

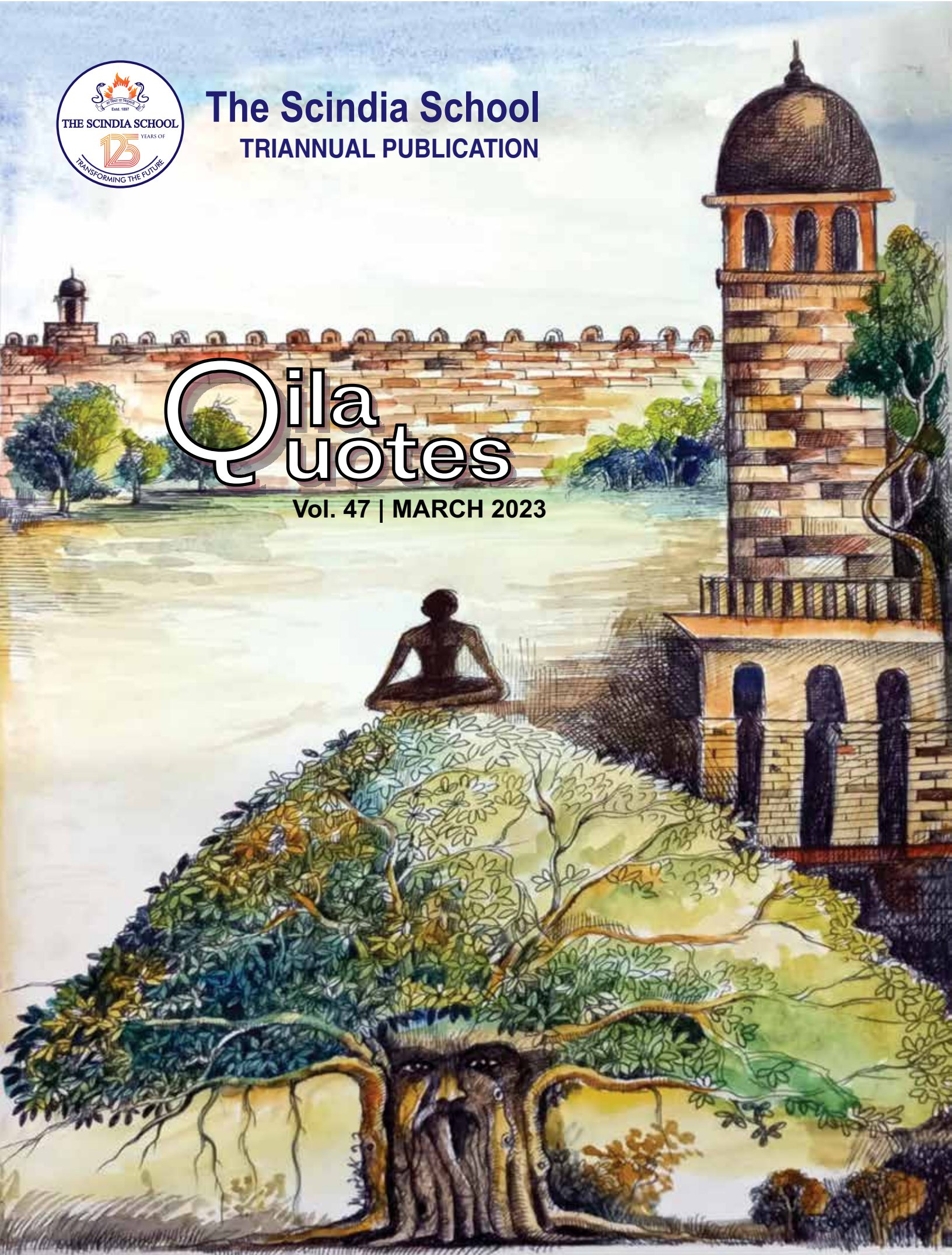


# The Scindia School

TRIENNIAL PUBLICATION

# Qila Quotes

Vol. 47 | MARCH 2023







The Chief Guest inaugurating the Exhibition



A still from the Tansen Play

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<b>Ex-officio Member, Secretary &amp; Principal</b>		
Mr Ajay Singh		

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Greevolothon- pledge to save air



Chief Guest inspecting the parade on Republic Day

# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Dear Readers,

It is with utmost humility that I wish to extend my gratitude to all the stakeholders yet again for the successful completion of the term and the fruitful year in particular. We can say with utmost conviction that the challenges of this year will be our stepping stones to success in the year ahead. It is also time to look back at our achievements in the year that surges ahead and is now drawing to a close.

The last three months have been quite eventful and rewarding with the significant changes that have been brought in and the accompanying excitement to embark upon the upgradation. The restoration, renovation and maintenance upkeep of the school has been taken up on a war footing. In upgrading the infrastructure we have ensured that the pristine splendour of the Fort remains intact while the safety and ease of our young learners is also of paramount importance.

Education is not just academic learning; it is the building up of character- all the qualities on which "higher citizenship is based". I can say, with a strong belief that we at The Scindia School have always striven to cultivate a Scindian who is a harmonious blend of the finest integrity and ethos.

On the academic front we are trying to chisel an intellectually enlightened Scindian who not only carves out a niche in academic excellence, but also uses the acquired learning on the canvas of life itself.

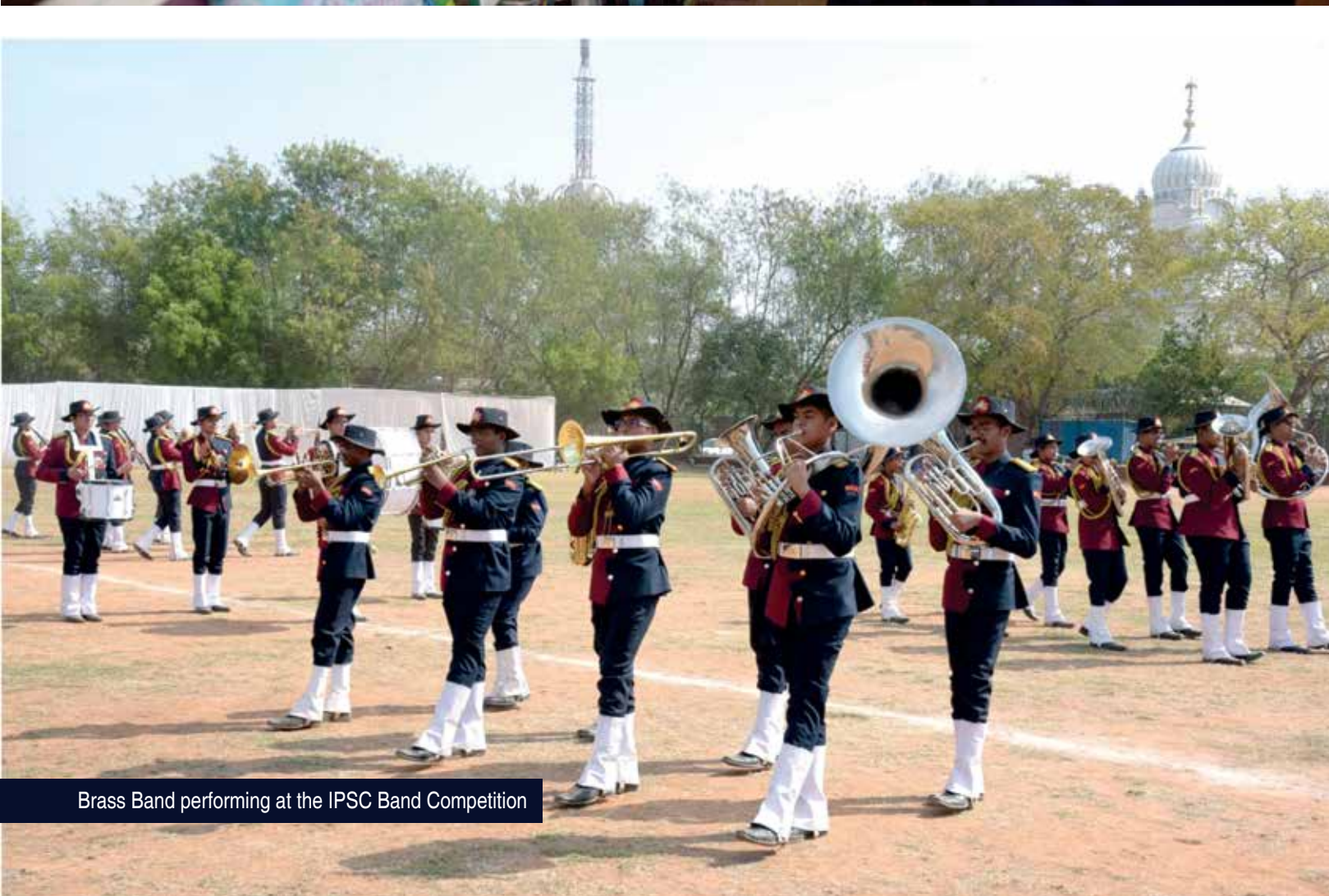
As the grand occasion of the 125<sup>th</sup> year culminating into the 126<sup>th</sup> year is nearing, a smorgasbord of activities and events is being held across the country. I would take this opportunity to thank our very own Old Boys for adding the sparkle to our celebration by organising a plethora of events in conjunction with the school, to bring venerated Scindians from all walks of life to pass on the baton of learning to the present generation of Scindians. I also express my gratitude to the parents for becoming a part of this mega celebration and the students for making the celebration come alive in all its splendour.

Ajay Singh  
Principal





Students surfing through the books in Book Fair during the 5th Scindia Literary Fest



Brass Band performing at the IPSC Band Competition

# EDITORIAL

The Scindia School celebrated its 125<sup>th</sup> Founder's Day on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022. 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022 was celebrated as the Parents' Day and the Old Boys' Day. On Founder's Day, we welcomed Ms Mithali Raj, the former captain of the Indian Women's cricket team as the Chief Guest. The Chief Guest took a round of the exquisite exhibitions. After the brilliant performance of the Brass Band, the school song was sung. Thereafter the school orchestra left the audience spellbound with their cadences in 'Saaz-e-Rang'. The Principal, Mr Ajay Singh read the Report of the year 2021-22. H H Maharaja Jyotiraditya Scindia welcomed the Chief Guest. In her speech and talk show, the Chief Guest talked about her lessons from life. Justice Sanjay Misra was presented with the Madhav Award. Annual awards were announced, and a wonderful dance performance captivated the audience.

## Workshops and Visits

Shri Shyamal Kumar Kanungo, a renowned scientist from Indian Space Research Organisation, visited the school and interacted with the students.

On 14<sup>th</sup> December 28 universities from across the globe visited the school and interacted with the students.

Mr Neil Cifuentes, who oversees the Student Exchange Programme at St. Mark's School, Southborough, MA, USA visited The Scindia School and observed various skill centres, sports arenas and Fort Biosphere, amongst others.

On the occasion of International Mathematics Day, the Department of Mathematics organized a two days' workshop from 14<sup>th</sup> March to 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023 which was conducted by the Centre for Creative Learning, IIT, Gandhinagar.

Four renowned journalists visited the school- Mr Nilesh Mathur, News Editor, Hindustan Times; Ms Smarica Pant, Chief Sub- Editor at India Today Education; Ms Sugandha Jha, Correspondent, Financial Express; and Ms Shruti Bansal, Sub-Editor at India Today Education. The guests took a round of the school and interacted with the faculty and students.

Four Old Boys from the Batch of 1977 visited the school on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Prof Mani Tripathi, Particle and Nuclear Physicist from U C Davis, was one of them. The three other scientists were- Professor Eric Prebys, Director of Cyclotron Lab at U C Davis; Dr Richard Lirakis, Head of Quantum Computing at IBM; Dr Richard Breedon, Particle Physicist and a member of the team that discovered Higgs Boson. They interacted with the Science students.

A Stamp Designing Workshop titled 'The Magical World of Postage Stamps' was conducted in the Assembly Hall on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2023 by

Mr Sankha Samanta, a great artist and Postage Stamp Designer. The speaker talked about the relevance of postage stamps even in today's world when we do not generally practice the art of letter writing. Through a Power Point Presentation he made the audience go through the whole concept of making a stamp. He also showed the stamps based on the *Ramayana* which consciously avoid any violent or warlike matter. It was an enriching session for the entire audience.

## Celebration

The XXIII Scholars' Banquet for the academic year 2021-22 was held in the school on 26 November 2022 in the School Dining Hall. 119 distinguished students graced the Scholars' Banquet. The Chief guest for the same was Lt Gen V K Sharma, Vice Chancellor- Amity University.

On 14<sup>th</sup> January 2023, students and faculty together celebrated the joyous festival of Makar Sankranti .

On the 26<sup>th</sup> January, along with the patriotic commemorations of Republic Day, Basant Panchami was also celebrated with marvellous performances of Indian classical music in the Assembly Hall.

On 25<sup>th</sup> January, Old Boys of the batch of 1972-73 came back to their *alma mater* to celebrate their Golden Jubilee Reunion. The Old Boys of batch of 1972-73 and the batch of 1982-83 participated in the Republic Day Parade. A special programme was organised in the Assembly Hall to welcome the Old Boys in which they went down the memory lane and shared their experiences with the present generation.

Republic Day was celebrated in the school with joy and fervour. The Chief Guest for the occasion was Mr Anand Rao Pawar, (Ex-Sh, 1964; Madhav Awardee). After the parade, the fraternity moved to the *Astachal*.





His Highness Maharaja Madhav Rao Scindia Memorial Inter-School Cricket Tournament



Mr Neil Cifuentes with the Principal

Valedictory Assembly was conducted in the Shukla Memorial Open-Air Theatre on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023. After the school song, the Principal, **Mr Ajay Singh** delivered a speech in which he wished good luck to all the students for their future. This was followed by the speech of Senior School Prefect, **Mayank Chaudhary**. This ceremony was followed by dinner of staff and students of Class XII at Principal's residence.

On 11<sup>th</sup> February 2023, each House bid farewell to its batch of 2023. The occasion was followed by dinner at the Archery field.

#### Events

5<sup>th</sup> Scindia Literary Fest was held from 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022 to 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022. 14 renowned Kavis, poets, and writers came to the Fort and painted the air 'literary'. **Kavi Vineet Chauhan, Kavi Raj Kaushik, Kavi Dinesh Raghuvanshi, and Kavi Dr Vishnu Saxena** were the stars of the *Kavi Sammelan*. **Dr Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Ms Roopal Kewalya, Mr Smarak Swain, Ms Rituparna Ghosh, Mr Sharif Rangnekar, Dr Deepti Priya Mehrotra, Mr Kevin Missal, Capt. Devendra Bhatnagar (Ex-Jayaji, 1974), and Ms Anita Krishan** interacted with the students through their stimulating sessions. A Book Fair was also organised during the fest.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur Trophy for the 'Best House in Proficiency in Hindi and English' was awarded to Madhav.

On 21<sup>st</sup> December 2023 the teachers put up a splendid performance for the students. The audience gave a standing ovation to the teachers and their amazing efforts.

The school organised the winter study camp for twenty days from 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022 to 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023 for Classes X and XII. Students attended a fete at Jai Vilas palace on 23<sup>rd</sup> December and the New Year's Eve party on 31<sup>st</sup> December.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023, Khelo India mascot Asha the cheetah, visited the school. The students participated in a rally escorted by the school's equestrian team, to promote awareness of the '*Khelo India Youth Games*.'

Greevolothon, an initiative of Greevolve India commenced from the Fort on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Around 700 students of 12 schools participated in this green venture. The children cycled along the Fort wall to generate awareness for the environment.

On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023, the student body assembled for a workshop on stress and time management conducted by the CEO of Twin Win India, **Mr Vaibhav Pande** and **Mr Anshul Vashisht**.

On 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023, the students of class XI surveyed and analysed the Gopachal Hill (on which the Gwalior Fort is built) and its surroundings. The students along with the Geography teacher, **Mr Anoop V** surveyed the area closely and were successfully able to crosscheck slope with the contour data from the toposheet.

On the evening of 19<sup>th</sup> February 2023, the students of Shivaji House celebrated Shivaji Jayanti. A puja was organised on this day for the students who were to appear for the Board Examination.

In the series of celebration of the 125<sup>th</sup> year of The Scindia School, the fraternity and the city of Gwalior witnessed an extraordinary

theatrical presentation named '*Tansen*'. His Highness Maharaja **Jyotiraditya M Scindia**, Her Highness Maharani Sahiba **Priyadarshini Raje Scindia**, **Yuvraj Mahanaaryaman Scindia** and **Yuvrani Sahib Kashmir- Chitrangada Raje Singh** graced the occasion. The play was an astounding one and was profusely appreciated by the audience. The event came to a close with the felicitation of the artist fraternity by the dignitaries and the Vote of Thanks by the Deputy Senior School Prefect, **Vidit Gupta**.

#### Extracurricular

The Inter-House Junior Group Science Quiz was held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023 in the Assembly Hall. **Nimaji** was adjudged winners and **Kanerkhed** was adjudged the runners up.

The Scindia School took part in the National Innoventure Challenge 2022- 23 held in Pune on the 28<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> of February. **Lakshya Tulsyan** of class VII and **Kushagar Arora** of class VI were the second runners-up in their respective categories. **Arnav Joshi** stood first in the Spotlight Challenge.

A delegation of six students escorted by **Mr Ganpat S Pathak** went to Hyderabad Public School for a Round Square Conference from 22<sup>nd</sup> January to 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023. The theme of the conference was Adventure - 'Inhale courage and Exhale fear'.

On 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023, students of The Scindia School and Scindia Kanya Vidyalaya were invited to interview five distinguished guests at Jai Vilas palace.

#### Social Service

Shramjeevi Sports were organized in school from 22<sup>nd</sup> January to 26<sup>th</sup> January, for the members of the support staff in which they participated very enthusiastically.

The Social Service League went to the *Sonsa* village to celebrate the *Sonsa* day. A team of five students accompanied by **Mr Gopal Chaturvedi, Mr Veerendra Nagvanshi** and **Mr Jitendra Jawale** went to the *Sonsa* village. Various sporting events like the three-legged race, kabbadi, tug of war, slow cycling race, 100 meter race for the senior citizens and gymnastics were held.

#### Sports

'B Group' Inter House Hockey Tournament was conducted in two phases. The trophy for the overall winner of Inter House Hockey Tournament 2023 was awarded to Ranoji.

Major Kripal Singh Pannu Tennis Open 'A Group' Tournament was organized on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023. **Utkarsh Gupta**, (Md, 2023), was the runner-up and **Kushagra Verma**, (Mj, 2023) won the Open 'A Group' Tennis Tournament 2023.

The Squash Open Tournament was conducted on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2023. In the B Group **Anagh Naduvath** and **Vedant Kanodia** were the Winner and the Runner up, respectively and in the A Group, **Jayatiwardhan Sharma** and **Tanush Somani** was the Winner and the Runner up, respectively.

On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023 Martyr's Day was observed in the school. The students observed a silence of two minutes at 11 am as a homage to the Mahatma. In the evening a special Astachal was



conducted in the Assembly Hall (as it was a cloudy day). The song sung by the school choir filled the Assembly hall with tranquillity and self-introspection.

His Highness Maharaja Madhav Rao Scindia Memorial Cricket Tournament was organized in school from 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The opening ceremony of the 18<sup>th</sup> HH Maharaja Madhav Rao Scindia Memorial Inter-School Cricket Tournament was conducted on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023 in the School's Madhav Pavilion. Genesis Global School, Motilal Nehru School of Sports, Manik Public School, Yadavindra Public School, Rajkumar College, and The Scindia School competed for the coveted trophy. On 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023, a gala Musical event was organized at the Principal's Residence. **Mr Padamjeet Sehrawat**, a cricketer, singer, anchor, commentator, composer and performer took the audience on a roller coaster ride of musical memories. The medley peppered with intense and profound messages coupled with anecdotes from his and others' lives created a magical atmosphere. The audience sat glued to their seats and also chimed into the songs whenever asked. The audience could be seen lip syncing with all the songs. This was followed by a banquet at the Principal's Residence. The Finale of the H H Maharaja Madhav Rao Scindia Memorial Cricket Tournament was played on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The Defending Champions, Motilal Nehru School of Sports, Rai won the match by 22 runs. The Chief Guest for the Closing Ceremony of the Tournament was **Prof Dr Vivek Pandey**, Vice Chancellor of Lakshmi Bai National Institute of Physical Education, Gwalior. Head of Yogic Sciences, **Dr Nibu R. Krishna** also presided on the occasion. The 'Best All Rounder' of the tournament was awarded to Siddharth of Motilal Nehru School of Sports, Rai who gave 226 runs and took 6 wickets. **Nihaan Jain** of Daly College, Indore became the 'Best Batsman' by scoring 170 runs in 4 matches. **Harsh Upadhaya** of The Scindia School was awarded the 'Best Bowler'. He took 9 wickets in 3 matches. The trophy of His Highness Maharaja Madhav Rao Scindia Memorial Cricket Tournament was lifted by Motilal Nehru School of Sports, Rai and Rajkumar College, Rajkot became the Runner up. The Chief Guest **Prof Dr Vivek Pandey** said that it was very encouraging to see that such sporting events are being held at school level to whet the appetite of students for sports. The Principal, **Mr Ajay Singh**, talked about the grit and determination that sports imparts to an individual. The event came to a close with the giving of mementos to the coaches of the visiting teams, distribution of awards to the winning teams and giving away of individual prizes.

#### Adventure Sports

A group of eleven students from our school, along with one escort teacher, participated in the skiing basic course organized by the Indian Institute of Skiing and Mountaineering in Gulmarg. The course was organised from 28<sup>th</sup> February to 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at Gulmarg. **Inesh Agrawal**, **Krishhn Leelotpal Divyaa** and **Harshit Garg** secured prizes in the 'Best Technique' Category. The teacher escort, **Ms Ritu Guglani** received a consolation prize.

#### Outreach Programmes

On 4<sup>th</sup> February 2023 The Scindia School organized an Outreach programme in Patna, for the prospective parents.

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#### Adieu and Welcome

We bid adieu to **Ms Kirti Srivastava** who had joined the school in the year 2017 as an English teacher. She served as the Resident Tutor and the House Master of Dattaji.

We bid adieu to **Mr Anubhav Sarkar** (Ex-Md, 2012) who joined the school in the year 2019 as a faculty in the Humanities department.



Mr Vishesh Sahai being felicitated by the Principal

We also bid adieu to **Mr Vishesh Sahai** who served the school for over two decades as the Housemaster of Ranoji House, Head of the Department of Commerce, Staff Editor of the Review & Qila Quotes and the Head of Communications.

We also bid adieu to **Mr Shailesh Agarwal** who joined the school in 2018 as a faculty of Commerce and was also the Housemaster of Shivaji House.

**Mr Chetan Bhatia** has joined the Department of English.

**Mr Vikas Soni** and **Mr Nitin Shelar** have joined the Department of Science as the faculty of Physics and Chemistry, respectively.

**Mr Parminder Singh** has joined the Commerce Department of the school.

#### New Appointments

**Mr Mandaar Sharma**, Head of Sports, has taken up the charge of the Housemaster of Shivaji and **Ms Sneha Bhagat** has taken up the charge of the Housemaster of Dattaji.

#### New Initiative

**Siddharth Gupta** of class XII and **Akshay Suman** of class XI have come up with a new Society known as the Research Club. This Club will be solely about the nuances of research. In the beginning of the year each student will choose a field of study on which they will be researching throughout the year. These research projects will be published at the end of the year in The Scindia School's Research Journal, and they will also be sent to other reputed journals like the Harvard Research Journal and many more. The club also aims to invite speakers on a monthly basis so that they can apprise the students on different aspects of research. The speakers will be from different fields of study so that they share varied responses drawn from different fields of study. These research projects will help students immerse themselves in different fields and genres and help them for their college admissions as well. **Dr Smita Trivedi** and **Ms Manisha Singh** are the Teacher Incharges for the same.

# संगीत साधक श्री राजा बनर्जी से एक भेंटवार्ता

सृष्टि का प्रारंभ ही संगीत से हुआ है और इसका प्रत्येक कण संगीत में डूबा हुआ है। यह एक साधना है जिसमें एकाग्रता और तल्लीनता की आवश्यकता निरंतर रहती है। संगीत में सतत परिवर्तन एक सामान्य प्रक्रिया है। भारतीय संगीत में भी समय के साथ अनेक बदलाव हो रहे हैं परंतु ध्यान यह रखना है कि उसकी आत्मा में परिवर्तन न हो। भारतीय शास्त्रीय संगीत का भविष्य उज्वल है। यदि लगन हो तो कहीं न कहीं से रास्ता अवश्य मिल जाता है। इन विचारों को मानने वाले सिंधिया स्कूल में सत्ताइस वर्षों से संगीत साधना के लिए समर्पित श्री राजा बनर्जी के साथ एक साक्षात्कार ।

साक्षात्कारकर्ता – आप किस उम्र में संगीत से जुड़े और आपको कब यह लगा कि मेरा क्षेत्र संगीत ही है?

श्री राजा बनर्जी – संगीत के प्रति रुझान मुझे बचपन से ही मेरे माता-पिता से ही मिला है। बचपन से ही मैं सिनेमा के गाने गया करता था। फिर जब मैं विद्यालय में शिक्षा पूरी करके महाविद्यालय गया तो संगीत के प्रति रुझान ज्यादा होने के कारण संगीत को ही अपना विषय बना लिया ।

साक्षात्कारकर्ता – संगीत कला के इस क्षेत्र में आपके प्रारंभिक प्रेरणा स्रोत कौन रहे हैं?

श्री राजा बनर्जी – मेरे माता-पिता...। पहले मैं अपने विद्यालय में गाता था। मेरे माता-पिता भी शौकिया गाते थे और उन्हीं को देखकर मैं प्रेरित हुआ। एक बार तो जब कक्षा चौथी में पढ़ता था तब अपना ट्यूशन छोड़ कर शास्त्रीय संगीत सुनने के लिए एक महाविद्यालय में चला गया था। वहाँ मेरी तन्मयता को देखकर संभवतः मेरे पिता ने यह भाँप लिया होगा कि मैं संगीत के क्षेत्र में जा सकता हूँ। महाविद्यालय में अपनी शिक्षा ग्रहण करते हुए मैं चंदेरी गोंदा नामक एक गायन समूह से जुड़ा था जिसमें अधिकांश रूप से मैं छत्तीसगढ़ी गीत गाया करता था। वहाँ पर मेरी लोकप्रियता बढ़ी और इसी लोकप्रियता के कारण मेरे माता पिता ने संगीत क्षेत्र में आने के लिए मुझे प्रोत्साहित किया । एक कारण यह भी था कि कक्षा बारहवीं तक मैं विज्ञान का विद्यार्थी रहा परंतु संभवतः मैं विज्ञान के लिए नहीं बना था और संगीत ही मेरा क्षेत्र था तब पिताजी ने मुझे संगीत के क्षेत्र में ही जाने की सलाह दी ।

साक्षात्कारकर्ता – आपने अपनी संगीत शिक्षा कहाँ से प्रारंभ की और किस गुरु से आपने शिक्षा दीक्षा ली ?

श्री राजा बनर्जी – संगीत की शिक्षा मैंने इंदिरा कला संगीत विश्वविद्यालय, खैरागढ़ से ली जो कि आजकल छत्तीसगढ़ में आता है। मेरे गुरुजी का नाम पंडित जगदीश प्रसाद पंडित था। कलकत्ता में जाकर उनसे मैंने गंडा बँधवाया था। मेरे गुरुजी देश के विख्यात संगीतज्ञ बड़े गुलाम अली साहब के शिष्य थे । उनका शिष्य मैं कैसे बना इसकी भी एक कहानी है – मैं स्नातक (प्रथम वर्ष) में पढ़ रहा था। हमारी कुछ कक्षाएँ शाम को होती थीं। शाम को कक्षा समाप्त होने के पश्चात जब मैं विश्वविद्यालय के उप-कुलपति के घर के पास से गुजर रहा था तो वहाँ से मैंने रेकॉर्ड प्लेयर पर बजते हुए शास्त्रीय संगीत को सुना तो फिर मैं वहीं ठिठक गया और लगातार उस राग को सुनता रहा। अचानक ऊपर से उप-कुलपति महोदय श्री विमलेंद्र मुखर्जी ने मुझे देखा और मुझे ऊपर बुला लिया, वह काफी देर से मुझे अपने बरामदे से देख रहे थे । उन्होंने मुझसे पूछा – क्या गाना तुमको इतना पसंद आया ? मैंने कहा – जी। उन्होंने कहा – तुम्हें मालूम है यह कौन गा रहे हैं ?..... पंडित जगदीश प्रसाद। मैं इन्हें जानता भी हूँ – मैंने कहाँ। उन्होंने अचानक पूछा – क्या तुम इनसे सीखना चाहोगे ? मैं तो जैसे हवा में उड़ने लगा था, मैं बहुत खुश हो गया। मैंने उनसे पूछा – क्या ये मुझे गाना सिखाएँगे ? क्यों नहीं – मैं एक पत्र तुम्हें दूँगा, तुम उनसे जाकर मिलना, वे तुम्हें अवश्य गाना सिखाएँगे – उन्होंने कहा। और इस प्रकार मैंने पंडित जगदीश प्रसाद जी से गंडा बनवाया और उनका शिष्य बना।

साक्षात्कारकर्ता – भारत के विभिन्न घरानों में से आप का संबंध किस घराने से है ?

श्री राजा बनर्जी – पटियाला घराने से, हमारे गुरुजी पटियाला घराने से रहे हैं इसलिए मुख्य रूप से उनका प्रभाव मेरे संगीत



पर पड़ा है। इसके अलावा महाविद्यालय में मैंने अन्य गुरुओं से भी संगीत की शिक्षा ग्रहण की है जिनकी शैलियाँ भिन्न थीं इसीलिए मूल रूप से एक घराने का होते हुए भी मेरे गायन में विविधता है। पुराने समय में घर आने का बंधन होने के कारण संगीत की अन्य शैलियों को सीखना कठिन था परंतु आज ऐसा नहीं है इसलिए धीरे-धीरे यह घराने महत्वहीन होते जा रहे हैं हालाँकि कई स्थानों पर इनका महत्व अभी भी बना हुआ है। कई संगीतकार इस परंपरा को मानते चलते हैं लेकिन मूल बात यही है कि विद्यालयों और महाविद्यालयों में विभिन्न शैलियों में सिखाने के कारण आज इनमें परिवर्तन आ रहा है। आज सोशल मीडिया के कारण हम विभिन्न संगीत शैलियों को सुन और सीख सकते हैं।

साक्षात्कारकर्ता- आपने अध्यापन कार्य कब प्रारंभ किया और आपने यही रास्ता क्यों चुना ?

श्री राजा बनर्जी - स्नातक करने के पश्चात् मैंने सेंट्रल स्कूल में एक वर्ष तक अध्यापन कार्य किया लेकिन मुझे लगा कि मुझे संगीत में स्नातक करने के पश्चात आगे पढ़ना चाहिए। फिर संगीत में स्नातकोत्तर करने के पश्चात् मैंने सोचा कि मैंने जो कुछ सीखा है उसको अगली पीढ़ी तक पहुँचाने के लिए विद्यालय सबसे उपयुक्त स्थान है जहाँ मैं विभिन्न प्रकार के छात्रों की पहचान करके उन्हें उन्हीं के अनुसार संगीत की शिक्षा प्रदान कर सकूँ, उन्हें भी मंच तक पहुँचा सकूँ।

साक्षात्कारकर्ता - संगीत की विभिन्न शैलियों जैसे -ध्रुपद, खयाल, तुमरी में आज सबसे अधिक किस शैली को बच्चे सीखना चाहते हैं?

श्री राजा बनर्जी - संगीत के इन तीनों विधाओं में सबसे कठिन 'ध्रुपद' होता है, उसके बाद सरलता के क्रम में 'तुमरी' और फिर उसके बाद 'खयाल' आता है। वैसे तो आज के बच्चे शास्त्रीय संगीत सीखना कम ही पसंद करते हैं। जिन बच्चों में थोड़े बहुत संगीत के गुण पाए जाते हैं वो तो हिंदी सिनेमा के गाने या पाश्चात्य संगीत को ही गाते-बजाते हैं। बहुत ही कम बच्चे शास्त्रीय संगीत सीखते हैं। उनमें से 'खयाल' को ही ज्यादा पसंद करते हैं। उनमें से भी कुछ बच्चे 'तुमरी' और उसके बाद सबसे कम 'ध्रुपद' सीखते हैं। मंच से बच्चों का एकल-गायन बहुत प्रभावकारी होता है।

साक्षात्कारकर्ता - आपने अनेक बार, अनेक मंचों से अपने संगीत की प्रस्तुति दी है। मंच पर जाने से पहले आप किस प्रकार की तैयारी करते हैं?

श्री राजा बनर्जी - किसी भी मंच पर जाने से पहले यह ध्यान रखना पड़ता है कि यह मंच किस प्रकार का है या यह कार्यक्रम किस संदर्भ में आयोजित किया जा रहा है या श्रोता किस प्रकार

के हैं? और इसी के अनुसार हमें अपने संगीत का चयन करना पड़ता है। मंच के लिए अभ्यास और संगीत का चयन करने के अलावा मैं शास्त्रीय संगीत का रियाज प्रायः प्रतिदिन सुबह करता हूँ।

साक्षात्कारकर्ता - मंच पर प्रस्तुति देते हुए क्या आपको कोई ऐसी घटना याद है जिसने आपके जीवन को प्रभावित किया हो?

श्री राजा बनर्जी - मेरे लिए मंच की प्रत्येक प्रस्तुति एक नया अनुभव देती है। ऐसी कोई विशेष घटना तो याद नहीं परंतु इतना अवश्य कह सकता हूँ कि श्रोतागणों द्वारा मिले प्रत्येक प्रोत्साहन से मैं प्रभावित होता रहा हूँ। इससे संगीत के प्रति मेरी श्रद्धा, संगीत से प्यार, संगीत के प्रति सर्वस्व-समर्पण और संगीत को अपने जीवन का सबसे महत्वपूर्ण अंग मानने के मेरे विश्वास को बल मिला है।

साक्षात्कारकर्ता - गायन में आप मन्ना डे को बहुत पसंद करते हैं इसका कोई विशेष कारण ?

श्री राजा बनर्जी - उनके गले से मेरा गला मिलता है। ग्वालियर निवासी प्रसिद्ध हास्य कवि प्रदीप चौबे जी ने मेरा एक प्रोग्राम करवाया था जो मन्ना डे को ही समर्पित था, उसी कार्यक्रम में मुझे उन्होंने हु-ब-हू मन्ना डे की उपाधि दी थी। यहाँ विद्यालय में भी हमारे सहयोगियों का आग्रह उन्हीं के गाने सुनने की रहती है। एक बार एक विदेशी छात्र ने जब मन्ना डे का गाना सुना तो उसने मुझे उनके गाने को दुबारा सुनाने का आग्रह किया।

साक्षात्कारकर्ता - क्या आपको लगता है कि भारतीय शास्त्रीय संगीत का प्रचलन विदेशों में भारत से भी अधिक है?

श्री राजा बनर्जी - भारतीय शास्त्रीय संगीत का प्रचलन विदेशों में भारत से भी अधिक हो रहा है यह कह पाना तो कठिन है, हाँ, इतना अवश्य कह सकता हूँ कि भारतीय शास्त्रीय संगीत का प्रचलन विदेशों में बहुत ज्यादा हो रहा है। वो हमारे संगीत को बहुत पसंद करते हैं। इसका श्रेय हमारे देश के बड़े कलाकारों को जाता है जिनमें कई नाम हैं।

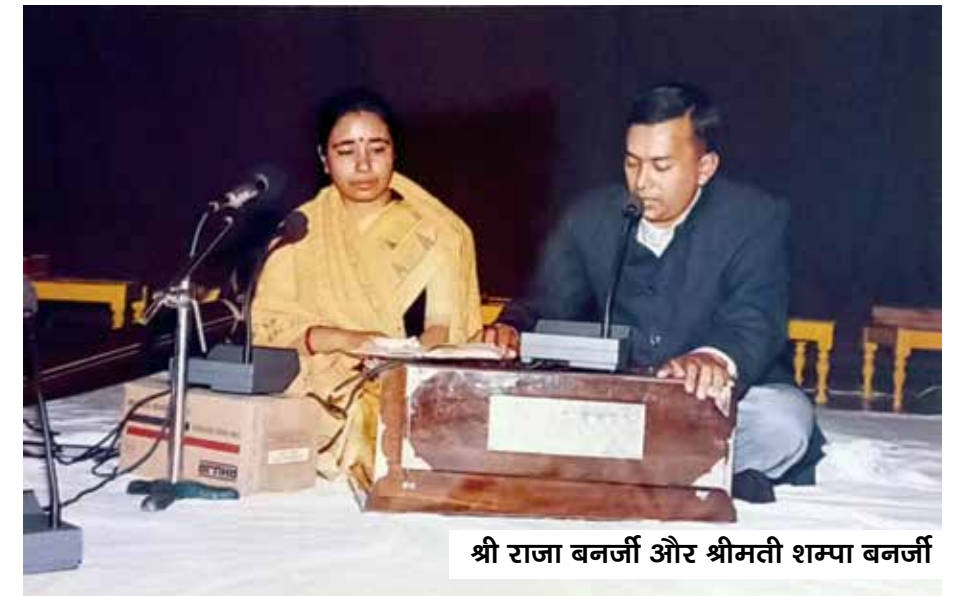
साक्षात्कारकर्ता - भारतीय संगीत की लगभग हर विधा पर पश्चिमी संगीत का प्रभाव दृष्टिगत होता है। क्या भारतीय शास्त्रीय संगीत भी इससे प्रभावित हुआ है?

श्री राजा बनर्जी - अवश्य हुआ है। यह मनुष्य की प्रकृति है, उसे एक नयापन, बदलाव चाहिए। भारतीय संगीत के कलाकारों ने भी ऐसा ही प्रयोग अपने संगीत के साथ किया। शास्त्रीय संगीत के रागों के बंदिशों में आधुनिक वाद्य-यंत्रों का प्रयोग करने लगे हैं। जिसे आज 'फ्यूजन' के रूप में देखा जा रहा है। बदलाव तो सृष्टि का नियम है, समय के साथ सब कुछ बदलता है। आज 'फ्यूजन' को बहुत पसंद किया जा रहा है, विशेषकर युवा - वर्ग में यह काफी प्रचलित हो रहा है। ऐसे में हमें बस यह ध्यान रखने

की आवश्यकता है कि भारतीय संगीत की आत्मा से कोई खिलवाड़ न हो चाहे उसका वाह्य स्वरूप कितना ही बदलता रहे।

साक्षात्कारकर्ता - कहाँ जाता है कि आज भारतीय शास्त्रीय संगीत अपने बुरे दौर से गुज़र रहा है इस संबंध में आपके क्या विचार हैं?

श्री राजा बनर्जी - इतना भी बुरा दौर नहीं कह सकते। आज भी कुछ नामी संगीत-समारोह भारत में आयोजित किए जा रहे हैं, लोग वहाँ जाकर संगीत सुन भी रहे हैं जिससे लगता है भारतीय शास्त्रीय संगीत आज भी ज़िंदा है। अधिकांश विद्यालयों में भी संगीत की शिक्षा दी जा रही है। स्पिक-मैके द्वारा प्रायोजित किए जाने वाले विभिन्न प्रकार के संगीत कार्यक्रम, भातखंडे संगीत-समारोह, तानसेन संगीत समारोह जैसे कई कार्यक्रम भारतीय संगीत को जीवंत बनाए हुए हैं। इसके साथ ही भारत-सरकार के संस्कृति विभाग द्वारा तथा निजी संस्थानों के द्वारा भी देश-विदेश में संगीत के कार्यक्रम आयोजित किए जाते हैं। जो भी लोग संगीत से जुड़े हैं वे निरंतर संगीत को आगे बढ़ा रहे हैं इसीलिए हम कह सकते हैं कि भारतीय संगीत का भविष्य उज्वल है।

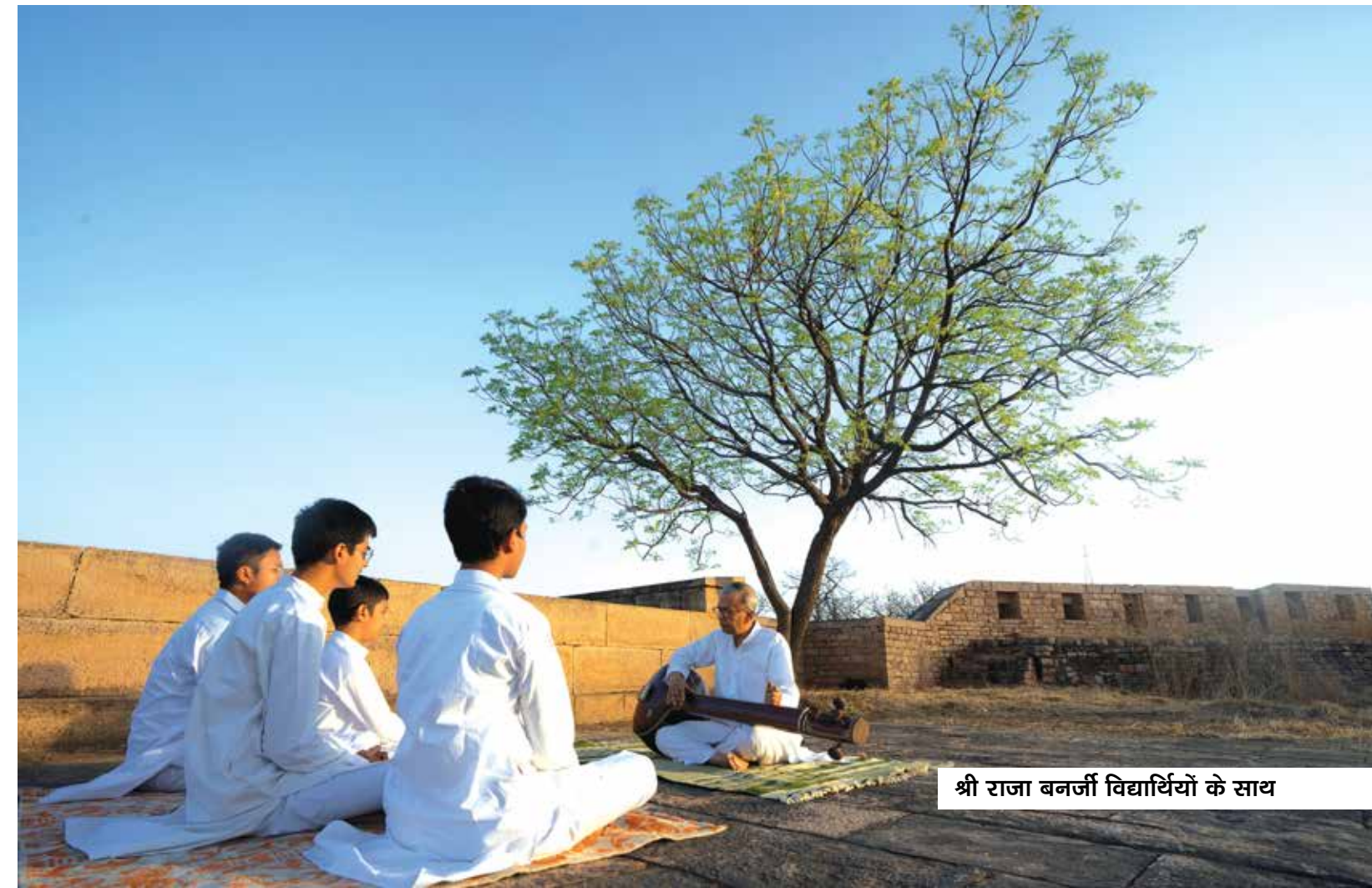


श्री राजा बनर्जी और श्रीमती शम्पा बनर्जी

साक्षात्कारकर्ता - आशा है सभी पाठक आपके विचारों से लाभान्वित होंगे और भारतीय शास्त्रीय संगीत के उन्नयन की प्रक्रिया में अपना सहयोग देंगे।

आपका बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद !

श्री मनोज मिश्रा  
विभागाध्यक्ष, हिंदी-विभाग



श्री राजा बनर्जी विद्यार्थियों के साथ



# STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

Shubh Kumar Shah of Class XII, Ranoji, has been selected to the University of Sydney Law School for Admission to Australian Council of Education and Research Undergrad Law Internship Programme and International Court Programme and has been offered a scholarship of 11,000 Australian dollars.

'Shri Atmaram Sharma Smriti Chal Vaijanti' award is given every year to a student who exhibits extraordinary accomplishment in Hindi. The award was given to Rhythm Arora of Class XII for his exemplary participation in dramatics, poetry recitation and writing, compering and displaying subject expertise in class XI and XII in Hindi.

Yash Agarwal participated in ABWA Infinity Quiz 2022-23. Yash Jain became a Member of APNA GHAR NGO, reached the TT Quarter Finals, was the Gwalior Captain U-17, U-19 and received a Honorable Mention in Harvard MUN.

Lalit Kumar was appointed a School Prefect. Dev Pratap Bansal secured third position in 400m at IPSC Athletics held at PPS Nabha.

Aditya Singh Gurjar emerged as the Best Defender in Inter House Football.

Swejeet Taparia came 3<sup>rd</sup> in PI Quiz (all over India), 4<sup>th</sup> in National Economics Olympiad (all over India) and 24<sup>th</sup> in Global Economics Olympiad and 1<sup>st</sup> in Marketing Skill (all over India).

Harshit Garg secured 29<sup>th</sup> position in Global Economics Olympiad.

Neev Agarwal became the Most promising Speaker at East India Debate organized by Assam Valley School, participated in Student Internship on Mental Health & Digital Wellbeing, and received a Verbal Mention in the Harvard HPAIR Summer Leadership Programme.

Shaurya Prakash attended the Military History Seminar at Welham Boys' School.

Anubhav Sachan bagged 'verbal mention' at Daly college MUN, participated in La' Martiniere College Lucknow Stock Market Competition and Lucknow Eco Jam competition and secured 4<sup>th</sup> position out of 32. He also bagged 3<sup>rd</sup> position in SRCC National Olympiad Quiz.

Ayaan Agarwal secured the 3<sup>rd</sup> position in the Srijanyam 2022-23 in the 'cartooning' category.

Akshay Suman participated in the Harvard IBM Entrepreneur, Harvard YLC PROGRAM, and in Q Labs IQ 6 months' programme.

Yash Vardhan Nevatia completed Fortis Mental Health Programme; participated in (Psychology) National Level Online quiz conducted

by Fortis Mental Healthcare, and won the Indo-Western Band Competition as a part of Vision 2022 held at Mussoorie International School.

Jeh Hilluwala went for a Culinary Exchange programme to Switzerland.

Raghav Mahajan went to Assam Valley Fest where he secured 1<sup>st</sup> position in the event.

Kushal Agarwal completed a 4-week PUMA Corporate Experience for Marketing and Strategy planning by Mindler where his marketing plan was adjudged as the Best Plan presented to the PUMA Marketing Team, He was then selected for working as an Intern at PUMA under Marketing and Strategy Planning Department for 4-months. He was part of the 5-day long IPSC Service Project at MGD Jaipur.

Tanish Agrawal received an 'Honourable Mention' in the TSL Sustainability Challenge.

Amogh Bhavgava was awarded the 'Best Scorer' in the U-17 basketball tournament held in LAHS, Gwalior .

Shahi Raj secured 1<sup>st</sup> position in Hindi Handwriting Competition; became the 'Best athlete B group' and participated in the U-17 basketball tournament held in LAHS Gwalior.

In the Inter House 'A' Group Cricket Tournament, held in school from 5<sup>th</sup> November to 13<sup>th</sup> November 2022 the awards were as follows: Best Batsman- Anoop Korku, Daulat; Best Bowler- Jeh Hilluwala, Shivaji; Best Player- -Anoop Korku, Daulat.

ITM Global School Gwalior conducted State level Roller Skating Championship from 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022 in which Atishay Mongia secured 1<sup>st</sup> position in 100m road race.



Valedictory Assembly



Skiing Basic Course at Gulmarg



# IN MEMORIAM

*Prelude: Pyare Mohan Khar who was better known by his acronym PMK was born on July 26, 1926 at Sehore in erstwhile Central Provinces. After completion of his MSc from Holkar College, he joined the Scindia school in 1950 and taught there till his retirement in 1987. Post 1987, he moved initially to Delhi from where he shifted to Nashik. He breathed his last on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2022 following a brief illness. He was the housemaster of Madhav House from 1962 to 1977. The tribute that follows is by one of his students who had the dual good fortune of being his student both in the chemistry class and in the House.*

PMK was a giant in more than one way. His external appearance certainly created that impression. The scar on the left side of his face and his impenetrable eyes gave the impression of a stern countenance which could change as soon as he let out a loud guffaw. But for me, he was more of an intellectual giant who was sent to illumine the lives of scores of his students on whose minds he left an indelible impression. Sometimes however his palms made impressions of a crimson hue on the cheeks of the truant but whether that left an indelible mark on the recipient is certainly a moot point. PMK was always a strict disciplinarian, and the physical retribution was a reminder that one did not cross the red lines laid down by him.

So coming back to the giant, he was in many ways like the central character in the childhood fable created by Oscar Wilde. But there is a twist in the tale as PMK can only be described as a selfless giant. We played in his garden and then left on our destined paths armed with the wisdom and knowledge acquired over the years spent under his tutelage. For those who took up science and were fortunate to have been in his class, chemistry was a cake walk. He had the uncanny ability to pique an interest in a subject which many consider as dry and insipid. His forte was in explaining concepts and as far I can remember he despised rote learning....

Of the many things that I admired in him, the foremost was the fact that he was ever willing to stick his neck out for someone whom he felt was being denied justice. A small anecdote to prove this point: the date of the Platinum jubilee debate clashed with the departure of the school football team to Indore for the triangulars. The football coach left me with a Hobson's choice: Stay for the debate or depart with the team. I was downcast and decided to share my predicament with him (PMK). He listened to my story and said "I can't see why you can't have your cake and eat it too!" A forceful plea was made to the principal who sanctioned my travel to Indore and I boarded the bus gleefully after the completion of the debate. I may add here that it was PMK who introduced me to the term Hobson's choice along with a myriad of other terms.

PMK loved to coin neologisms. The neologisms covered both animate and inanimate objects. He had an utter disdain for films and film actors in particular. So Amitabh Bachhan was rechristened as Bachhan Kumar and Dharmendra also acquired the same surname! The neologisms spilled on to the chemistry lab where the troika of Dr Ingle, PMK and Mr Ghangrekar indulged themselves with "Beeko Tea" (tea in beakers) which was inspired from the Cona Coffee served in the fancy restaurants of Bombay! He also devised the term Dholpuri Football which denoted aimless kicking of the ball in the air rather than passing it with surgical precision. Perhaps the last one attributed to him is "Amma jaan" for Amazon.

He was a veritable storehouse of knowledge the repertoire of which ranged from Science, Sports, English and Hindi literature, Urdu poetry and music. The noteworthy point is that his knowledge was acquired in the pre-internet era where the only source of knowledge was self-reading and in-depth discussions with peers. His mastery was how he summarized this information into small capsules which were fed to the young students. He was the only teacher on the Fort who could discuss Aldous Huxley, Neils Bohr, JBS Haldane, George Orwell, GB Shaw and so many other scholars with consummate ease. The meaning of the immortal lines penned by *Ghalib* need to be contorted to describe this quality of PMK :

*Bazeecha itfal hai duniya mere aage,  
Hota hai shab o roz tamasha mere aage*

For him acquisition of knowledge related to any field was merely child's play indeed!

It is difficult to single out which was the foremost leadership skill he imparted to his students. The Persian word "Bebaak" would be my pick. Bebaak means to be outspoken and fearless; someone who is not afraid to speak his mind. PMK was one person who didn't mince his words and was not afraid to call a spade as a spade. Some of his students certainly imbibed this quality and I am reasonably convinced that it caused them little regret in their life. He certainly didn't train his students to be lackeys!



Another attribute one learnt from him was diligence and personally I feel he favored diligence over intelligence. The painstaking way in which he helped us solve chemical equations were lessons in diligence and it became ingrained in our future endeavors.

He was passionate about urdu poetry and I would be in no position to gauge his passion as my interaction with him was at age when I did not even know the urdu alphabet. These facts were brought to light at his prayer meeting when his students of yester years quoted so many lines which he rattled verbatim. In hindsight his satirical wit was certainly reminiscent of Saadat Hasan Manto and perhaps they shared a common dislike for Uncle Sam!

For many of us PMK would always be the person who shaped our lives: we were the clay, he was the master potter at work who toiled endlessly to transform his "blighters" to "men of substance."

Mrs Kamal Khar his "shareek e hayat" stood by his side through thick and thin. His three children **Sanjay**, **Kaumudi** and **Nandini** are indeed privileged to have a father who has left behind such a rich legacy.

It would not be inappropriate to end this obituary with a due apology to *Mirza Ghalib*

*Ye massail e tasawaf, ye tera byaan "Pyare"  
Tujhe hum wali hi samjhenge, gar koi khwaar bhi hota..*

(Your concerns so mystic, so inimitable your style PMK You will always be revered as a Saint by us, even if you had any vice)

**Dr Amarender Singh Puri**  
(Ex-Md, 1979)



# OLD BOYS' NEWS

**A Networking and Leadership Conclave was organized at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023. The Conclave brought in Scindians together from all walks of life to share their expertise and wisdom.**



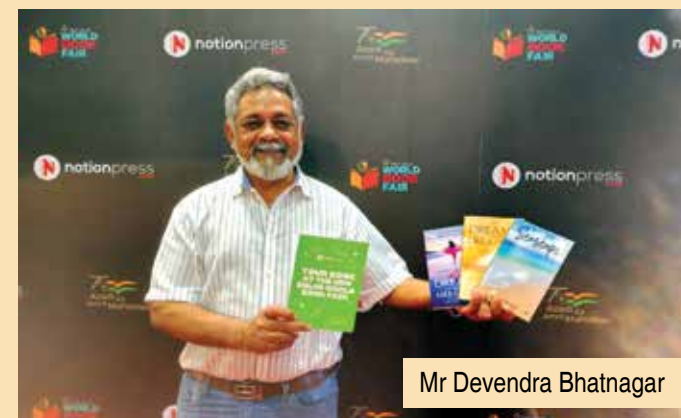
(President), Mr Girish Malpani (Secretary), Mr Siddharth Jagtap (Treasurer), and Mr Sachin Chanchani.

Mr Gagan Khosla (Ex-Je, 1974) undertook a month-long cycling journey to pedal approximately 6000 kilometers across India's Golden Quadrilateral, in partnership with the World's trusted Child Rights NGO, Save The Children. The aim of the expedition was to raise funds which will help in uplifting the lives of children through the powerful tool of education. Mr Anurag Sachdev (Ex- Sh, 1974) supported him during this ride.



Our congratulations to Mr Anurag Sinha (Ex-Mj, 2000) for being awarded the 'Best Actor' at the New Jersey Indian and International Film Festival.

Shri Siddharaj Manik Prabhu Inter School Cricket Tournament 2023 was organized at Manik Public School, Hyderabad.



Mr Devendra Bhatnagar (Ex- Ja, 1974) launched his third book-'Seascape'. Many congratulations!

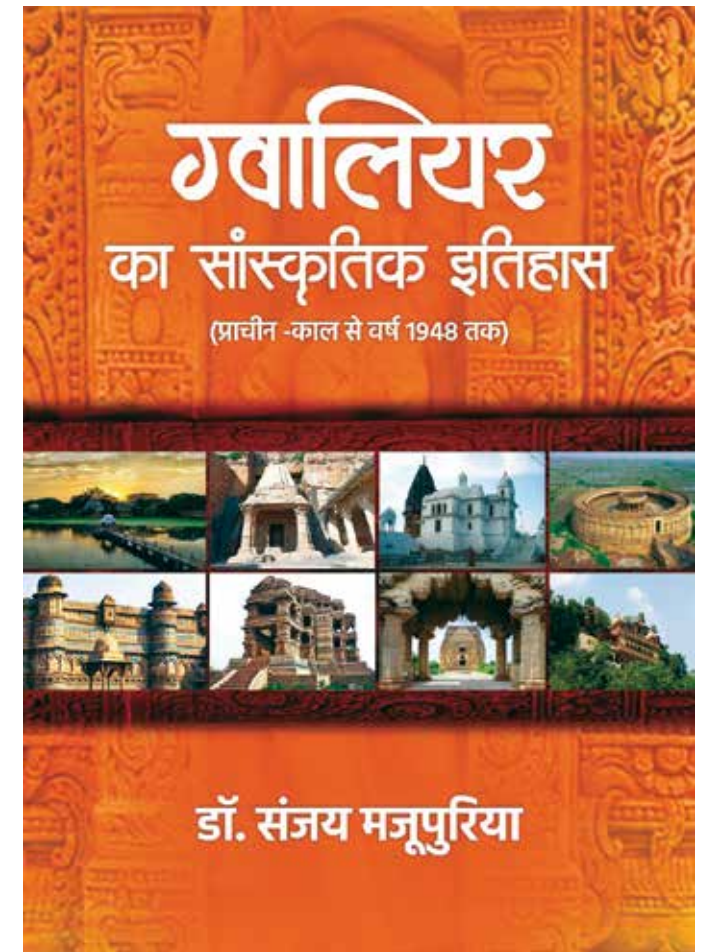
We congratulate Dr Atul Shrivastava (Ex- Ja, 1984) for being appointed the Head of the National Orthopedic Association.

The Alumni Cricket Bash was organized at The Doon School, Dehradun on 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2022.

The Old Boys of Ranaji brought a lot of bonhomie and laughter on the Fort while they gathered here for the Ranaji Reunion and sweetly

reminisced their days here. The royal Ranajians reunited on the Fort between 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023. They were welcomed by the students and the teaching fraternity. The Old Boys gathered in the Assembly Hall and sang the school song. They also recounted several anecdotes about their stay in school and how it positively impacted their life thereafter. A Dinner was held at the Swimming Pool on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 to celebrate the reunion of Ranajians from various batches. The evening was filled with laughter, joy, and nostalgia as they fondly recalled stories of their days at the Fort. The Principal, Mr Ajay Singh graced the occasion and presented mementos to the Old Boys. Over the next two days, they interacted with the current students at Scindia. This proved to be an invaluable opportunity for students to interact with Scindians who have realworld experience and learn from the insights given by them. On 4<sup>th</sup> March 2023, the students welcomed the Old Boys with a thunderous applause in the Morning Assembly after which the Old Boys spent their day going around the Fort. The school organized a special Astachal which left everyone invigorated. On 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023, Ranaji House hosted a 'Chai Pe Charcha' in Ranaji Common Room which witnessed a lively discussion and interaction with the Old Boys. The inspirational speeches and experiences from them inspired and motivated the current generation. According to tradition, the Old Boys passed the baton to the outgoing class XII Batch. After this, the school bid farewell to the Old Boys after spending a memorable time with them.

Dr Sanjai Majupuria (Ex- Je, 1969) has published his second book titled, 'Gwalior Ka Sanskritik Itihas'. Many congratulations!



**Scn. Gagan Khosla cycling 6000 km on the Golden Quadrilateral**

Save the Children <https://www.savethechildren.in>

Itinerary

Date	Distance	Start	End	Time
1	100	00:00	01:00	01:00
2	100	01:00	02:00	02:00
3	100	02:00	03:00	03:00
4	100	03:00	04:00	04:00
5	100	04:00	05:00	05:00
6	100	05:00	06:00	06:00
7	100	06:00	07:00	07:00
8	100	07:00	08:00	08:00
9	100	08:00	09:00	09:00
10	100	09:00	10:00	10:00
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98	100	01:00	02:00	02:00
99	100	02:00	03:00	03:00
100	100	03:00	04:00	04:00

Powered by: SOBA CARE

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The Inter school Alumni Golf Tournament was held at JP Green's Greater Noida.

SOBA Nagpur distributed Blankets & woollen caps to attendants of all Public Toilets in Nagpur on 12 January 2023. The event was attended by Dr Sanjay Kolte (President), Mr Harshawardhan Dhanwatey (Vice President), Mr Pramod Munot, Mr Bharat Goenka, Mr Sachin Chanchani, Mr Sandeep Agrawal, Mr Pratik Munot. The chapter also distributed blankets & woollen caps to all the Licensed porters & Shoe-polish wala's at Nagpur Railway Station on 23 January 2023. The event was attended by Dr Sanjay Kolte



Ranaji House Reunion



# REVIVING THE ART OF STORY TELLING: WHAT DOES THE JOURNEY OF THE INDIAN KAAVAD MEAN?

*“Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.” - Margaret Mead*

*In a recently published book “Sapiens- A Brief History of Humankind” the author Yuval Noah Harari has looked into the beginning of humankind and the reasons behind the success of our species in the battle of dominance. He claims that 100,000 years ago, at least six human species inhabited the earth, today there is just one- us- Homo Sapiens. Why did we succeed? Amongst the many reasons provided, an important explanation given is about our language. However, many animals including all ape and monkey species have vocal language, what, then is so special about our language? The most common answer is that our language is amazingly supple. We can connect a limited number of sounds and signs to produce an infinite number of sentences, each with a distinct meaning. We can thereby ingest, store, and communicate a prodigious amount of information about the surrounding world. At the same time, our unique languages have also evolved as a means of sharing information about the world and at the same time also speak about things that don't really exist.*

Thus we see that stories have existed long before recorded history, and the telling of stories has changed forms drastically throughout the ages. From cave painting to novels to movies, stories have always fascinated mankind. Although the methods have changed, the desire to tell and hear stories has remained unchanged, and still greatly impacts the way we look at life.

Since times immemorial, storytellers have roamed across India for ages, and today our country is a rich reservoir in story telling with an amazing variety of tales and techniques. A number of storytelling forms still use visual props: the intricately painted phad scroll and the ingenious story box, kaavad with folding doors are both from Rajasthan. In West Bengal, a long vertical scroll, the pata, is used, as singing tellers share a story in homes or at funerals and functions.

A long wide, vertical scroll, the padam, is still used at times in Andhra Pradesh to present a vivid painted version of the *Ramayana* or *Mahabharata*. In *Maharashtra*, the story telling form of *chitrakatha* was popular in earlier days, when a teller and musician shared the epics using small, painted pictures, often pasted back to back and displayed during the telling.

Musical storytelling forms also flow across India. In parts of North India, the manhatt shares stories while he plays fine rhythms on

a metal pot (bhatt). *Kirtan*, in *Maharashtra*, is a stirring, devotional mixture of song and dramatic narrative, performed by a kirtankar and accompanying musicians. It spread to the south, centuries ago and became *harikatha* and *kathakalakshepa*.

*Pandavani*, in *Madhya Pradesh*, features a central teller/singer who tells and sings with drama, while several musicians provide refrain. In Southern India, the ballads of the villupaatu tellers share legends of regional heroes and spirits, deities, the epics as well as stories on contemporary issues like AIDS, literacy, rural sanitation, nutrition etc. A story telling style that adds much gesture and dance to the story is ottan thullal of Kerala. This colourful form was started by poet Kunchan Nambiar when he was rebuked by a Chakyar storyteller hundreds of years ago. In response, he wrote satirical tales to be told in a new style: with dance, simpler language, lively music, costume and humour.

We also have story telling forms where the teller tells with little or no music, without props. Chakyar koothu is performed in some temples of Kerala by a skilled actor with a large solo drum played sparingly behind him. Also in Kerala, padagam is an even simpler form with one man alone telling the story. In dasakathia from Orissa, two men share myths using their voices and simple wooden clappers for rhythm.

As story telling helps adults pass on wisdom, knowledge and culture, our homes have also become places where innumerable stories are told by our grandparents, aunts and uncles. Thus we see that Indian culture is thoroughly steeped in storytelling, and at the same time storytelling is a key part of our lives.

An interesting form of story telling is the Kaavad Katha tradition of Rajasthan. Kaavad is a portable wooden temple/shrine that has visual narratives on its multiple panels that are hinged together. These panels open and close like doors simulating the several thresholds of a temple. The visuals are those of Gods, goddesses, saints, local heroes and the patrons.

It is made by the Suthar (carpenter) community in Mewar. Kaavads are commissioned by traditional storytellers (kavariya bhats), who specify what is to be depicted on the shrine. The box consists of an elaborate series of painted hinged panels. Most kaavads follow the same general format: illustrations from the great epic, the Ramayana, on the left series of panels and scenes from the life on Krishna on the right, with references to local myths and patrons towards the end. The story-teller opens them in sequence with the events in his narration. This portable temple/shrine comes to the devotee rather than the devotee going to the temple (Bhanawat, 1975).

The *Kaavadiya Bhat* periodically brings the shrine to his patron's house to recite his genealogy and to sing praises of his ancestors. He also recites the stories especially those that relate to the patron saint of the community concerned. The Kaavadiyas (storytellers) and their jajmans (hereditary patrons) consider the Kaavad as a sacred shrine which demands certain rituals to be followed, listening to genealogies, epic stories and making donations. It is believed that listening to stories purifies the soul and reserves a place of entry for the devotee in heaven.

However, with the changing dynamics of the Indian society, the fervour of the story telling tradition has changed remarkably. There has been a major influx of technology where children are left to their own devices by busy parents who provide them the best that money can buy. At the same time with nuclear families being the norm, parents are not able to take time out to acquaint children with their own background. In this globalised world, the traditional story tellers are also finding it difficult to find a place for themselves as well as for their art. With the onset of different sources of entertainment, the story telling tradition is becoming redundant which is visible at both macro and micro level. In today's situation, the bond between the storyteller and the listener hangs by a fragile thread and this has an enduring impact on our coming generation.

The emphasis on education (as indicated by help with reading) as preached by the school and school system is much stressed upon undervaluing the impact of story-telling on the language learning ability of the child. This can be largely attributed to ignorance of the community on importance of story-telling and the lack of occurrence thereof. The lack of libraries in schools is also one of the reasons for children not developing an interest and love for books.

The importance of early grade reading cannot be denied and for children to be lifelong learners, this particular area cannot be ignored. Thus seeing the emerging gap created by the lack of learning resources, in 2013, Government of India launched its nationwide programme on development of language.

**Dr Ruchira G Chawla**  
Faculty, Humanities





# THEN AND NOW....

*I had often heard that time flies. Surely time did fly so swiftly, in the experience of mine that I recount in the next lines, that I now reckon that the adage must be true.*



Vidit Gupta receiving the Housemaster's Cup

Vidit was probably seven or eight years old when he entreated to us that he should be sent to study in a Boarding School. To us the reasons may not have been very clear then but I can connect the dots now. So going back to the story, his persistent demand seemed to be as if he was not satisfied with any of the schools that the city could offer. He tried adapting to the environment of the schools that he had frequently changed to get things working but nothing appeared to satiate his curiosity, stimulate his imagination and provide him with enough challenge to whet his appetite. Concerned at this development, we started looking for a residential school that could offer the kind of challenge which Vidit must have wanted all along. He came to the Fort and loved the place, instantly. He felt that he belonged here! In retrospect, I must say that perhaps we were not able to fully comprehend his inclination for doing things differently or his passionate nature of doing everything to his best potential while setting high benchmarks for himself. In the end, we gave in to his request and decided to admit him to The Scindia School in grade VII, in the year of 2017.

In recollection, it was a tough decision for me to make, as I can imagine it would be for any mother to take. Sometimes I must have felt that it was rather harsh of me to send Vidit- who was a little more than eleven to a Boarding school, but deep down I knew that he was mentally ready to face a challenging yet fulfilling life in the environs of a boarding school.

It was 8<sup>th</sup> July 2017, when Vidit had to be dropped off. We didn't find him nervous, or even sentimental while leaving him at the Fort and I don't know from where, but he got the strength not to shed a single tear in front of us.

One day that I specifically remember about his younger days at the Fort is that he had succumbed to a high fever right before his first debate presentation in an Inter House Debate Competition and consequently couldn't get the permission to participate in it. But it was after he cried and pleaded to **Dr Bhakuni** and **Ms Puja Pant**, that they finally took him in and he, to his greatest surprise, won the

debate. Since then, I have seen Vidit move from strength to strength. He called us every week at home to talk about the new developments in his interests. He soon became the Junior House Prefect. Surely, it was the foresightedness of his Housemaster, **Ms Anita Pandey** and his teachers, that they recognized his uniqueness and cast some magic spell to help him bring out the best version of himself!

More recently, I recall, with a great sense of humility and a subtle sense of pride about the time when he delivered his speech on the Founder's Day of 2022. When he entered these hallowed portals and watched the Deputy Senior School Prefect giving his speech back in 2017, he had asked me then to give him six years to do the same. As I sat among the audience who had become teary-eyed listening to his promise to me, way back then; an episode that he mentioned therein, I recalled his promise which he has so wonderfully fulfilled.

During his six years at school he dabbled into and pursued several activities. He probably visited around 15 schools in the country for his IPSCs, Round Squares, Debates, Quizzes and what not and being with the children there, he sometimes came back with trophies and certificates but every time with a bag full of stories from schools all across India.

Out of nowhere and without telling anyone and I do not know how and really when, he started writing poetry. He could already write well in English and Hindi but to our surprise the school gave him the environment to self-teach himself a whole new language and a new genre of poetry- *Urdu*.

Today, when I see him as a confident young man, as a scholar and a fine orator, I feel that my decision to send him to The Scindia School was a right one. If he had not come here, perhaps, we as parents would never have been able to bring out these talents of his. He always speaks so highly about his teachers back in school, from his House Master- **Mr Srijith Pillai** to **Mr Vishesh Sahai** and so many other staff members who always engaged him in discussions and activities and allowed him to do what he actually loves- to explore and stretch his limits and live himself to the fullest.

**Dr Anjali Gupta** (Mother of Vidit Gupta, Je, 2023)



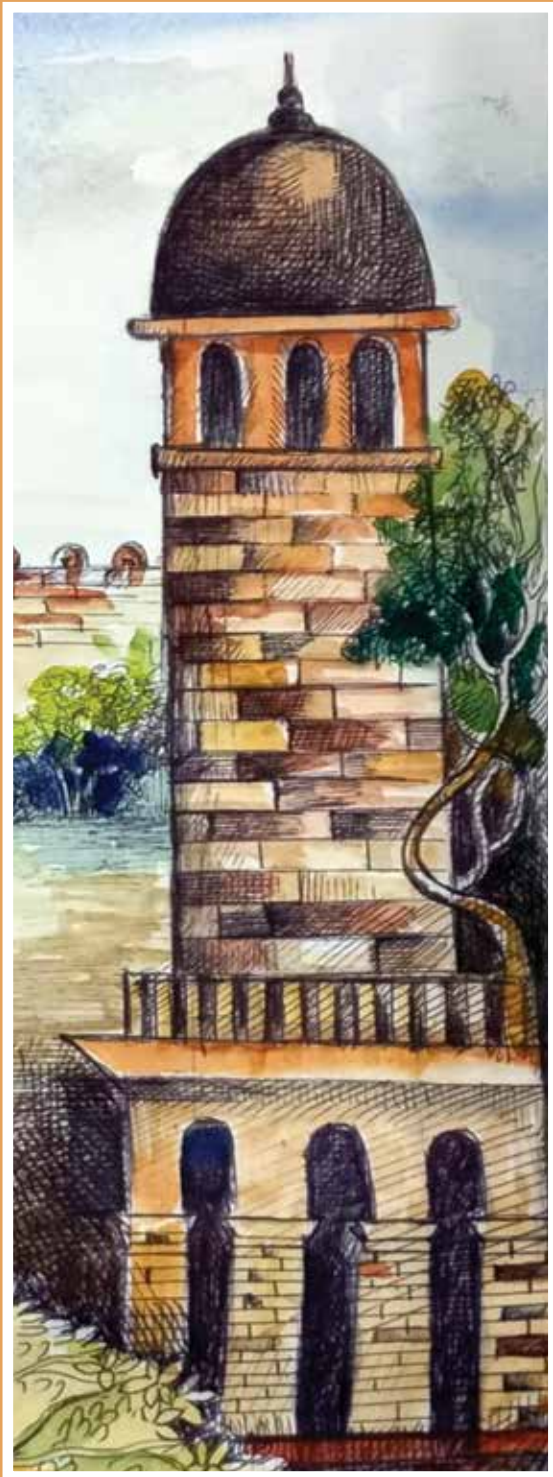
Vidit Gupta at the Scholar's Banquet



Vidit Gupta with his mother, Dr Anjali Gupta



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