



ASTACHAL

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A review of the Scindia Old Boys' Association

A NEW ERA BEGINS...



H.H. Jyotiraditya Scindia, President, Board of Governors, Scindia School presenting Madav Award to LT. Gen. S. P. S. Dhillon the incoming President, SOBA while Mr. G. S. Bakshi, Co-ordinator, Mr. N. K. Tewari, Principal and Mr. Sunil Bharti Mittal, CEO-Airtel, look on.

It's a pleasure to greet all of you fellow Scindian Old Boys, as I begin my term as President of the **Scindia School Old Boys' Association**. At the outset, I would like to thank all the previous Presidents of SOBA, for their leadership and commitment in taking this organisation so far. My special thanks to my predecessor, **Mr Rajnish Rai Kumar**, who along with his spirited team, has rejuvenated the SOBA while in office. They were instrumental in successfully organising numerous alumni programmes including the **Scindia 111**, held recently at Gwalior.

I feel privileged to serve as President at such an exciting and significant time in the history of our Alma Mater. With the School going through a major transformation, all of us have a significant role to play in its endeavour towards up-gradation of its infrastructure, and more importantly towards achieving academic excellence.

My team consists of the following members :-

- (a) Mr Vikram Mathur - Vice President
- (b) Mr Gopal Bhargava - Vice President
- (c) Mr Prashant Gangwal - Secretary
- (d) Mr K.M. Agrawal - Treasurer
- (e) Mr Sandeep Agrawal - Jt Secretary
- (f) All the Regional SOBA office bearers (who are also executive members of the Central SOBA).

All of us on the SOBA executive committee are a charged, enthusiastic and diverse group and we aim to focus our efforts and skills to further the good work that has been done so far by our predecessors. As your representatives, we would make every effort to carry out the charter by making SOBA more vibrant and visible, increase fellowship across the globe; developing a sense of pride among our alumni in contributing towards strengthening our social, cultural, welfare and sporting activities. We look forward to your whole-hearted participation in the afore-mentioned activities and renewal of your bonding with fellow Scindians.

We have numerous exciting activities planned as we begin our new era. I solicit your ideas and support and hope to meet many of you at the regional alumni events in your area. I also hope that you all will stay in touch with friends and classmates through our online SOBA website for alumni.

I extend my good wishes to you and your families. May the New Year bring happiness and prosperity to all.

Sincerely,

Lt Gen Samer Pal Singh Dhillon, AVSM, VSM

Celebrations Par Excellence

The School celebrated the Platinum Jubilee in 1972 and the Centenary Celebrations in 1997, which meant that the next mega event was only scheduled for 2022. It just seemed so far away. On both the occasions it was the School management that undertook all the responsibility of celebrations.

Mr. Niraj Lal, President SOBA (North America) suggested that the alumni take the onus and put together an event. So was coined SCINDIA 111 and it happened to be falling in 2008. A number of us from India, also members of the Central SOBA, were attending this convention. All were in agreement and so the die was cast.

The Scindia School, Gwalior celebrated its 111th Founder's Day on the 21st October 2008. The event was organised over three days on the Fort and in the city of Gwalior. The dates were 19-20-21 October '08...

It was christened **SCINDIA 111**.

Parents of present students are the alumni of the institution, along with their families, spread all across the country and abroad attended this function in big numbers. It was a gathering of over 1,500 people.

Day 1

On the afternoon of 19th October, the sequence of events was set alive by a display from School brass band playing number of tunes while marching in various formations in the school football field. The exhibition was much appreciated by one and all and the band received a very deserving thunderous applause. This was followed by a soccer match. (Students vs. Old Boys)

The boys (some not that old) from Class of '83 celebrating their Silver Anniversary of passing out the School, were the stars on the occasion. Their football Team 83 (38 players : 11 + 27 extras) turned out smartly attired in their designer soccer kits to take on the School XI. The game was kick started by **Mr. N.K.Tewari**, Principal, Scindia School. Needless, to mention who won. School XI ran over 11 + 27. For their spirit, credit must be given to the 83 Team who took an oath to beat the School XI hands down when they gather for their Golden Jubilee in 2033.

Next in line for the day was the most nostalgic venue of all — **Astachal**. A full house at the venue where Old Boys and their families gathered for the most sober moments of the day and of the two days to follow. It was just the same. A lovely view of the sunset, the devotional songs, moments of silence and you being with yourself. Most of the guys were wearing Kurta and Pyjama and would have walked straight back to their respective houses for PREP. Thank God, for the wives and

children enquiring of the venue / time for the cocktails and dinner. **Mr. R.S.Pawar**, Member, Board of Governors of the School gave an AV presentation at the venue, showcasing the future plans of developments being undertaken by the School and requested for active indulgence by the alumni.

After **Astachal**, we moved on to Kesharbagh where SOBA Premier League — a Cricket match between 7 teams from 7 different Regional SOBAs for the SPICE CUP was held — a



flood-light event full with commentary box (photo above) and other frills. The teams with their sponsors were : **Bangalore Challengers** (Radha Laxmi Contracts), **Kolkata Knight Riders** (Amrit Exports Pvt. Ltd.), **Gwalior Maharaja** (ing Vysa Life Insurance Co. Ltd.), **Agra Super Kings** (V.O.I.), **Nagpur Indians** (Wier Pumps Ltd.), **Delhi Dare Devils** (Root Cooling Systems Pvt. Ltd.) and **Kanpur Chargers** (S. Kumar). Photos along side.



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The Spice Cup was lifted by Gwalior Maharaja. (Photo below)



It was a thrilling event.

Day 2 started with the arrival of **Lt. Gen. S. P. S. Dhillion**, Deputy Chief of Army Staff who assumes the office of President, Central SOBA at the AGM to be held later in the day. (Photo below) An exhibition of dare-devil jawans in the Army with a display of Army paraphernalia was a much appreciated event.



The AGM was held before lunch at The Assembly Hall (photo below)



After the AGM, the next part of the celebrations was a fabulous MIKA SINGH NITE with Awards, drinks, dance and dinner. (Photos below)



Awards were given to a few deserving SOBAlites. **Mr. Surendra Mehrotra** was given Eminent SOBA Award by **Mr. K. K. Mathur**, Chief Guest of the evening. (Photo below)



The best SOBA chapter of the year went to Lucknow-Kanpur SOBA. (Photo below)



Mr. Prashant Gangwal, Secretary Central SOBA receiving guests at the Mika Nite.

Day 3

The Day 3 was the culmination of the grand SCINDIA 111. The Founders' Day function was held at the Shukla Memorial Open Air Theatre in which the Chief Guest was **Mr. Sunil Bharati Mittal**, CEO Airtel. The function was attended by present students, their parents and old boys with their families. The programme started by floral tributes to **Late H. H. Madhav Rao Scindia**. The cultural programme that followed included singing of the School Song, School orchestra, plays by School children. The Annual Awards were also given. This year the Madhav Award was given to **Lt. Gen. S. P. S. Dhillion**.

The concluding function was the grand dinner at the bunglow of the Principal, **Mr. N. K. Tewari**. Photos follow :



For the success of SCINDIA 111 special thanks go to **Rajneesh Rai Kumar**, the team leader who for the first time, had the courage to celebrate the 21st October Foundation Day under the banner of SOBA — planning, fund raising, execution and above all getting the involvement of over 600 old boys and their families. Hats off to Rajneesh and his band of enthusiastic SOBAs all over the world who got together to make this show a grand success. Another person who deserves our *vishal* thanks is **Prashant Gangwal** who thereon open the *vishal* gates of his *vishal* Kesharbagh lawns and hosted the Cricket Match with dressing rooms, commentary box and what not. We also thank all our sponsors who supported us in this three-day event and made it so very memorable.



Pavan Kaula... Soaring High



Pavan Kaula

Today, lets catch up with a Scindian who has scaled new heights of achievement... **PAVAN KAULA.**

Coming events cast their shadows in advance. This couldn't be more true than in the case of Pavan Kaula, Madhav 1976.

Pavan's tryst with aviation started as a child when he went to their farm in Devanahalli in Bangalore and was enamored by the flying activity at Jakkur airfield.

Later, reading about Burt Rutan, during school days, he kept his passion and his dreams alive. The high point was his visit, in 1991 to Oshkosh in the US, which is the Mecca of aviation enthusiasts.

His dreams took concrete shape when, for his personal transport, Pavan built the Long EZ aircraft, a canard layout type of aircraft designed by Burt Rutan. For the uninitiated, Burt Rutan is one of the world's greatest Ruta Aerospace designers and the Long EZ falls under the experimental aircraft category.

Settled in Coonoor now, Pavan has 10,000 hours of flying experience. He started with training as a glider pilot in Delhi, worked with Tata Steel, set up a Glider Club for them and also served as the instructor for the



flying club in Jamshedpur, before moving on to Singapore Airlines to fly the Boeing 747-400s.

Presently, Pavan is focused on building a Glass Air III as Zephyr in his fabrication unit which also works for the DRDO. He carries out R & D work in the hardware and software aspects of aviation.

Pavan's dream is to see more and more Indian's flying their personal planes and he feels that for this, youngsters need to be inspired. One way to begin would be to set up Adventure Clubs in schools to popularize ultra light flying, para-sailing and aircraft building and maintenance. Hope the Scindia School Board is listening...

More on him at this link: <http://www.hindu.com/mag/2007/05/27/stories/2007052750190700.htm>



This Scindian, a keen Golfer, plays at our SOBA Delhi Golf Championship on 27-2-09. Thereafter, you can catch him at the Alumni Dinner - The Raj Rif Mess.

Pawan Bansal
Delhi SOBA

Nalin Mehta's Book Launched

Nalin Mehta (Ranoji, 1996) book, **India on Television: How Satellite News Channels Changed the Way We Think and Act** was launched on 15th July, 2008 by Hon'ble Minister **Oscar Fernandes** in presence of **Rajdeep Sardesai** of CNN-IBN and other media personalities. The book is a fabulous study of Indian TV. Nalin Mehta worked with NDTV for a few years before moving on to Australia to pursue his PhD. After coming back to India, now Dr. Nalin Mehta, he worked with Times Now for a short while and is now working with the United Nations. You can contact him at nalinnikki@gmail.com

3 Scindians Launch a TV Channel

Voice of India, a true blue news channel which has recently been launched is a brainchild of three Scindians — **Sumit Mittal** (Jyotibha, 1985), **Madhu Mittal** (Jyotibha, 1990) and **Rahul Kulshreshtha** (Ranoji, 1989). The channel which focusses on people's issues and brings to you your news and opinions, was launched on 1st August, 2008. They have plan to launch four more channels:

(1) Voice of India MP/Chattisgarh, (2) Voice of India Rajasthan, (3) Voice of India, Bangla and (4) VOI Millionaire, Asia's First Luxury Channel.

To meet the manpower requirements of these channels they have also launched ISMS — an Institute for Media Studies.

Commonwealth Games

The Commonwealth Games 2010 will be held in New Delhi. The Commonwealth Games torch has begun from Meerut. **Banjul Badil**, a SOBAite from Meerut (Jayaji, 1988) is seen carrying the torch wearing a SOBA T-Shirt.



Banjul Badil has now relocated to Panaji, Goa and welcomes any Scindian wanting to holidaying in Goa. 3 cheers for Banjul Badil.

Ameen Sayani

We congratulate Madhav Awardee **Ameen Sayani**, the radio broadcasting wizard, who has been conferred the coveted Padma Shri by the President of India.



Kanpur SOBA

Welcome General

Sunday, 11th January, 2009 dawned bright and sunny. This was D-day as members of Kanpur SOBA had been eagerly awaiting the visit of Central SOBA President **Lt. Gen. Samer Pal Singh Dhillon**. Morning was reserved for a live presentation — "LIFE IN THE OLIVE GREEN", to motivate youngsters and to offer an insight of the Armed Forces as a career option; evening, a grand gala dinner at the exotic Golf Club. About 1,200 students with their parents waited patiently at the Lajpat Bhawan Auditorium. Their patience was well rewarded as Lt. Gen. Dhillon very successfully showcased the Indian Army highlighting the varied advantages it offers as compared to the corporate sector. The perfectly and expertly packaged presentation was a true and vivid portrayal of what life in the Armed Forces is all about.



Dignitaries on the dais

The lively interactive session, thereafter, proved the success of the presentation. The General was bombarded with volleys of questions shot by the enthusiastic participants aged between 16-22 years. National spirit of patriotism was on an all time high as the programme ended on a positive note. Immense coverage by all local dailies further added to the popularity of the event.

Kudos to our **Rajiv Batia** alongwith The Indus Entrepreneurs UP (TIE UP) President **Anil Gupta** and

Gaurav Vaidya, member TIE UP for the excellent arrangements. Thereafter, **Rajiv Batia** hosted lunch at his residence.

For the evening get-together, old boys assembled with *crème de la crème* of Kanpur at the legendary Golf Club. On arrival of our esteemed guest, the General, the meeting was called to order by Kanpur SOBA President, **Gopal**



President Kanpur SOBA, **Gopal Bhargava** presenting a memento to SOBA President **Lt. Gen. SPS Dhillon**.

Bhargava. After the School Song, the President welcomed the old boys and guests from Gwalior, Lucknow, Delhi and Varanasi. The esteemed guest list consisted of **Lt. Gen. S. P. S. Dhillon** (President, SOBA), **Mr. Arun Kanodia** (B.O.G.), **Mr. Rajnish Rai Kumar** (I.P.P.), **Mr. Kishan Arora**, **Mr. Ashish Burman** (Ex-Mem), **Mr. Pawan Gupta**, **Mr. Gopal Bhargava** (V.P. SOBA), **Mr. S.S. Boora** (Ex-Mem), **Mr. Prashant Gangwal** (SOBA, Secretary), **Mr. G.S. Bakshi** (SOBA, Co-ordinator) and Lucknow SOBA President **Mr. Rajiv Kapoor**.

Thereafter, **Vikas Arora** Secretary, Kanpur SOBA shared the report of Activities and Achievements of past 3 years.

For dedicated services, Secretary **Vikas Arora** and Treasurer **Vineet Awasthi** were honoured by the Kanpur SOBA, awards being presented by the General.

In his key note address, the General outlined the future activities of SOBA.

The meeting being a signature sign off by President Kanpur SOBA and his team, new office bearers to carry the Kanpur SOBA flag forward **Shrawan Lakhotia** and **Vineet Awasthi** were elected President and Secretary respectively.

The meeting ended with pleasantries to the Guests and a vote of thanks after which all proceeded for drinks and dinner.

The evening ended with music 'n masti, drinks 'n dinner.

SOBA North America

SOBA activities in North America got rejuvenated in 2003 and the distance traversed since then has made us all well connected and closer to each other in N America. What is even more encouraging is that SOBA in India has really taken off with SOBA Central and all chapters really vibrant and continuously engaging in a series of activities.

After the grand event in Niagara in 2006, SOBA (N.A.) has been in little of a slumber in the recent past. We of course, did have the unique inaugural Pan Public Alumni Event in November 2006 in New York and some of the regular SOBA Networking meetings. But, we all know that we are meant for much much more.

It is time for some fresh set of people, ideas and action to join the SOBA (N.A.) team and build on the strong initial foundation set. Pan Public School Alumni Networking and joint events have immense possibilities. N America is ideally suited for it and SOBA has the natural leadership in it. It is

very encouraging that Scindia School Principal **Mr N. K. Tewari** is now the Chairman of the Indian Public School Conference. SOBA Chapters in India and other parts of the world are eager for more engagement and interaction from all of us.

Niraj and **Jitendra** would love to continue being involved with SOBA as before, but SOBA(NA) looks forward to many more energetic, dedicated and passionate team members who feel the drive from within, are committed and want to cherish and expand the unique gifts of great friendships and relationships that SOBA brings. All we can share from personal experiences is that the relationships, learning and interactions that SOBA offers are unique and enriching. One gets to be a close part of a warm welcoming family spread all over N.America, and the world. Please contact :

Niraj M. Lal, President SOBA NA, Email : nlal@totalpac.ca, Cell: 647-248-5999 and/or **Jitendra Muchhal**, Secretary SOBA NA, Email : jmmuchhal@hotmail.com, Cell : 917.941.0493

Lt. Gen. S. P. S. Dhillon

Sir, for the record, we'd like you to give your name, the year you joined, and the year you passed out.

I am Samer Pal Singh Dhillon. I joined the School in 1960 and passed out in '65. In '66 January, after passing out, I joined the National Defence Academy, from which I graduated to the Indian Military Academy and got commissioned in the Indian Army in the regimental artillery in the year 1969 December. Ever since then I have been in the regiment of artillery and today with the grace of God the and also what I learnt in Scindia and the values I cherish, I have risen to where I am as Deputy Chief Of Army Staff as of today.

What are the values you imbibed while you were in school — values that have made you what you are today?

Actually, if I recall, from what I have seen and how I have applied it, in various fields, I think the most important thing was the indianness of the School in which it gave me the strength to interact with anybody without getting over-awed. Right from the President of India to a common man on the street, I think Scindia teaches you not to get over-awed by people because you interacted right from the blue-blood to the common man. The school itself is number one. Number two in the indianness part is our culture, our civilisation, our *sabhyata*, our *parampara*, which we value so much over here. They have stood the test of time outside too. Because, when I have interacted with various people, I have interacted more with Indians rather than outsiders, so I am part of anybody in India and very happy to be so. Next, the values or the character qualities which I have imbibed from School have helped me in my career in particular. If I recall a great saying that "the battle of Waterloo was won on the playfields in Eton, I can put it surely I have won my battles in the playfields of Scindia. I learnt here what camaraderie is all about, what brotherhood is all about, what team spirit is all about. How to go ahead and carry the team with you. What truthfulness is all about, what honesty is all about and what hardwork is all about. The same values have made me achieve what I achieved in School — without looking for reward. To be honest, rewards keep coming and going but your internal content comes from what you do and what you achieve from within.

Sir, Scindia has provided a lot of Alumni to the services. Some very distinguished ones who have already retired, some are currently serving. What is your message to the current Scindians who aspire to be in the services?

Actually, for most of us who have either retired or are in the senior ranks, the major reason or the motivation for joining the services was after India just gained its independence, we had two wars, ['47, '48], when we were not even born, with Pakistan. Then this war with China and with Pakistan again. All these things put a spirit on Nationhood in us and we

thought we need to do better in this field and we need quality leadership also to go into these fields and to get the pride of the country back. So it is more of the national spirit, the pride that we wanted, the way of life which was appealing to us, to be a sportsman — to be more active in life and the quality which was anticipated. I being the son of an army officer had seen it to that extent — that was another factor which influenced my decision. I would also give this credit to my housemaster then — Mr. Mukherjee whom I asked what would be best for me. Seeing my character traits he said "I think there's nothing else better than Army for you". And I took that advice.

Talking of Mr. Mukherjee, there is an anecdote that is attached to you, five or six of your batchmates confessed, in ditto, with comma fullstop — and every word separately to Mr Mukherjee and he was baffled. I believe that was disclosed when you passed out ultimately, sir, I would like you to confess today to all the Scindians.

You know we did something naughty then. Frankly, I would not like to tell what we did. So, Mr Mukherjee knew I was the person behind it but he could not pin point. And like I told you about the spirit camaraderie and of brotherhood — nobody complained about anybody, nobody put a blaming finger on anybody. But he wanted to pinpoint it on me. So he called all of us and made us sit in a room, and sent us to another room where some sheets of paper were lying and we were supposed to write down whatever had happened. So suddenly something came to my mind — that we will be caught if we all write differently what we had done. And the situation came when generally people write what they have seen. So what I did? I took a ballpoint pen, put sheets of paper one on top of the other, pressed the pen hard and wrote so that the imprint was left on the next piece of paper. I went and submitted my paper to Mr Mukherjee. So the next guy who went inside saw the imprint on the paper and he wrote the



same thing. The third chap to go inside he saw the imprint on his piece of paper and he again wrote the same thing. So Mr Mukherjee thought he really had a chance ... later on he realized that everyone had given in the same confession — to the fullstops and commas. He was so baffled and he forgot about the incident and started investigating how this could have happened? Subsequently, when I met Mr Mukherjee later in life, he asked me this. Then I confessed to him about what we had actually done.

Sir, talking about the life in Scindia, your most memorable moments.

Actually I was average in studies, my day time was spent in arts and crafts — wood carving, clay modeling, stone carving and also sketching — those were the moments that I liked. I somehow became a very good footballer. The number of goals I could score in a match was not even funny. Even in the final match that we played with the school goalkeeper and the opposing team, we scored six goals and I managed to score four out of them. So it is just one of those moments — and then playing for the School, thereafter. And winning against - College and the others gave me satisfaction. School, goals, the football team, the athletics field, again I excelled in long jump and hop step & jump and relays. I won all those and it gave me tremendous happiness. It is actually a sense of achievement. And you know how boys are — sportsmen are heroes for them and you suddenly become a hero also then. Later on when I left and joined the Army I thought I was leaving it for good as I could leave studies which I was not very fond of. Believe me I have had more studies to do after Scindia than while I was in it. So if anyone thinks you can get away with studies you are very wrong! I think that's not the right thing.

The Efficiency shield for the first time? When the record was broken and Jayaji lost the efficiency to your batch. I would like you to reflect on that...

Yeah actually that's one of the most memorable moments, frankly. I was the house prefect and we had done well in most of the games, and we had done well in academics. We had also got the Cariappa Shield and some other very good prizes. And on the open air theatre, Rajmataji, when she was giving the efficiency shield, it was to be given to our house. She gave

it very very reluctantly, mind if I say that, as she could not realize anybody else other than Jayaji House or anybody from Madhav House can get the Efficiency shield. She spoke about it for about two-three minutes, now how can some other house get it? But the record said quite clearly that Ravindra, the new house, has won the shield and it was actually a very special moment in my life and I can't forget it easily.

Concluding the interview, I would like to ask you — now that you are taking the reigns of SOBA as President, SOBA has come a long way. So what are your plans and visions for SOBA for the next few years?

What I feel is, after you pass out from Scindia, your bonding with Scindia remains the same as it was earlier. There is a time in society when you want to give back a little also. Mine would be to make Scindia more attractive, to help it in anyway I can- with a team of course! which I'll have to select very well because there are ones who go to do the ground work and they have done a tremendous amount of work in the last four years, I have seen. My interaction would be with the Board of Governors for commonality of purpose and direction. Improve infrastructure, improve the quality in Scindia itself — now what do I mean by that! Frankly, the quality that one looks for in a school — good education, good living condition for children, good living conditions for the teachers, motivating Principal! Some areas maybe lacking, it never is always the best. There is always scope for improvement. So we take a stock in which fields we can improve now, we prioritize them — because there will be financial boundaries, and make Scindia more attractive. The aim is, in the next ten years' time, let us not talk about it ourselves but let people say that Scindia is the best school in India. And maybe in twenty years from now, lets talk about making Scindia one of the best in the world. So that is the mission that we have set for ourselves, I have set for myself. I'll try motivate the team, I'll try and travel a lot, meet people, wherever they are, the Old Boys, and try to extract whatever I can from them.

Sir, last question. After passing out close to 43 years now, you must have come across schoolmates, housemates, batchmates. What were



The General and Mrs. Deepak Dhillon with His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck the 4th King of Bhutan, during the recent coronation of his son.



The Bhutan Govt acknowledged the presence of our General and Ma'am by issuing 3 commemorative stamps of Ngultrum 5, Ngultrum 10 and Ngultrum 15. The Ngultrum is pegged to the India rupee.

your reactions when you met them after so long a time, you had spent a good part of your life with them, and now you are meeting them after so long.

Actually, its really very emotional to meet old colleagues and old friends. Without getting emotional about it, I think there is nothing like old schoolmates to meet. I can simply put it as that. Its lifetime relationships. And frankly, some of the things that I have spoken about today, including the goal-scoring and all — its one of my colleagues from school who I met after thirty years who mentioned this to me — that you were taken in the school team, and because of those goals you proved yourself in life. So they really know you. And having met them, I really wish I had a time-machine. Even for a few days, if I could roll time back and get back to Scindia as a schoolboy, I think there'll be nothing more rewarding than that.

I take this opportunity to welcome you to Kolkata

and let us play the host for once. We look forward to you visit to Kolkata

I assure you I will be visiting all the SOBA associations where ever they are in their own turf. I will be interacting with the old boys personally. I am being very honest with you that's one of the targets I have set for myself while I am in service or out of it. I have still time to go. So that I can get your minds clearly on. Actually you are the ones who are going to give the direction, I am only going to interface between the functionaries here and what you feel I'll translate those feelings without fear because I have lived a fearless life myself till now in a career where you speak what you feel like speaking and what you do what you have to do you can't mince words. So what you feel I'll take the gist of it and the assence of it translate the thing into reality.

Thank you so much.

Rajnish & Rasika

Rajneesh, it has been two eventful years at the helm of SOBA as president. Could you just sum it up? How painful was it?

No pain at all, it was big fun. See it was coming all from my heart for the love for the School I went to — which was so dear to me, my best friends come from there. So it is all big fun, no pain at all.

How did you come across the School? How did you get admitted to the School? Could you just throw some light on it?

I belong to Amritsar and there's a boy by the name of **Kirti Arora**. He's much senior to me. His father and my father were good friends. And he was studying at the Scindia School and he happened to be home one day for dinner with his parents. He was the school captain then and so my mom just mentioned to him that "Kirti your younger brothers are still here, don't you think they should be joining you in the Scindia School?" And he said "Aunty why not. Why don't you get him to give the exam this year itself?" And we packed bags and came over to give the exam, though we were a little late. The President then was requested and he agreed, and me and my

brother, we the exam and joined the School. And my younger brother **Vipul** and me joined together. He joined in class 3 and I joined in class 4.

So right from 4th standard to 12th standard. Okay, now I have to ask you Rasika, you have to bear a lot of the brunt. So what is your take on his being the President SOBA for all these years?

To be very honest, its been no different for me. Okay, because I knew Rajneesh for 10 years before I married him and I have been married to him for 14 years now — so that span is a long time. And the thing is that he was as passionate about Scindia from the first day I met him. I wasn't, to be honest, but after 14 years, I am a little bit converted. But the thing is that he's always been like this and he always wanted to be here every 21st of October without fail. So, for me its just been no change at all because we've been as involved when he was the President as when he wasn't. So whether it was organizing the Delhi SOBA dinners or events or organizing a camp or something or the other something was always taking his time. And you know my favourite line to him always is that if I die it shouldn't be around the 21st of October because he obviously won't be there! So that sort of sums it up. And I don't think life's going to be very different after that as well. And sometimes I also think that may be our marriage has survived because of that because in the evenings he doesn't have time to talk to me because he busy with SOBA work and in the morning I am not there and weekends the SOBA work is on, so that's why I think we've lasted 14 years.

Does he bring the SOBA work home? I mean is it restricted to his office only or it a 24x7 kind of a thing?

He works a lot from home and all that work is around SOBA work only. I have not seen him do anything else. So if he does anything else its during the time that I am not home, because I work as well. So obviously the other work that he does gets about three to four hours, the rest of the day goes into SOBA work.



Rajneesh, what you plan for the SOBA chapter every year in the SOBA family as such is like leaving imprints on sand. What is your opinion on it? In the SOBA meetings you are there, there is a lot of appreciation. So what do you say about the various talk in SOBA hereafter.

I am more than hopeful that when I took over SOBA as President of the organization I think, on a scale of zero to ten, we have come to two or so I think there is a lot more we can do. And with the new team coming in and with the new ideas, I think we can push it even further. We need a scope that we'll go for. We started the stepping stones have been laid but there is much that we can do and I am very much sure that this is going to happen in the coming years

[Rasika] But considering it was a job that nobody wanted and it was a job where people are actually willing to take it on and take it forI think that is an achievement in itself.

Accha, you would be having some message for the new team that is coming in? You will still be in the executive committee for the whole term, so any new message? Because you will no longer be driving the ship anymore, so what directions would you like to take?

As our constitution says, the Past President happens to be a part of the committee for the next two years. And it is a great thing that has happened to SOBA that the new President who is taking over the reigns of SOBA is **Lt. General Sameer Pal Singh Dhillon**. He is the Deputy Chief of Army Staff as of today. A someone of that level of caliber, I am sure he's going to take SOBA much forward. His vision, his driving force is going to lead this organization to much greater heights. I am so much more happy that somebody of this

caliber has come in, that is going to push this whole thing up to great heights.

Rasika, the general perception is that wife, who is married to a Scindian old boy, in most of the meetings or even in the family she is going to be lost, as this man is heart and soul, hook line and sinker with SOBA and with Scindia. So what is your advice to the new wives coming into the family, and to other wives who have not yet joined the band wagon as yet and are sitting on the sidelines.

See, I think the basic decision comes from the fact that do you want to live with this man for the rest of your life and if you have taken that decision, you have no choice but to love Scindia or leave it. If you leave Scindia then you leave him as well, there's no way out. So once you learn that and you accept it, I think the best thing to do is, you find your own associations within the Scindia family because the Scindians are not about themselves, they also have families, wives, children and I think we've all found quite a good group and we get along really well together. So now we don't need the guys to be, you know, coming and asking after us. And we've made our own association, which is very interesting and great fun and I have made wives. In fact last time I was telling them let's opens a wives' SOBA Association. And that should keep the fun element going amongst ourselves and that's how it is, you know. Everytime we meet, we don't bother with our husbands, we just let them get on with it, and we find our own things to do. That's what is sort of made me bear it. The first two years were very tough. My advice to every Scindian wife is, that if you have tolerated it for two years, then you'll get through the next 25 years.

Thank you very much both of you.

Bravo, Scindia!

Mr. N. K. Tewari, Principal, Scindia School has been nominated as the Chairman Inter Public School Conference for the period 2009-11. It is a matter of great honor and privilege and we wish him all success.

At the 69th All India Public Schools Conference hosted by The Scindia School was a great success and was highly appreciated by the heads of institution who had gathered here from all over India.

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Letters to the Editors

Astachal...

I came across one of your issues of *Astachal*. I would like to subscribe for the same. Please inform me the amount payable to enable me to do the needful.

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Yours etc.

Kamal Kumar Barjatya, Rajshri Pictures (P) Ltd., Mumbai

Scindia Revisited

— Naresh Mantri (*Ranoji '68-'69*)

As we, **Neel Madhav Roy** and yours truly, drove down the Urvai Ghati that winter afternoon, a sense of *déjà vu* filled us. And why not? For after all these years, *bandhan aur bandish se chutkara mil raha hai*. We were stepping out into the big “bad” world, from which we had been kept secluded all these years, in a world of our own, far from the maddening crowd. In our mid-teens, we were ready to face the world, with all its vagaries and eccentricities. Brimming with confidence, we literally vowed never to return to this place (though, as fate would have it, some smart alec in Doon School leaked a paper and we had to come back to re-write that a month later). We did, however, keep a tryst with destiny and this year made, what I would call a pilgrimage, a trip to School for the Class of '68 get-together.

Forty years had passed since then, and the drive up Urvai Ghati brought back memories of all our journeys, official and unofficial, during our days at the School. Stepping out of the car at *Teli ka Mandir*, we strode down the road towards the Main Building, holding hands. Kid stuff?

No.... It was for real. We just wished to relive the moments we spent there, and one of them was when all of us walked together, *t h i s w a y*. Memories came flooding back, and the dash towards the Assembly Hall was automatic. Morning time, and we had to rush, *a n d t h a t i s p r e c i s e l y w h a t w e d i d*. Funny, how old habits DO NOT DIE.

From here, it was just a journey down memory lane. Khan Saheb's

Geography class, Sahi Saheb's English class, the workshops and hobbies area, the Library, Chemistry and Physics labs, the biology classroom, et al. The benches where we used to sit and who used to sit where, came flooding back as if it was just yesterday. How could we remember all those names, most of whom were nothing but memories? Faces long forgotten?

While the group from Kolkata were travelling for this visit, there was just one demand, "Kisi tarah woh "saada" evam "pulao" ki vyavastha karni hogi!" And the next day, when we did have "saada" for lunch, the unanimous cry was "yeh woh wala "saada" nahin hain", as if we did remember what it tasted like then. No way, we did remember that taste! And the search for "khurchan" in the "pulao" bowl prompted a young lady (probably the wife of a recent old boy) to ask "What is this 'khurchan'?" How do I explain? But I did manage to convince her it was something we fought for, and that it was definitely missing from today's "pulao". A very knowing smile crossed her lips, as if she understood what we were all capable of. (After all, she had a Scindian at home to take care of, and a Scindian will always be a Scindian, no matter what!).

The celebrations started with the "Astaachal". As I sat on the hallowed steps with the sun setting behind the hills in front, my eyes closed and I was transformed to the young boy for whom this was but a routine, to be attended to avoid punishment. Not today. I was in fact reflecting on what I had got from my days at the School. What was the significance of "Astaachal" and how it has helped me in life? The short sessions of music, reading of a story or quote, the parables narrated and explained! I tried to sum it all up when I was speaking there, "It taught us to align ourselves with the Almighty, represented by the setting sun, which sets, to return again full of vigour..." We were taught never to give up hope, when the chips are down or the going gets tough, and to fight back with renewed zeal and confidence. This is what makes a man. Brave. Confident. The never say die attitude. This explains the number of Scindians in the Armed Forces echelons!

Another surprising fact which came to light was the bonding that we all shared, within the batch or the house group. There were 6 of 10 from Ranoji House present there, and it had to be seen to be believed, and how we clung on to each other, just not letting go, afraid one of us may get lost again. What was it that helped this bond to grow? As I had said at "Astaachal", the staying together, the sharing of everything we had — the joys and sorrows, the 'tuck' and food, only helped develop the bond which is otherwise to be found in siblings only. We were nothing less than siblings, and this was evident. We missed each other all these years, each being busy and involved in a world of his own. But coming back here, we were those young kids who ragged, pulled legs, and wanted to stay together. That we missed those days, was summed up when one of us walked up to Mr. Verma, the present House-master, and asked "Sir, can I stay back here?" What a feeling!

If it was not bonding, then what was it that prompted **Neeraj Lal** (Ja) to sound the bugle (pooo...pu..pu..poooooooh!) and fly all the way down from Toronto. **Anil Ghai** (Md) to take it up and marshal his forces to the School, **Sanjeev Katpalia** (Ja) to come in from Istanbul. **Shivanand Prasad** (Ja), though a year senior, wound up work and flew in from London. **Matish Shah** (Rn) came from Chennai. **Shankar Shrivastava** (Ma) reportedly bullied his senior into granting him leave. **Ali Latif** and **Anil Gupta** (both Rn) made a "quickie" from Delhi. **Ajay Singh** (Sh) drove in from Indore. **Virendra Guleria** (Ja) was there too. **Uday Phalke** (Rn) rushed in from Nagpur. **Bhaskar Narain** and **Ajay Patodia** (both Ch) came in from Jaipur and Delhi respectively. And we did miss those who could not make it. I particularly missed **Prakash Desai** and **Dinesh Singh** (both Ja), **Aditya Birla**, **B. P. Singh** and **Harish Wadhvani** (all Rn), **Ashok Lohia** and **Jimmy Dastur** (both Md), **Ajay Kichlu** and **Rakesh Bothra** (both Sh), **Rajeev Somani** and **Samir Amin** (both Ch) and **Naresh Mitna** and **Aditya Narain** (both Rv)

When I was asked to write this piece, my feeling was that since it was "our" get-together, each of us present there should contribute. Requests were made to all and as **Aly Latif** (Rn) wrote back "It was too personal an experience and I would like it to remain like that. I just can't share my experiences." Sure Aly, it was moving. But **Nand Taparia** (Rn) wrote back "When friends meet it's only to catch up on the time lost between the two meets. Moreover, in schools like Scindia every one has the same status and each one of us was at par, that made us to behave like we did. Although we did bully or tease each other but it was more for the sake of fun and nothing else. The mischief of school days are also inherited at the School which we pass on to the newcomers and the younger generation redefines or polishes such acts for more 'shararats'. Remember while at the Fort we were walking under the scorching sun but we hardly complained, b'coz we had the shelter of our friends. The diet we ate was handsome looking at the portions that we ate. It was b'coz of the excellent company of our mates. Moreover, I feel our group of 6 Ranojians were on Cloud 9." This very much explains the bonding factor, doesn't it. And **Uday Phalke's** was the best, "This has given me the energy to live for at least the next ten years so that we meet at our Golden Jubilee". So long friends!!!

Camaraderie is explained, but then what did we get from Scindia? What makes Scindia so special in our lives? Why did I have to say that I am more of a Scindian than a Xaverian, where I spent more years vis-à-vis Scindia. Just one sentence sums it all up, "Scindia made us, not men, but human beings." Hats off to Scindia!!!!

While I write this, I take the liberty, on behalf of all my batch mates to bow our heads in salutation to all our teachers, wherever they may be, in reverence thanking them for making us what we are today. Thank you, Sirs!

श्वासों का आयाम से प्राणायाम तक

— सुजीत पाल
योगाचार्य, सिधिया स्कूल



हमारे जीवन का आधार श्वास है और प्राण जीवन स्वरूप है। इस विषय को समझने के लिए हमें कई स्तरों पर समझना पड़ेगा। जन्म से लेकर मृत्यु तक हमारी यात्रा के बीच हमारा जीवन है, उसमें हम 24 घन्टे में एक दिन व एक रात्रि बिताते हैं और खो देते हैं हमारे जीवन की अमूल्य सम्पदा 21,600 श्वासों को। यह हमारे जीवन की पूँजी है जिसको योगियों ने समझा और समाज को योग विद्या दी और जिसके द्वारा मनुष्य अपना जीवन दीर्घायु, आत्तिकज्ञान युक्त और मुक्त तक कर लेता है।

21,600 श्वासों को समझना चाहिए। यह ठीक-ठीक चलें तो हमारा जीवन 100 वर्ष की आयुवाला होगा और यदि 24 घन्टे में 21,600 से कम श्वास चलें तो 100 से ज्यादा आयुवाला होगा, और यदि ज्यादा श्वास चले तो 100 से कम आयुवाला होगा।

हम सामान्य स्तर पर श्वास नाक से लेते हैं और छोड़ते हैं, और कभी-कभी जरूरत पड़ने पर यह मुख से भी लिया और छोड़ा जाता है। पर विभिन्न मार्ग से श्वासों को लेने और छोड़ने का जो परिणाम होता है, वह विशेष है, और अलग-अलग भी। हमारे नाक में दो छिद्र हैं, पर उसमें तीन तरह का श्वास बहता है — जिन्हें इड़ा, पिंगला और सुषुम्ना (श्वर और नाड़ी भी) कहा जाता है। बायीं नाक की ओर से बहने वाली श्वास को इड़ा, दाहिने नाक की ओर से बहने वाली श्वास को पिंगला और दोनों नाक से बहने वाली श्वास को सुषुम्ना कहते हैं।

शरीर में बहत्तर हजार (72,000) नाड़ियाँ होती हैं। उनमें दस प्रधान नाड़ियाँ हैं। उन दस में यह तीन (इड़ा, पिंगला, सुषुम्ना) उत्तम हैं। बाकी सातों का नाम और शरीर में उनका स्थान इस प्रकार है — गान्धारी बायीं आँख में, हस्तिजिह्वा दाहिनी आँख में, पुषा दाहिने कान में, यशस्विनी बाये कान में, अलंबुषा मुख में, कुहु लिंग देश में, शंखिनी गुदा स्थान में विद्यमान रहता है।

हम पहले कह चुके हैं कि 24 घन्टे में हमारी 21,600 श्वासों को लेना और छोड़ना एक सहज प्रक्रिया है। जो 48 मिनट बायीं नाक से और 48 मिनट दायीं नाक से बहता है। जब एक-दूसरे में बदलता रहता है, तो थोड़े समय के लिए दोनों नाक में बहने लगता है। इसका प्रभाव हमारे जीवन में दिखाई देता है और इतनी चर्चा हम करना चाहते हैं। हमारी स्वाभाविक श्वासों की गति या परिमाण बारह (12) अंगुल का होता है, पर भोजन या वमन (उल्टी) के समय अठारह (18) अंगुल का होता है, चलते समय चौबीस (24), दौड़ते समय ब्यालिस (42), स्त्री प्रसंग में पैंसठ (65) और सोते समय सौ (100) अंगुल का होता है।

इसी तरह से हमारा श्वास विभिन्न कार्यों द्वारा क्षीण हो जाता है। उसे योगी लोगों ने देखा-जाना और योग-विद्या द्वारा समाज का कल्याण

भी किया। जिसकी चर्चा अब हम करेंगे — पहले श्वासायाम फिर प्राणायाम।

जिस समय हमारा श्वास इड़ा नाड़ी यानि कि बायीं ओर से चलती है, उस समय हमारा शरीर शीतलता को प्राप्त करता है, और जिस समय हमारा श्वास पिंगला नाड़ी यानि कि दाहिनी ओर चलती है, उस समय हमारा शरीर उष्णता को प्राप्त करता है, और जब श्वास सुषुम्ना नाड़ी यानि कि दोनों नाक से चलने लगती है तो शरीर समता को प्राप्त हो जाता है। एक बात और जानना चाहिए कि इड़ा और पिंगला में श्वासों का प्रवाह होता है, और सुषुम्ना में प्राण का प्रवाह होता है। इसीलिए प्राणायाम के अभ्यास के पहले नाड़ी-शुद्धि (अनुलोम-विलोम) किया जाता है।

श्वास और प्राण का जो अन्तर है, उसे कहने के पहले दो बातें और कहना चाहूँगा कि जीव शिव है, और शिव का एक नाम प्राण भी है। इसलिए मृत्यु के समय प्राण के शरीर से निकलने के बाद जीवन समाप्त हो जाता है। पर जीवित अवस्था में श्वास तो आती-जाती है, उससे जीवत्मा को कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता। परन्तु प्राण के अभाव में जीवन समाप्त हो जाता है। जिसका स्थान हृदय में है, और गीता में कहा गया है कि ईश्वर सबके हृदय में रहते हैं। अतः हमारा प्राण जीवत्मा और शिव स्वरूप ईश्वर भी है।

दूसरी बात मनुष्य शरीर का दूसरा रूप अर्धनारीश्वर भी है। जिसका बायाँ भाग नारी और दाहिना भाग पुरुष स्वरूप है। प्रमाण के रूप में देखें तो पायेंगे कि बायीं श्वास शरीर को शीतलता और दाहिना उष्णता (गरम) प्रदान करता है जो कि शरीर के लिए आवश्यक है। और इसी प्रकार श्वासों के जरिए पुत्र-कन्या का भी जन्म होता है। यह ज्ञान-विज्ञान एक योगी अच्छी प्रकार जानता है। गर्भ धारण को हमारे 16 संस्कारों में प्रथम संस्कार माना गया और मृत्यु के बाद दाह को अन्तिम संस्कार माना गया है।

एक बात और है गर्भ की अवस्था को योगी प्रथम जन्म और समाधि की अवस्था को मृतवत् मानते हैं। जिस के बाद योगी को जन्म-मृत्यु और जीवन को ज्ञान हो जाता है। ध्यान के द्वारा योगी लोगो ने गर्भ की अवस्था को गहराई से समझा और पाया कि गर्भ अवस्था में जीव का प्राण शरीर के अन्दर में ही विचरण करता है। श्वास चलता ही नहीं, सिर्फ प्राण का प्रवाह रहता है नाक के अन्दर, (यह एक विशेष प्राणायाम है जिसे योगी जानता है) शरीर तो एक ही आसन (गर्भासन) में रहता है। फिर जब भूमिष्ठ होता है तब श्वास चलने लगता है और विभिन्न आसनों में रहने लगता है, और स्थिरत्व खोकर चंचलता को प्राप्त होता है। इड़ा-पिंगला में श्वास बहने लगता है तो नारी-पुरुष भेद हो जाता है और शिवावस्था को खोकर जीवावस्था में आ जाता है।

इसी का अध्यायन करके योगी फिर प्राणायाम द्वारा समाधि को अपनाता है और स्थिरत्व को प्राप्त करता है। जिसका एक संक्षिप्त विवरण दिया जा रहा है। साधारण अवस्था में श्वासों की स्वाभाविक

गति 12 अंगुल बाहर की ओर बहती है, उसे प्राणायाम द्वारा घटाने से जो परिणाम होता है वह इस प्रकार है —

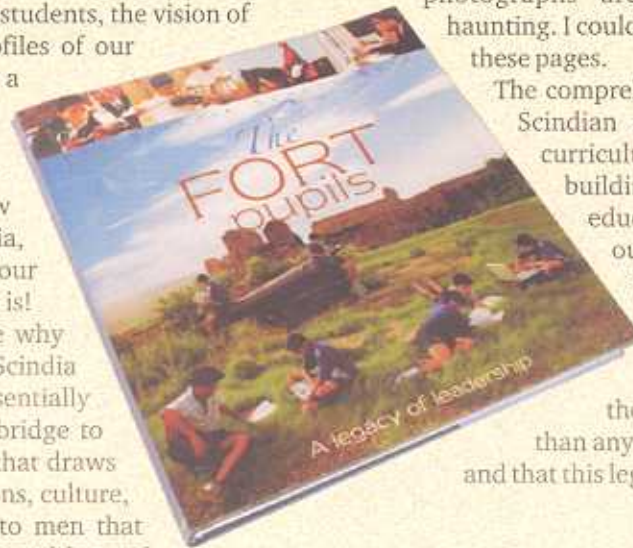
प्राणायाम	और उसका परिणाम
1. 12 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	एक अंगुल वायु की गति कम किया जाता है, उसमें निष्कामता उत्पन्न होती है।
2. 24 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	दो अंगुल कम होकर आनन्द की प्राप्ति होती है।
3. 36 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	तीन अंगुल कम होकर कामशक्ति प्राप्त होती है।
4. 48 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	चार अंगुल कम होकर वाक्सिद्धि होती है।
5. 60 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	पाँच अंगुल कम होकर दूरदर्शिता प्राप्त होती है।
6. 72 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	छह अंगुल कम होकर आकाश में जाने की शक्ति प्राप्त होती है।
7. 84 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	सात अंगुल कम होकर प्रबल वेग प्राप्त होता है।
8. 96 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	आठ अंगुल कम होकर अष्ट सिद्धि प्राप्त होती है।
9. 108 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	नौ अंगुल कम होकर नौ निधियाँ प्राप्त होती हैं।
10. 120 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	दस अंगुल कम होकर मूर्तियों के दर्शन होते हैं।
11. 132 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	ग्यारह अंगुल कम होकर छाया-रहित स्थिति प्राप्त होती है।
12. 144 शुद्ध प्राणायाम से	बारह अंगुल कम होकर पूर्णरूप से वायु निरोध हो जाता है जिससे हंस गति प्राप्त कर के साधक सुधामृत पान करता है।

विशेष बात यह है कि अष्टांग योग में प्राणायाम का स्थान चौथा है। लेकिन चतुर्थ स्थान से अष्टम स्थान तक पहुँचने के लिए प्राणायाम ही एक मात्र साधन है। वह इस प्रकार है — 12 उत्तम प्राणायाम से प्रत्याहार, 144 उत्तम प्राणायाम से धारणा, 1,728 उत्तम प्राणायाम से ध्यान और 20,736 उत्तम प्राणायाम से समाधि की स्थिति उत्पन्न होती है। इस तरह आपाद-मस्तक प्राण को प्राणायाम द्वारा शरीर में भरने से उसे खाने-पीने की आवश्यकता नहीं होती है। इसीलिए सब कार्यों को सिद्ध करने वाला यह प्राण विधि कहा गया है। जो गुरु वाक्य से ही ज्ञात होता है। और सदा के लिए योग युक्त हो जाता है।

Feed Back

A Great Legacy

The Scindia School Book: **The Fort Pupils**, is a collectors' item for every Scindian. Chronicling the evolution and history of our School, the book is a masterpiece with contents worth preserving in our national archives. The majestic beauty of the Gwalior Fort, the sweeping vistas of the monuments, the story of individual students, the vision of the School's founders and the profiles of our teachers are all woven together in a seamless, integrated whole. The collection of photographs, evident that they have been individually handpicked by historians who know and understand the fabric of Scindia, bring alive the 111 years of our School's legacy. And what a legacy it is! The book constantly reminded me why our parents chose to send us to the Scindia School — to receive a "quintessentially Indian education that provides a bridge to the modern world". An education that draws upon the best of our Indian traditions, culture, history and values to make us into men that would lead India today, tomorrow and beyond.



Glimpses of that educational journey are scattered throughout the book. The narrative is simple in its prose yet precisely accurate in its storytelling. The anecdotes and quotes complement the prose with magical synthesis. The photographs are breathtaking, perhaps even haunting. I could see myself living the experience in these pages.

The comprehensiveness of the experience of a Scindian education, the diversity of the curriculum, the excellence of the character building and the generosity of our educators are often forgotten as we live our lives after graduating from School. This book will always remind me of where I came from and how it shaped who I am. And it will also remind me that the legacy of our School is greater than any of our individual accomplishments and that this legacy will endure for years to come.

Partho Sanyal

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