slope was a challenge that had to be done with extreme caution. But without any doubt the task was completed. The rest of the day was spent settling ourselves and we looked forward to the next ride.

The most challenging task had started. We were a bit nervous going back to Thimpu through the Dochula pass. We started at 6:00 am. First there was a ride of 8 kms to the starting point. From there was a 33 kms upward incline, which had been previously a downhill ride. That ride was the toughest one that we undertook during the entire expedition. The downhill ride was a feast



Meditation in Bhutan

for the eye as we watched the beautiful scenery as we swiftly cycled downhill, proud of the achievement of the expedition.

The next day, we visited the base of The Tiger's Nest Monastery. We came back to Phuentsholing, and bid adieu to our instructors and guide. We left for India by passing the border and reaching directly to the state of West Bengal.

Ecosphere - Journeys of Change

Krishnam Purwar | XII C

The summer season is noted for the Duke of Edinburgh's award treks. Volunteering for the International Award for Young People Residential Project in collaboration with Ecosphere has been a wholesome experience for the 13 boys who became a part of the project this year. The fifteen days' venture was adventure incarnate for the entire team. We assisted the local community of the Spiti valley to build a green house. Ladakh's lesser-known neighbour is the cold, mountain desert of Spiti. It is meant for those travellers who dare to drift from the well-trodden tourist trails. Villages of Spiti remain remotely set away in the lap of the mighty, barren Himalayas of Himachal Pradesh. We visited monasteries dating back over a thousand years, which sample a fascinating culture and cuisine; a coterie of individuals different from the rest of their diverse country. Many Spiti homes have opened their hearts and home and provide homestays for travellers with the help of Ecosphere- a social enterprise that aims at the sustainable development of the region.

Service has always been an integral part of a Scindian's life and is deeply embedded into the curriculum of the school. In Spiti (Himachal Pradesh) during the winter season, there is no source of vegetables for the villagers and hence the need of building a greenhouse was observed by an NGO known as Ecosphere. Each year, boys from The Scindia School volunteer to complete the initiative. This year a group of 13 students along with Mr Shailesh Agrawal went for a residential service project in the Spiti Valley. During this fifteen days' venture, they successfully built a greenhouse for the villagers of Hull. Apart from the service project, the team also trekked to the highest village of the world named Komic, and Demul. They also visited village Hikkim where the world's highest Post Office is situated. The experience had a deep meaning for the Scindians as it provided us with an opportunity to express bonhomie towards our country brethren.



The Spiti Project

मेरी श्रीलंका की यात्रा

कृष्णा गुप्ता | 8 सी

एक बार हमारे परिवार में बात चली कि यात्रा क्यों करनी चाहिए ? तो हम कहने लगे इससे मन खुश हो जाता है। हम अपने आप को ताज़ा और स्फूर्ति से भरपूर पाते हैं। तभी मेरे मन में आया कि क्यों न हम कहीं यात्रा करने जाएँ। तब कोई बोलने लगा - 'अमेरिका', मेरे भाई ने बोला - 'राजस्थान' और मैंने श्रीलंका जाने की इच्छा व्यक्त की, तो सब लोग शांत हो गए। तब हमने मेरे जन्मदिन के पाँच दिन पहले श्रीलंका जाने की सोची। हम सब जाने की तैयारी करने लग गए। सब लोग बहुत उत्साहित थे। अगले दिन हमने उधर घूमने की जगह पता लगाई तो हमें पता चला कि उधर बहुत सुन्दर-सुन्दर जगहें हैं। जैसे कि कोलम्बो, कैण्डी, रावनएला आदि। जल्दी से वह दिन आ गया जिस दिन हमें जाना था। हम हवाई जहाज में बैठकर पहले दिल्ली गए और उसके बाद कोलम्बो जो श्रीलंका की राजधानी है। हमें श्रीलंका पहुँचते-पहुँचते रात हो गई थी। ऊपर से श्रीलंका बहुत सुन्दर दिख रहा था। फिर हवाई अड्डे से सामान लेकर हम बाहर निकले। हवा में एक मिठास थी और हमें पता ही नहीं चला कि कब रात के बारह बज गए। अगले दिन हमें चिड़ियाघर जाना था। उधर हमने बहुत सारे पशु-पक्षी देखे, केवल वह ही नहीं, उधर एक शो होता है हाथियों का, उधर मैंने मेरे पिताजी को ले जाकर हाथी को उनके पास बुलाकर उन्हें डराया। मैंने एक बहुत विचित्र चीज़ देखी जो थी हाथी के गोबर से बनी हुई किताबें, पन्ने, मूर्तियाँ दिखी मैंने एक हाथी की मूर्ति खरीदी। अगले दिन हम कैण्डी नामक नगर गए। वहाँ मेरा जन्मदिन भी मनाया पर उससे पहले हम शांतीला नामक पहाड़ी पर गए जहाँ राजा का महल था। ऊपर चढ़ने पर बहुत डर लगा पर जो अन्दर नज़ारा था वह अकल्पनीय था, बहुत ही सुन्दर था। इस दिन

मेरा जन्मदिन था तो हमने खूब मज़े किए और स्वादिष्ट भोजन किया। अगले दिन हम रावनएला नामक प्राचीन नगर में गए। मतलब जहाँ रावण रहता था। पहुँचते ही हम ने अशोक वाटिका के दर्शन के लिए निकल पड़े। उधर हमने वह वृक्ष देखा जहाँ माँ सीता बैठा करती थीं एवं हनुमानजी के पैरों के निशान भी देखे। इन सबको देखकर मुझे बहुत अच्छा लगा। फिर हम एक गुफा के पास गए पर हमें बताया गया कि रावण अभी तक ज़िंदा है और उनका शरीर एक गुफा में है जिसे साँपों ने घेर रखा है। यह बात सुनकर मुझे बहुत आश्चर्य हुआ। फिर हम अपने होटल में गए और हमने आराम किया। अगले दिन हमें हनुमान जी के मन्दिर में जाना था। उधर एक विशाल मूर्ति थी उसे देखकर मुझे विश्वास नहीं हुआ कि हम श्रीलंका में खड़े हैं। हमने नीचे एक भोजनालय में खाना खाया जो कि उधर का सुबह का नाश्ता था। उसमें पापड़, एक मिठाई जो कि हलवे जैसी थी और कुछ दक्षिण भारत की चीज़ें जैसे डोसा, फिर हमें कुछ लोग मिले जो हमें एक गाँव ले गए। हमने गाँव को देखना चाहा तो उन्होंने हमें एक बैलगाड़ी में बैठाया और धीरे-धीरे वह बैलगाड़ी एक नदी के तट पर पहुँची। फिर हमें नाव में बैठाया गया और फिर हमें एक किनारे पर उतारा गया जहाँ श्रीलंका की सांस्कृतिक झोपड़ियाँ थी। उधर की झोपड़ियाँ भारत की तरह ही थी पर उनकी छत केले आदि पत्ते से बनती है। हम अन्दर गए तो हमने देखा कि फर्श बहुत शीतलता प्रदान कर रहा था। हमने देखा कि पीसने वाली एक चक्री थी और बगल में काठ पर बैठने की व्यवस्था थी। फिर हमें उधर का भोजन खिलाया गया जिसमें अलसी की रोटियाँ, नारियल की चटनी, दही और केले की सब्ज़ी थी हमें वह खाना खाकर बहुत अच्छा लगा और इससे ही हमारी यात्रा का अंतिम चरण प्रारंभ हो गया था। हमें श्रीलंका में बहुत ज्यादा अच्छा लगा। हम सबको एक बार जीवन में श्रीलंका जाना चाहिए इससे हम खूब सारी चीज़ें सीखते हैं। श्रीलंका एक पौराणिक, सांस्कृतिक एवं आनंददायक जगह है।

A Cellular Tale

Mr Sandeep Agrawal | (Ex-Sh, 1980)

I am a cell. One of the thirty trillion in the human body. That's a huge number, folks. Could be written as 30,000,000,000,000. Each one pulsating with life, living its assigned life, and then dying out. Performing designated functions to the best of its ability. Getting sick, and recovering from the disease on its own, or with external assistance, at times. Performing respiratory, reproductive, and excretory functions. Making friends with neighboring ones, and fighting with a few others too. Each of us having individual emotions. Maybe smiling on a sunny afternoon, and frowning on an overcast evening. Or the reverse?

Blessed with some wisdom, and combined with perhaps some good Karmas of earlier lives, I had this deep aspiration to seek my creator. Given the limitations of mobility, sight and sound, I somehow got into a meditative pose and started my upward journey, traversing the various organs of the human body. Exploring their dimensions and functions. What a journey it was. The churning stomach, pumping heart, pulsating lungs, moving limbs, all within a defined framework. As I moved along some of the arteries, the red blood gave me some much-needed Praana-Vayu, a new lease of life, as if propelling me further towards my goal. But, what would be my goal? It was an uncharted trip, hitherto unknown. What would be my destination? Delving deeper within myself, I concentrated upon the life-giving force within me, the radiant light which had given me birth, and provided the energy to move forward. I got visions of an extremely complicated organ, which could be the culmination of my travels. I knew that my time was limited, as I have a very low life-cycle. A neighbor had once whispered to me in her dying days, that I would live only for about three weeks. What if I didn't reach my destination? Would I get another life to complete the task at hand? Would I start from where I left, or from scratch?

I kept wondering who controlled all this. There had to be some power. I surely needed to get an answer to this mystery. I kept moving, hoping it was the correct direction. There was no possible way to seek any assistance on the way. It was a dark road ahead. Not allowing the obstacles to deter me, I followed my cellular instinct and surged ahead. Some nerves touched me on the way, telling me that I was on the right path, (Seventy two thousand of them couldn't be wrong.) Fortune surely favors the brave. The incremental pulse from the

source of this power had started to become more prominently discernible, and it became increasingly obvious that I was nearing this huge control centre.

A flurry of activity greeted me on my arrival. There was no movement, but the silence commanded respect. Information was being received at tremendous speeds, and orders for implementation meted out immediately. There was no way you could disobey these instructions. I stood at the gate, observing this magnanimity, It was so complex, but simple at the same time. In spite of a multitude of situations, its responses were uniform, without any favour or fear. It was mesmerizing, but there was too much of activity to my liking. I knew that it was time for me to leave.

Yes, I am a cell. But this time, a cell with a human form. Being one of the 7.7 billion people living in this World. And having the same thirst to know about my Creator. Getting on to the job, I sat still to meditate upon Him and my Self. I had to know Him. As I delved within, my thoughts arose, crossing the horizons of our Earth, proceeding to the Solar System, whizzing past the stars and galaxies, and reaching the virtual periphery of the Universe. Perhaps, that was the extremes to which I could stretch my capacities. It was not possible for me to think beyond this Universe. With the constraints of the human body and its faculties, that was the ultimate destination that I could possibly aspire to reach.

I saw a brilliant, but soft light. In spite of its luminescence, it was not hurting. The colours changed intermittently, but it was not possible to give them names. I had not seen such radiance earlier. It was bright, yet comforting, encompassing each near and distant object in its fold. Suddenly, there was nothing beyond that, to be seen or known.

This got me wondering, that as the tiny cell had its limitations, so do all of us. From the standpoint of that miniscule cell, it would perceive our human body to be 30 trillion times larger than itself. There could be no way that it could imagine anything beyond it. Hence, for all practical purposes, the human body could be the cell's universe. Similarly, as humans, we see ourselves as part of this Universe, which is infinitely gigantic in proportion to our own being. We therefore know today that this Universe is all that could possibly be, and all of us to be its various components.

But, what if our own Universe was a cell too? And what if there were millions of such Universes floating around?

A Report on the Trekking Expedition to Annapurna Circuit

Tarun Bansal | XI D

On 4th of May 2019, 9 students namely Ansh Rai Goel, Dhan Bahadur Karki, Ojal Agarwal, Pranav Wadhwa, Rakshit Malhotra, Shikhar Agarwal, Tarun Bansal, Ujjwal Singh and Vishesh Sharma with Ms Divya Verma and Ms Raksha Siriah reached Kathmandu for the Annapurna Circuit Trek. The second day was kept for sightseeing and briefing of programme. Everyone's clothing was



Trekking to Annapurna Circuit

checked to see if it was appropriate for the high altitudes or not. For those who didn't have proper clothes, same were arranged from Kathmandu.

On 6th May we started our journey by road for a place called Jagat from where we were supposed to start our trekking. We were at the height of 1330 meters. The weather was not so cold yet and so we all enjoyed a bath at a hot water spring.

Trek day 1: We all were very excited as we started our 18.3 kilometres trekking; the trail was quite scenic. At around 4 pm we reached a place called Dharapani (height- 1990meters). Our stay was in the tea houses which were very comfortable.

Trek day 2: The trek was of 17.8 kilometres from Dharapani to Chame, which we covered in 6 hours and we reached the height of 2710 meters. As the days passed, our trek started becoming more challenging and the weather was also changing but the trek trail's beauty kept us energetic.

Trek day 3: We trekked for 14.3 kms from Chame to Upper Pissang. We reached at around 2:30 pm the small village of Pissang to be welcomed by cold winds blowing. In the evening, we visited the local monastery. It was really tough to walk as it became very windy.

Trek day 4: Pissang to Manang was a long trek of 23.4 kilometres. We reached 3540 meters enroute and gradually came down to 3540 meters the height of Manag. Manag is a district and a serenely beautiful place. It gave us an impression of a small, well-organised colony where mouth-watering bakery shops were the major attraction. We got a day to rest in Manang.

Trek day 5: We went for a 5 kilometres for an acclimatisation trek to Gangpurna at the height of 3600 meters. In the afternoon we attended a talk organised by the Himalayan Rescue Association Nepal on Acute Mountain Sickness. It was a highly informative session.

Trek day 6: Manang to Tilicho base camp (4150meters) was a long trek of 14.9 kilometres and the toughest day for all as we had to cross a landslide area, steep down and uphill too. It was snowing when we reached Tilicho at around 4 pm. We were mesmerised with the snowfall but we had no option than to sit in the dining area in front of a fireplace as the temperature had dropped to minus.

Trek day 7: Srikharka was our next day's stay where we reached before time and took a long day rest which was quite required.

Trek day 8: Srikharka to Yakkharka (4200metres) was a memorable trek because of the height gain and natural beauty. We were fortunate enough to see the blue sheep and musk deer, close at hand. Yakkharka to Leether was a 30 minutes trek and we reached around 1 pm. Each day after reaching the tea house, the dining area used to be the favourite place for every trekker because of the fire that burned brightly in it.

Trek day 9: The next day was important one and difficult too, as we were moving towards the High Camp at the height of 4850 metres; like its name it was really high; from Yakkharka the landscape had changed, from pine trees to barren mountains and the landslide area, which increased the difficulty level. All the team members reached around 2 pm and had Dal Bhat (Favourite dish of Nepal) and went for a short hike too. That day we had an early dinner as the next day was the main day when we had to cross the Thorangla Pass (4850 meters).

Trek day 10: We started around 4:15 am when it was pitch dark and we were walking in a queue as the route was quite slippery due to the frost. Unlike the other passes in India, this was a long pass with snow covered peaks all around and the wind making our way difficult. After three hours of continuous trek, we finally reached the Thorangla Pass at around 7:15 am. The beauty of Nature was beyond imagination as all around were snow covered peaks which seemed like one could go and touch them easily. The last part of trekking was to go down for at least 16 kilometres which was again a task because as tiring it is to climb up, it is more difficult to come down. One has to be very careful; the route was narrow and steep.

For a successful expedition, safety is the priority. We reached safely to a small but famous pilgrimage town, Muktinath at 3800 metres. It was a fulfilling day because after seven days and covering 152 kilometres, we had achieved what we had set out to achieve.

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