



## IN THE FIRST PERSON

reported by Mansi

Children who newly join Sahyadri are called freshers. In 2011-12, I was one of the 56 freshers who joined Sahyadri School. When I was sitting in my car, a dark green Logan, I was wondering about the school. How will I make friends with the girls? What will the freshers' hike be like? What if I am homesick? What if I cannot make friends with the girls? What if I have doubts about studies? My mother saw my face and laughed. She said, "Everything will be fine," and smiled. I felt better and gazed out of the window.

As soon as I got out of the car and set foot on the Sahyadri road, I ran to the first checkpoint and noted that my dormitory was Shravani. I also noticed something surprising-- that there were also some other sixth standard girls in another dormitory, Alaknanda. My grandparents, parents and younger sister, Mrinali, stayed in Naval Virayatan, as we had come a day early. At night, we went to the dining hall for dinner. After a simple and satisfying dinner, I was eager to see my new dormitory. Walking along the road beside the dining hall, Mummy and I saw Shravani dorm.

After my family left, I was dependent on my friends.

For me, making friends in a new environment has always been tough. I had to figure out each and every girl's nature, behaviour and ways. But after nearly four weeks, I had some pretty good friends. There were some conflicts and twists, rows and arguments. But these would get sorted out in a few days.

My first assembly was the singing assembly. I was impressed to see all the students singing very well. My classes also went well. It was interesting to learn the way the teachers taught Art, Maths, Science, Social Studies, and Hindi that day.

When nearly a week had passed, all the freshers were given a call chit. When my house parent, Reena akka, was giving me a call chit, I thought the chit was for joining hobby classes. I kept on repeating, "I want to join Bharatnatyam." Later, at night, my friend explained to me, that the chit was for calling our parents for ten minutes!

Once when I was going to the class with two of my friends, I asked one of them, "Where are we going?" She replied in a single word, "Cluster." I didn't know the meaning of the word 'cluster.' I thought and

thought, but I couldn't make sense of it. Then, in one of the junior assemblies, I came to know what the word meant. It was the place where the 4th, 5th and 6A, 6B classes were situated!

It was a sunny day and I was getting ready for games time. We were playing throwball that day. Throwball is a game which has a court and net like volleyball, but the ball is thrown and caught in a different way. The service also differs. To my surprise, no one explained the instructions, so I didn't understand anything. Many days passed by but nothing was explained. Then, suddenly, we started playing softball, which is like baseball, but is played with a softer ball. Unlike throwball, this game was explained. It was fun. Then, another day, a girl suggested, "Why don't we play throwball today? We will also explain it the freshers!" Fortunately, all the others agreed. The instructions were so simple! All my questions were answered. So, by mid term, I loved throwball and played it well.

Once, at lunch, I saw some people sitting and eating near the waste bin in the dining hall. Walking up to them, I said, "You're supposed to sit at your own assigned table." A girl answered, "We have manning".

I was totally confused about this strange word, "manning". I thought that if a person didn't want to sit at his/her table, that person could try another table, and each person had a choice between two assigned tables. When I was done with my lunch, I went to give my plate for washing. A junior boy also came up with a bit of rice left in his plate. The people sitting at the table near the waste bin shot up and looked at our plates. They pointed at the junior's plate and said, "Eat that". At once, it was apparent that "manning" was a way to check food wastage.

There were only two or three weeks left to go home! The days flashed by like seconds. Every one was making preparations for the dorm party which is held at the end of the term. We were allowed to invite just four teachers. We had to divide duties, invite teachers, select games, decide the date and so on. There were four duties--cooking, serving, utensils and decoration. I was in the cooking group. The day of the dorm party arrived. Everyone was very busy. You couldn't find anyone with nothing to do. Over all, it was a good party. Everything went as planned. So it was a good ending for the term.

### A NOTE ON THE PROCESS

Once the target audience and the purpose of writing news reports was clear, students learnt to discriminate between fact and opinion, and discussed news values such as objectivity and fairness, and the need for a report to be clear, concise and correct. Having selected a topic, students proceeded to brainstorm questions around their topics, helping one another. Information was gathered mainly through interviews, but also through documents and direct observation. Students planned interview questions meticulously, helping one another, and learnt how to conduct a good interview. Organizing the gathered data, students then made an outline of their report, with titles and subtitles.

They wrote the report out in three drafts, following the writing process. Students wrote a first draft, revised it themselves and then shared it with at least one classmate, taking suggestions for improving it. They then wrote a second draft, which was shared with the teacher, who made further suggestions in a one-to-one discussion with each student. Students made a final draft of the report and submitted it.

## FITNESS INCORPORATED

reported by Jai, Visishta, Sudhanshu & Abhishek

The Sports Fest is a very exciting occasion for people who love sports in Sahyadri School. This year, the Sports Fest was held on 24th and 25th of December on the football field. The heats had been conducted over four or five days in the morning during PT, or during the afternoon games time. Students chose events depending on their interest. Parth sir says, “The Sports Fest is held because sport is an important part of our life. It brings out your perseverance, dedication, sportsmanship, patience and skill.”



### OPENING REMARKS

It is a chilly morning on the 50m x 100m football field, which looks ready for the day's action. Tracks have been freshly made with lime powder or 'chuna'. To prepare the ground, pebbles have been removed and the soil has been watered. The field is sprayed with colours as the students order themselves class-wise for the walk-past. The fourths, wearing rich green jerseys, are followed by the fifths in blue and the sixths in purple. The seniors: 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th, are wearing yellow, maroon, red and grey, respectively. The colours for the different classes are decided by the games committee, which consists of Parth sir, Vinayak sir and Akshata akka.

Every year, the Sports Fest starts with a walk-past. Students of each class stand together in rows and the whole school walks around the track. From each class,

a person is selected to hold the flag and command the group. Flags of different colours represent each batch. Vinayak sir feels that the walk-past is important because students learn to walk in an organized way, and in a graceful manner.

After the walk past, Pushkaraj, Arjun, Rwit, Rohan Patil and Aakanksha of class X, the torch bearers, run around the field with the flaming torch. Abhigyan, the school captain, and the students, take the oath, promising to participate in the events in the true spirit of sportsmanship.

The games committee selects the school captains, a girl and a boy from class ten, on the basis of their overall performance in school-- their behaviour, studies, how good they are at sports and how responsible they are. Abhigyan and Vedika were the captains this year.

## ON THE FAST TRACK

Soon, the events start and the 1500m run generates great excitement as people flock to watch it happen. Before the 100m for 9th-10th, the 200m for 9th-10th takes off. Arjun and Abhigyan, both considered the fastest runners in Sahyadri, are competing for the last time, as this is their last year in Sahyadri. Like a car lurching, the runners are off, and they race neck to neck. On reaching the 100m mark, Arjun slows and stumbles out, as Abhigyan finishes the 100m race with a timing of 13.72 sec. Arjun, who has suffered a severe muscle pull, withdraws from the other events.

“Injuries are part and parcel of sports. Every time you indulge in an activity here is a risk of injury,” Parth sir says, when asked about the injuries during this Sports Fest.

The winning timing in the 100m race for each group has gone through changes in the last two years. In 2011-12, in 4th boys, the best timing was 16.86 seconds in contrast to 2009-10’s 19.63 seconds. In the 5th-6th group, the timing improved from 15.94 s to 15.77 s. In some cases, the timing hasn’t improved; in 9th-10th it went up by point seven two seconds (from 13.06 s to 13.78 s). In the 7th-8th group, the timing was 16.28 s and now it is 13.91 s. In 9th-10th girls, the timing came down by 0.1 s (16.56 s – 16.46 s). In 5th-6th though, it went up by 0.61 seconds (16.45 s – 17.06 s). There are new winners every year, and so the 100m is a hard fought event. The improvement is the most noticeable in the 4th, as the timing has decreased for both boys and girls. For example, the girls’ timing has reduced from 21.25 s to 18.12 s. So one can conclude that there has been a lot of improvement in timings since 2009.

*Table for 100 m races:*

<i>Boys</i>			<i>Girls</i>		
<b>Group</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
4	19.63s	16.86 s	4	21.25 s	18.12 s
5, 6	15.94s	15.77 s	5, 6	15.45 s	17.06 s
7, 8	16.28s	13.91 s	7, 8	NA	15.94 s
9, 10	13.06s	13.78 s	9, 10	16.56 s	16.46 s

*Results of Races:*

<b>7th-8th Girls- 100 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Ruchi	8	15.94 s	1
Rahi	8	16.24 s	2
<b>7th-8th Boys- 100 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Abizar	8	13.91 s	1
Jai Patil	8	15.50 s	2
<b>9th-10th Boys- 100 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Abhigyan	10	13.78 s	1
Khushhal	10	14.14 s	2
<b>9th, 10th Girls- 100 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Shreya Seth	10	16.46 s	1
Devanshi	10	16.76 s	2



<b>4th Girls- 100 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Sakshi S.	4	18.12 s	1
Meher	4	20.82 s	2
<b>4th Boys- 100 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Aum	4	16.86 s	1
Vedant	4	17.86 s	2
<b>5th, 6th Girls- 100 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Hemali	5	17.06 s	1
Apeksha	5	18.13 s	2
<b>5th, 6th Girls- 200 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Hemali	5	36.75 s	1
Sakshi J.	6	36.89 s	2
<b>7th, 8th Boys-100 m Hurdles</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Abizar	8	16.31 s	1
Poojit	7	20.39 s	2
<b>7th, 8th Girls-100 m Hurdles</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Sonia	8	20.95 s	1
<b>10th Boys- 200 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Arjun Nair	10	28.02 s	1
Abhigyan	10	29.40 s	2
<b>Pre-School- 200 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Ashwath	2	44.66 s	1
Isha	2	52.23 s	2
<b>7th, 8th Boys- 200 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Abizar	8	30.24 s	1
Jai Patil	8	32.45 s	2

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<b>4th Boys- 200 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Aum	4	37.08 s	1
Akshat	4	46.91 s	2
<b>5th, 6th Boys- 200 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Pranav Parekh	6	36.72 s	1
Parth Gupta	6	37.21 s	2
<b>7th, 8th Girls- 400 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Heloise	8	1.31.12 min	1
Nikita	7	1.35.70 min	2
<b>9th, 10th Boys- 400 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Abhigyan	10	1.05.52 min	1
Pareen	9	1.10.81 min	2
<b>7th, 8th Girls- 1500m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Shruti R.	8	6.54.46 min	1
Rahi	8	7.39.00 min	2
<b>7th, 8th Boys- 800 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Pranjay	7	2.58.05 min	1
Suprabh	7	2.59.08 min	2
<b>9th, 10th Girls -200m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Devanshi	10	36.56 s	1
Shreya Seth	10	38.29 s	2
<b>9th, 10th Girls- 800 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Sanskruiti	9	3.34.30 min	1
Meera	10	3.45.84 min	2
<b>7th, 8th Girls- 800m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Shruti R.	8	3.16.04 min	1
Nikita	7	3.50.73 min	2
<b>7th, 8th Boys- 1500 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Saeesh	8	6.52.07 min	1
Anjaney	8	6.59.56 min	2
<b>9th, 10th Boys- 1500 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Abhigyan	10	5.06.00 min	1
Anshumaan R.	9	6.28.88 min	2
<b>9th, 10th Boys- 800 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Abhigyan	10	2.32.52 min	1
Pareen	9	2.42.46 min	2
<b>7th, 8th Girls-200 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Damini	8	35.87 s	1
Rahi	8	36.50 s	2
<b>5th, 6th Boys-400 m</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Timings</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Parth G.	6	1.26.40 min	1
Madhur R.	6	1.28.82 min	2

5th, 6th Girls- 400 m	Classes	Timings	Rank
Hemali	5	1.27.72 min	1
Shraddha	6	1.31.94 min	2
7th, 8th Boys- 400 m	Classes	Timings	Rank
Jai Patil	8	1.15.52 min	1
Saeesh	8	1.19.72 min	2

### THE LONG AND THE SHORT OF IT

The long jump event was conducted by Pradnya akka and Menaka akka at the long jump pit, which is behind the goal post at the far end of the football ground. The original measurement of the long jump pit in the Olympics is 2.75m x 9m.

To get selected for the event, the fourth, fifth and sixth children had to jump at least three metres during the heats. The seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth children had to jump four to five metres to get selected. Those who chose to participate in long jump practised with Parth sir and Akshata akka for two weeks before the Sports Fest.

#### *Table of Winners*

Here are the long jump records for 4th, 5th, and 6th girls:

Class	Names	Distance
4	Sakshi S.	3.16m
6	Sakshi J.	3.24m
6	Purnima	3.10m

Here are the long jump records for the 7th, 8th girls' group and the 9th and 10th girls' group:

Class	Names	Distance
8	Shruti	3.63m
8	Heloise	2.80m
10	Devanshi	3.28m
9	Regina	3.16m



Here are the long jump records for 4th, 5th, 6th boys:

Class	Names	Distance
4	Vedant D.	3.54m
4	Aum	2.84m
6	Madhur	3.82m
5	Lakshman	3.04m

Here are the long jump records for the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th boys:

Class	Names	Distance
8	Rishabh	4.80m
7	Keshav	3.88m
10	Rwit	4.93m
9	Pareen	4.86m

Vedant of class 4 says, “I felt excited and expected my jump to go well.” Lakshman of class five says, “I felt excited and nervous.” Madhur of class six says, “I felt nervous before the first jump, but after getting my results, I felt confident about the long jump event. I felt happy that I came first in my batch.” Deepak of class 6 says, “I felt nervous before my jump. I thought all my jumps would be fouls, but I did well in all my jumps.”

Kesav of class seven says, “I felt a bit confident. While taking the run up, I felt tense and slowed down. I jumped with all my faith.” Rishabh of class eight says, “I felt a bit nervous and I expected to do better than in my practice jumps.”

Pareen of class nine says, “I felt confident and expected to get a good distance jump. I expected around 4m 90cm.” Rwit of class ten says, “I didn’t feel anything before jumping. I just felt a bit tense when someone else did better than me. I just did my best.”

## THROWN INTO FOCUS

Throws test our muscular power. During the Sports Fest, javelin, discus, shot put and medicine ball throws are conducted.

If the thrower keeps the rules in mind, the throw may go better. During a javelin throw, the tip of the javelin should touch the ground first. During the run-up, if the javelin touches the body of the participant or he/she crosses the line, the throw is disqualified. The discus, the medicine ball and the shotput are thrown from within a marked circle. One has to enter and leave the circle from the back-half. The thrower should not cross the circle at any point, and the throw should not land outside the marked area.

There are some tips for javelin, discus, shotput and medicine ball throws. If the thrower keeps certain points in mind, fewer injuries will be incurred and the throw is more likely to be effective. For all these throws, you need a proper warm up, correct timing, right stepping, the correct way of holding and running, and regular practice.

Students were selected for the throws about one week before the Sports Fest, when the heats were conducted. 20 to 25 students took part in the heats and five or six got selected from each group.

Here is the list of winners in javelin:

### *9, 10 Girls*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Class</b>
Preetha	18.50 m	9
Meera	11.75 m	10
Regina	9.84 m	9

### *7, 8 Boys*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Class</b>
Rishabh	30.62 m	8
Parth P.	25.25 m	7
Anjenay	21.73 m	8

### *7, 8 Girls*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Class</b>
Shruti	14.01 m	8
Mehak	13.33 m	8
Akshata M.	13.15 m	7

### *9, 10 Boys*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Class</b>
Arjun N.	39.83 m	10
Pareen	28.82 m	9
Dhruv	25.52 m	10

There were some problems during the event. Participants did not come on time, and at times people stood in the throw area, and it was hard to stop them.

Here are the records for discus:

*7, 8 Girls*

Participant	Distance	Class
Aishwarya	17.40 m	7
Maria	15.17 m	7
Rishika	14.58 m	8

*7, 8 Boys*

Participant	Distance	Class
Abizar	25.05 m	8
Oran	18.33 m	8
Shamin	15.56 m	8

*9, 10 Boys*

Participant	Distance	Class
Arjun N.	21.03 m	10
Atharva	20.45 m	9
Abhishek	18.05 m	9

*9, 10 Girls*

Participant	Distance	Class
Vedika	20.65 m	10
Tanvi	14.35 m	10
Aashrita	14.20 m	10

Several injuries took place. Once, when students were practising the throw, the discus hit Vedika of class 10.

Records for shot put:

*7, 8 Boys*

Participant	Distance	Class
Abizar	10.41 m	8
Jai P.	8.12 m	8
Oran	7.72 m	8

*7, 8 Girls*

Participant	Distance	Class
Aanya	7.38 m	7
Maria	7.25 m	7
Ananya	6.57 m	8

*9, 10 Boys*

Participant	Distance	Class
Dhruv	10.96 m	10
Atharva	9.83 m	9
Satyajay	9.59 m	9

*9, 10 Girls*

Participant	Distance	Class
Vedika	7.57 m	10
Noor	7.45 m	10
Aashritha	6.85 m	10

There were many problems this year. The 7th, 8th participants didn't come on time and some people didn't show up.

Records for medicine ball throw:

*4 Boys*

Participant	Distance	Class
Arjun	6.08 m	4
Aditya	5.48 m	4
Akshat	4.37 m	4



5, 6 Girls

Participant	Distance	Class
Saumya	6.18 m	6
Anjali	6.16 m	6
Akshat	5.90 m	6

4 Girls

Participant	Distance	Class
Sakshi	4.49 m	4
Meka	4.42 m	4
Riddhi	3.64 m	4

5, 6 Boys

Participant	Distance	Class
Madhur	10.25 m	6
Jai C.	8.58 m	6
Pranav	8.51 m	6

The fourth class throw went well, but in the 5th-6th throw many people didn't turn up.

**JUST FOR FUN**

The obstacle race is a fun event which is only for classes 4,5 and 6. The participants crawl through a nylon net and pull themselves out of a metal ring. Then they

jump over a bench, skip with a rope and crawl under the hurdles. Finally, they dribble a basketball to the finish line. According to Akshata Akka, most senior students don't enjoy the obstacle race.

Almost the entire school participates in the ten-lap-walk. Akshata Akka says students and teachers who have not participated in anything else get to walk and take part in this fun event.

Tug-of-war is also a fun event which is held just before the closing ceremony. Tug-of-war is held for each class, and sections A and B compete with each other. Akshata Akka says it's very hard for the games teachers to find time to make mixed groups. The fourths and fifths have mixed groups for tug-of-war, as the fourth standard has fewer students than the fifth standard.

For this year's Sports Fest, there were four stalls – a sugarcane juice stall, a fruit and cucumber stall, a tea and snacks stall and a medical stall. A contractor in Rajgurunagar had supplied two sugarcane-juice machines to the school. This time, the school ordered two sugarcane-juice machines, as there was a long line for sugarcane juice last year. The stalls were managed by office staff. There were no issues or difficulties as the stalls were well managed. The dada's took three whole days to put up the stalls and the shamiana.



## CLOSING REMARKS

After all the excitement and fun, the Sports Fest comes to an end. The students stand class-wise as Amresh Sir declares the Sports Fest closed. Starting with 4th, the classes proceed for the silent walk. Everything is still, and the evening drowns in the impending gloom as the fact sinks in that the Sports Fest has ended. The silent walk is held to show respect to the field during the Sports Fest, as all the events were conducted on the field.

Abhigyan and Vedika now hold one side of the white school flag. On the other side, Eniyan and Abhiruchi hold the opposite edge of the flag. 250 pairs of eyes watch solemnly as they carefully fold the flag and it is handed over to the new captains, Eniyan and Abhiruchi. A burst of applause rings through the crowd.

According to Parth sir, "Since the first Sports Fest began, the level of both, participation as well as performance, has increased dramatically over the years. Also, this year, the opening and the closing ceremonies were well organized." In Parth sir's opinion, the low point of this year's Sports Fest was that, "Barely anybody practised all around the year."

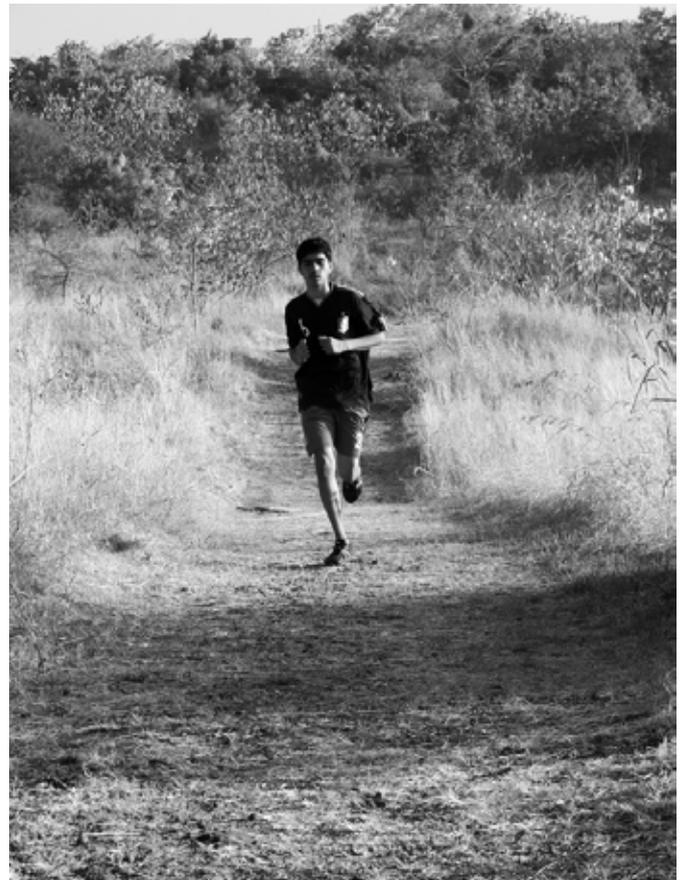
Shrikant sir feels that this year's Sports Fest was quite nice but the students could practise more before the Sports Fest and perform much better. According to Akshata Akka, this time's Sports Fest was much better than last year's, as there was more participation. Vinayak Sir feels the students were doing better this year than in the past two-three years, because the students practised well.

## A RUN OF THE HILL STORY

reported by Vedika & Sreyas

The cross country, a long distance race which is run not on the road, but on unmetalled tracks or country tracks, is organized in several KFI schools, like the Rishi Valley school and the Rajghat Besant School. January 3rd 2004 was the day when the cross country was introduced in Sahyadri, and since then, the games teachers organise a cross country every year. It is a 15.5km run beginning at the school gate and ending near the oval garden. Vinayak sir says, "We should have this in order to exert ourselves at least once a year, to think about our fitness level and our stamina."

This year, the run started around 6.40 am on the 31st of December, and ended at 9 am. The weather was pleasantly cold. Akshata akka, Dilip sir, Sahebrao dada and Satish dada organized the cross country with the help of Vinayak sir, Parth sir, Amresh sir and the other teachers. About 40 to 45 people were involved in preparing the route. Some workers cleared the route and stuck flags on trees – a white flag to



show direction, and a red flag to mark steep areas. Teachers were posted at various spots along the route to help runners by offering water, showing direction and warning the runners about dangers such as steep areas or barbed wire. A medical kit was available with teachers at a few spots. If a participant was hurt, these teachers would bandage the wound and help them carry on with the run.

The participants start the run at the school check-post, reach the school board, and cross the main road to reach the dirt path up to the turn-about point, coming back the same way, which is a distance of 4.5km. Then they enter the school parikrama, one lap of which is 2.5km. The organizers of the cross country have tried to change the route, but due to safety reasons it is not possible. The run is divided into five levels. The first level is completed by running down the dirt path and back up. Each subsequent level is completed by running a lap of the parikrama. One level is compulsory for the fourths and fifths, and sixth onwards, two levels are compulsory. In Vinayak sir's opinion, there should be only three levels, so that everybody will be able to run the whole cross country.

In the first place was Abhigyan of class X, with a spectacular timing of 1:20:31. He has won the cross country three years in a row. Eniyan of class IX came second, with a timing of 1:28:05, followed by Suprabh of class VII, with a timing of 1:29:00. There was a tie for the 4th place between Aakash and Yeshovardhan

of class X, with a timing of 1:32:00. Kesav bagged the 5th place with a timing of 1:34:31. This year, most juniors participated in the run, but there were only a few seniors. According to Akshata akka, the total number of participants was smaller compared to last year. 11 people stopped after completing the 1st level; 52 after the second level; 34 stopped after the third level and 43 people completed the fourth level. Altogether, 42 people completed all five levels of the cross country.

Vinayak sir says that since the Sports Fest and cross country were only a week apart, therefore there was no time to practise for the cross country. The cross country started at 6.40 rather than 6.30, because the sun hadn't risen and it was still quite dark. There were no major injuries, but people did get sprains and a few cuts and bruises.

People have different views about the cross country. Aanya of class VII and Shruti of class VIII feel that the route is quite repetitive. They also feel the time limit should be expanded so that everyone can complete all five levels. Aanya walks and jogs to complete the cross country. Abhigyan of class X and Annapurna of class VI feel it is a good way to keep fit and test our stamina. Annapurna also feels it is a good challenge in our daily lives. Shruti of class 8 feels that it is an important occasion, as it is one of the things the whole school does together. We look forward to next year's cross country and hope it goes off as smoothly as this year's.



## HOWZZAT!

reported by Parth

Every year, a cricket camp is held in the Spring Term. This year, the cricket camp started on the 28th of November, 2011. The morning session started at 6.15 am and ended at 7.15 am. The afternoon session started at 2.30 pm and ended at 3.30 pm. The weather in the morning was cold, chilly and windy, while the afternoons were hot and sunny.

The cricket camp, organized by the games committee, was held on the football field. The coaches were Milind sir, Upendra sir and Kailash sir from Pune, who have been conducting camps in the school for many years. According to Parth sir, they will be coming next year too.

The camp, which went on for fifteen days, was held in order to improve students' cricketing skills. Cricket is not played in the monsoon term, as the rain makes the field slushy.

Of the 89 students who attended this camp, 46 were junior boys, 23 were senior boys and 20 were girls. The 4th and 5th were allowed to attend the cricket camp this year for the first time, because the games committee was trying to figure out whether they could play properly and pick up the skills of cricket.

The participants followed a daily routine in the camp. First, they ran around the football field. Then they did warm-up exercises like alternate toe-touching, and some stretching. Some drills were done to hone their skills. One specific drill to improve their aim required them to throw a ball over-arm at a cone that was twenty yards away. They learnt the right 'stance' or position for holding the bat. Then they learnt how to grip the ball. First, you hold the ball with two fingers and the thumb. You put two fingers over the seam, and the thumb underneath, in between the seam, without letting your palm touch the ball. In the afternoon, matches were played. Participants practised bowling, batting, fielding and catching skills.

Pranav of class six, Ananya of class ten, and

Aishwarya of class seven feel that their batting, bowling and fielding skills have improved.

This year, during the camp, two inter-school matches were played, one by seniors and one by juniors. These matches, played between Sahyadri School and Deccan Gymkhana, took place on 11th December, 2011.

Kushal Singh, the captain of the Junior School team, says, "I felt very nice when I was selected as the captain." Arjun Nair, the captain of the Senior School team, says, "I was happy and I knew earlier that I was going to become the captain, as I helped in the selection of the team. We had played matches in the cricket camp and on the basis of that I knew I was going to become the captain."

The inter-school matches were held so that Sahyadri cricketers could get to know how people play outside school. The school teams don't go to the Deccan Gymkhana because there are many tournaments going on there.

Parth Gupta was the highest scorer in the Junior School team, with 23 runs. Kushal Singh, the captain of the Junior School team, took the highest number of wickets, sending four batsmen back to the pavilion. Suprabh Bajoria, the vice captain of the Junior team, was the wicket keeper. Deccan Gymkhana bowled 45 extras, while the Sahyadri Junior team bowled 37 extras. Deccan Gymkhana won the match by 14 runs. Deccan Gymkhana scored 124 runs, while Sahyadri scored 115 runs in 20 overs. The captain for the Deccan Gymkhana team was Aum, who was also the wicket keeper. The highest run scorer was Rishikesh, who scored 41 runs.

Here are some highlights of the match played by the seniors. Abhigyan Singhal, the vice captain of the Sahyadri team, was the highest run scorer as well as the highest wicket taker. He scored seventeen runs and took one wicket. Dhruv Pandey was the wicket keeper. Arjun Nair was the captain of the team.

Deccan Gymkhana won by nine wickets. The Sahyadri team scored 107 runs while Deccan Gymkhana team scored 110 runs in 16.1 overs. It was a twenty over match. Sreyas, the captain of the Deccan Gymkhana senior team, scored the most runs in the match, with forty-eight runs.

Now, everyone is looking forward to next year's cricket camp, hoping to get selected in the Junior or the Senior team.

## THAT'S THE WAY THE GAMES TIME GOES

reported by Aashutosh

Most boys of class 6 feel that after studying for five hours, it's fun to play on the games field. Games time is from 2.30 to 3.50 pm. After the rest hour, their mind is buzzing with excitement. "What are we going to play?" "When are we going to play?" "Who is on our team?"

Generally, those who play well start deciding what game to play. Some say, "We will play football!" Others say, "No, cricket!" People vote for these games and the majority opinion decides the game. Sometimes the person who is the best player decides the game himself, and then the others listen to him. Sometimes, if the game they decide upon is not available because some other class has occupied the field, they play another game for which the field is available.

Some one says, "Last two people to touch the poles are the captains!" Then the two captains start doing tip-top. The two captains stand about ten feet apart, facing each other. Each of them starts saying 'tip-top' and puts one foot before the other. Finally, when they reach the middle, one captain steps over the other one's foot. Whoever wins the tip-top is the first to choose a player for his team. After everyone is chosen, the captains do tip-top again to choose the side and start. Then the captain shows his team mates their positions and soon after that, the game of football starts.

Most of the time, when the 6th boys play football, there is no referee. Players decide fouls by voting. When many players appeal, "It's a foul!" the offender has to agree. Sometimes a player takes advantage of the situation and doesn't appeal against a foul if he is very close to the goalpost and has a chance to score a goal.

Sometimes, a person who plays well bosses over others and shouts at someone who makes a mistake or does something for which the team has to suffer. The person who is blamed feels bad, but usually doesn't tell anyone about it.

Sometimes abusive language and playful bullying occurs on the field. Abusive language is heard during conflicts. Sometimes people tease each other playfully for fun. No serious bullying takes place. Most of the 6th boys prefer no abusive language and fights on the field. They feel all 6th boys should come regularly for games at the right time, which is 2.30 pm.

At times some people do not play. They may feel uninterested in the particular game chosen. They might not have the skills and so sometimes they are asked to leave the field. The substitutes have little to do till another player is injured or tired. The boys feel the fields should have grass because students sometimes fall and get injured. For football, students wear studs, but studs are to be worn on grass, not on mud.



## INS AND OUTS

reported by Madhur & Somya N.

Every year in Sahyadri School new students apply for admission. The school starts giving out forms on 1st October. The admission process starts in the last week of December and ends in the last week of March. Admissions for 2012-13 began on 27th December. The school advertises the start of admissions in magazines like 'Down to Earth' and 'India Today', and sometimes in local newspapers, the internet and on the school's website.

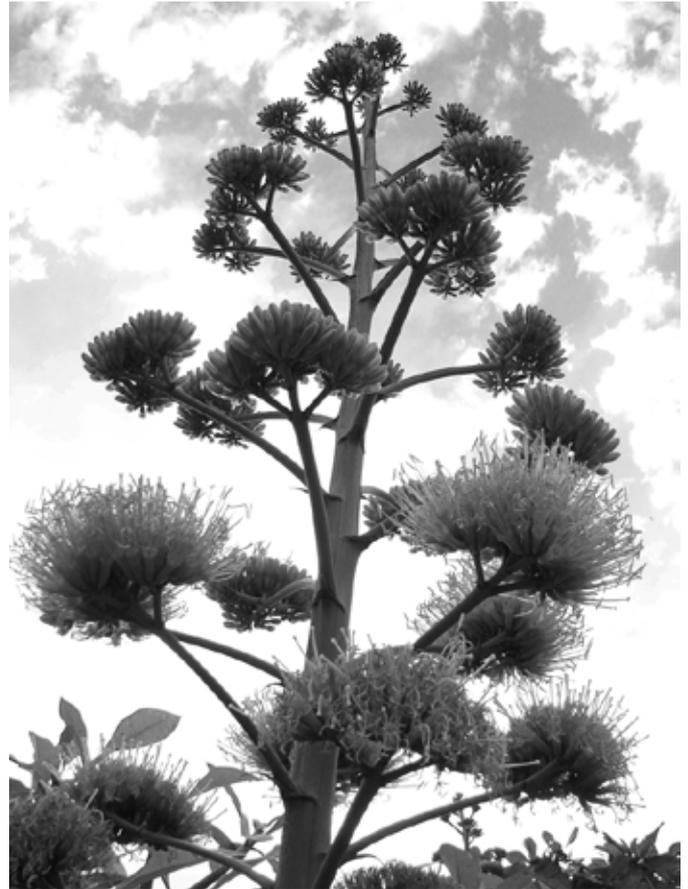
Sahyadri School has a student population of about 230 students. At the end of each school session, the class ten batch leaves, and a few students are withdrawn from other classes across the school. This creates about 50 to 60 vacant seats, and the school needs to admit new students.

The highest intake of new students is in classes 5 and 6. At this stage, freshers find it easy to adjust to the level and pattern of studies. The lowest intake is in classes 7 and 8, as this is a late entry point and freshers take longer to get accustomed to a different pattern of teaching. In 2012-13, in particular, a group of six new students from Kashmir will join class 6 as part of a philanthropic effort by the actor Rahul Bose.

The number of people seeking admission follows the same trend each year. The number of students selected for admission is about one-third of the number of forms sold. Although 180 to 220 forms are sold, only about 120 to 150 applicants come for the selection test. Of these, around 50 or 60 get selected.

The school prospectus and the application form are designed by a group of people, including Prabhat sir and Amresh sir. The last changes in the school prospectus were made in 2008. A parent has to fill in the form, which asks for information about the parents, the child's interests, health problems and other personal details.

Parents contact the school and obtain the school



prospectus and the form. The parents then fill the form and apply for admission. The school invites the parents and their children to school, for the admission procedure. New students are selected through a lengthy process. The student is first interviewed by two teachers. After that, the student gives a written test. Finally, the parents are interviewed. According to Amresh Sir, the admission process may undergo a change because of the Right to Education Act recently introduced in the parliament. The school may have to admit students by random selection. Once the state government gives the order for this change, it will take place in our school.

Every year, new students are interviewed by two teachers. Usually, the teachers involved in the interviewing are Arun sir, Reena akka, Rahee akka, Shephali akka, Vandan akka, Kishore sir, Parth sir, Anjali akka and a few others. The teachers ask questions about the students' hobbies, likes and dislikes, whether they are vegetarian or non-vegetarian, what they watch on television, what kind of music they listen to and so on.

After the interview, the freshers have to give a written test which assesses their basic skills in Maths and English. This is necessary in order to check if the students are ready for the class they are going to join. There should not be too much mismatch in the level of studies. The test is usually supervised by Deepak dada in the lab.

The last stage of this process is the parents' interview, which is conducted by Amresh Sir, Prabhat Sir and Ramesh Sir. The parents are questioned about their reasons for choosing Sahyadri, and about their child's interests, talents and temperament.

On the basis of the information gathered through the interviews and the tests, some students are selected. The school looks for children who are cheerful, active, interested in learning, independent and friendly. They should be independent enough to live without their parents and do their work on their own. Students who have a lot of interest in the different hobbies and activities conducted in our school are given preference. Some applicants may not get selected if they do not do well on their test or if they have special needs which the school cannot take care of.

Smidhushri, one of the new students who came for admission this year, says that he is feeling very happy that he may get a chance to study in Sahyadri. Smidhushri's parents say, "We've come here hoping for better education. Here, there are more activities in which the child gets involved and the teaching is not only book oriented."

## UNDER THE LENS

reported by Shruti

In Sahyadri School, 241 students attend classes four to ten. But how many teachers are needed? Well, this year there are approximately 35 teachers. How does Sahyadri School find the teachers it needs?

According to Amresh Sir, new teacher applicants send their bio-data to the school by e-mail. This document has background information about the applicant's

educational qualifications and past job experience. If the bio-data is satisfactory, the applicant is called to the school and is asked to take a demo class. This class is observed by two other teachers and the applicant's teaching abilities are assessed.

The selection of new teachers starts in the 2nd term, but also happens through the year. The advertisements are put on the school website, weekly magazines, local newspapers and on a website called 'Naukri.com'. Naukri.com is a useful website for people who are looking for jobs or for employees for their organization.

When selecting a new teacher, the school looks for certain important qualities. The teacher should be able to fit into the culture of Sahyadri. The school tries to find teachers who are truly interested in the learning of students rather than in evaluating them and giving them marks.

Madhavi akka, class teacher of class five, says, "The whole selection process was informal and friendly. I liked the school and the students I was to be teaching."

## CONVER-STATIONS

reported by Siddhi

The total strength of teachers in Sahyadri is thirty-five. Teachers have staff meetings because their work is interlinked, and they need to discuss school issues and listen to one another's views.

You must be wondering what teachers do in staff meetings. They discuss upcoming events and orient themselves to these. They have class review meetings before the Parent Teacher Meetings start, an orientation meeting at the starting of a new session and an term-end review meeting at the end of each term. General staff meetings are also held to discuss issues related with the culture in the school.

Staff meetings are conducted by a chairperson who may be one of the teachers, the Principal of the school, or the school co-ordinator, that is, Prabhat sir. The entire staff meet everyday during the juice break,

when announcements are made. Full staff meetings are held once in a fortnight from 4 pm to 5.30 pm in the staff meeting room, the audio-visual room or the art room. At the start and end of a term, the teachers also meet in the senior auditorium. According to Amresh sir, attending staff meetings is compulsory. At times, some teachers may be on leave or not be well, and so may miss the meeting.

Apart from whole-staff meetings, once in a week, all those who teach a particular subject meet for forty minutes to discuss teaching methods, design the curriculum and so on. Usually, such faculty meetings take place in the staff meeting room.

Shubhang sir says, "Interesting things about how to teach children are discussed in staff meetings." He recommends having a predefined agenda, and documenting the minutes. He would also appreciate a timed discussion, as sometimes one point on the agenda is discussed at great length, and there is not enough time left to discuss other points.

Sulabha akka thinks that staff meetings are useful, as the staff members get an opportunity to discuss topics of common interest related to school issues, to express their opinion and to resolve certain issues that concern the students, teachers and the school as a whole. She feels that the agenda should be of interest to most of the staff members. This can be achieved by keeping a suggestion box into which teachers can put their suggestions regarding the topics that concern or interest them.

## THE ACTIVE VOICE

reported by Shraddha

The Junior Forum is a group consisting of the Junior School students and teachers. This Forum was created in June 2011, and has been meeting for different purposes. The Junior Forum was created because, while the senior students had an opportunity to discuss problems in the student council, the juniors

didn't have any such space to share their problems and discuss issues related to their lives.

Reena akka and Anjali akka, who are in charge of the Junior Forum, initiated the first meeting. The Junior Forum is conducted in a particular way. First, Reena akka and Anjali akka hold a meeting to decide the topic and the format for the Junior Forum meeting. In the Junior Forum, the teachers first remind students of the previous decisions. Then they present the agenda for the day's meeting. Sometimes, a group of children may form a fish-bowl to raise questions and receive responses. At other times, the teachers themselves conduct the meeting. Children express their views and feelings about issues, and bring up their problems. In the last part of the meeting, the teachers might take a decision. Finally, students mention the issues which could be taken up in the next Junior Forum.

The Junior Forum has brought about many changes. Instances of pairing have reduced. In the class cluster and in the dining hall, students are conducting themselves better. A group of students succeeded in having long pipes installed to prevent roof water from gushing into the cluster in the monsoon.

Visishta of class six says, "It's worthwhile having the Junior Forum. It is very helpful because the juniors can share their difficulties."

## MORNING MONTAGE

reported by Nishtha

Every morning at 8:15 a long bell rings for the assembly. At 8:20, the assembly starts. All the students and several teachers gather in the senior auditorium. At times, Junior assemblies are held in the junior auditorium or in the A-V Room. A few are held outdoors.

The school plans special assemblies three times a week. Students might present class assemblies and dorm assemblies. Sometimes teachers or school guests give a talk in the assembly. At times, seniors meet in

the student council while juniors gather for the junior forum. Presentations are made by class 9 and 10 students in subjects like English, Economics and Environmental Science. Documentaries such as BBC Life videos are also shown. At times, on festivals or other special occasions, assemblies may present the cultural aspects of the occasion. Once each term, photos of the previous term are shown. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays are reserved for singing assemblies.



Some students and teachers, who form the lead group, gather beforehand and practise the songs for the singing assembly. The whole school sits together to sing Indian songs from the ‘Geet Gunjan’, in order to keep the traditional songs alive. Although some songs are devotional, they are not sung as prayers to god. Singing together helps students and teachers gather energy, and evokes a sense of beauty and joy.

Anjali akka and Prabhat sir try to plan a variety of assemblies, and fix the schedule for these. If there are any audio-visual needs, then Vinayak sir and the A-V team help. At times, problems crop up. Assemblies might get delayed, since teachers are often busy.

Most students feel that the photo assembly is the most popular and interesting assembly of all.

## AND IT GREW AND IT GREW

reported by Deepak

When the school opened in the year 1995, the first library was located in what is now called the staff meeting room. The first librarian for this library was someone called Arun Kumar.

The space available in the current staff meeting room was too small. At that time, they had no idea where to make a new library, but there was a big room available behind the dining hall. So, until a new library could be constructed, this room was used as the library. However, this space was also felt to be too small. So they wanted

to make a new library that was big and spacious.

To make a big, new library, the school needed architects who were masters in their field. Nachiket Patwardhan was the architect for the building and Ari Carneri from Brazil was the landscape architect. Sharad sir joined Ari sir in the work on the landscape. The school now had architects, but no labourers or materials to build the library. At last, the villagers of Gundalwadi opted to work for the school as labourers. The school also had to think about making the mezzanine floor for extra space, as the other buildings don't have any structure above the ground floor level. The school took three years to make the library, and the opening ceremony was held on August 1, 2008.

The school wants to further develop the new library by bringing in more furniture and by providing computer terminals. Some of the new furniture will go on the mezzanine.

Jai of class 6 feels that the library is a peaceful place and he spends a lot of his time in the library.

## SILENT SUNSETS

reported by Tathya

Asthachal is meant to create a space where students can be with themselves. During Asthachal, students see the sun going down in silence, for twenty minutes. It is held on a top of a hill where one can feel the cool breeze and see the clouds in the sky. People sit barefoot on Asthachal hill so they can feel the earth and be close to nature.

Students wear white kurta and pyjama for Asthachal, as it looks peaceful, clean and fresh, and suits the purpose. The white uniform was adopted in 2003, from Rishi Valley.



## IN CLOSE CONTACT

reported by Annapurna

In Sahyadri, students spend about seven hours a day in the class with their teachers. From school, they go home to their dorms, where a group of about 20 to 25 students are looked after by one dorm parent. House contact is a time when the students and the house parent share issues related to day to day life.

Every day, students gather in their dorm after dinner and, over a warm cup of milk, informally share their experiences. Once a week, on Mondays, the dorm has a formal house contact for about an hour and a half. In house contacts, both functional and relationship issues come up for discussion. Functional issues are often related to hygiene and management of time. Students also bring up difficulties they might have in relating with one another.

House contact is conducted by the house parent. In some dorms, the students might conduct it at times. During this time, some teachers are invited to visit the dorms. Purna akka and Vandan akka think that house contacts help the students to mix up. Reena akka says, “It gives the dorm parent an opportunity to know the students’ view point and to understand certain issues that students have.”

## READING MATTER

reported by Harshith

In Sahyadri, there is a Resource Room where students go to improve their language skills. The Resource Room was started by Bela Raja and Geeta Dalal, both educational psychologists, who worked with the children initially, as visiting faculty in Sahyadri.

The Resource Room helps children with learning difficulties to pick up skills in reading and writing, using a variety of methods. If the English teacher finds that a child’s reading and writing is not up to the mark, then she refers the child to the Resource Room.

Radhika akka takes a look at the child’s written work and talks with the class teachers, house parent and the Principal, and then advises assessment for the child, if needed.

Radhika akka’s schedule starts at 7.30 am in the morning and ends at 6.15 pm in the evening. Of the students who attend the Resource Room, at least 80% have improved. According to Radhika akka, students come more or less regularly.

Aditya and Runali of class 9 enjoy going to the Resource Room. Runali says that it has improved her spelling and sentence construction, and has helped with exam preparation.

## ON A MUSICAL NOTE

reported by Purnima & Sakshi

Everybody looks forward to weekends, as the whole weekend is free and one can attend different kinds of hobby classes. In Sahyadri School, there are seven hobby classes – Bharatnatyam, guitar, sitar, piano, violin, Hindustani vocal music and tabla. According to Amresh sir, we have hobby classes so that students can learn to sing, to dance and to play musical instruments. Hobby classes help students find a meaningful way to spend their free time.

Sangeeta Chakraborty, who joined Sahyadri school in the year 2009, teaches Hindustani vocal music. She offers a hobby class on Thursday and Friday from 4.50 to 5.40 pm. Besides vocal music, students also learn the harmonium. Sangeeta akka says, “Children make noise, but it is fine with me.” Students learn and perform songs for festivals, too. Sangeeta akka teaches songs like bhajans, Bengali songs, patriotic songs, devotional songs and many others. There are twenty seven children in the hobby class, of which fifteen are girls, and twelve boys. Vocal music hobby classes are held in the music room.

## SAY IT WITH STRINGS

If you pass the pre-school on Sunday before lunch time, you can see Amol sir teaching the guitar. Most of the batches have seven or eight children. Sir teaches the basics, that is linear exercises, to the beginners. When they are more comfortable with the guitar, he starts teaching them songs. Amol sir also repairs instruments in the class. But if he is busy, he repairs them at home.



The sitar hobby class began in the year 1995 or 1996. Girish sir has been teaching sitar in Sahyadri for many years. The sitar class is usually held in the music room. When the music room is not free, it is held in the staff meeting room. Girish sir stays in the school guest house on Saturday, Sunday and on alternate Fridays. When Girish sir is at home in Pune, adult students come to his house to practise sitar from eight in the morning to noon, and in the evening from four to eight.

In Sahyadri School, five batches of students attend the sitar hobby class at different timings over the weekend. These are students from 6th to 10th. So far, the sitar students have not performed outside the school. In sitar classes, Girish sir first teaches the basics, that include Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni Sa, and then he goes on to the Ragas.

Sakshi of class 10 says, "The sitar classes should be held more frequently, as they are very interesting. Girish sir teaches skills in the right order, and is very caring to students."

## GET WITH THE BEAT!

reported by Krishna

Folk dance takes place every Saturday from 6.30 to 7.30 pm in the senior auditorium. This process started in the year 1995, when the school began. Mahesh Pandey, the first dance teacher, was the one who brought these western folk dances to Sahyadri.

The teachers who conduct the folk dance now are Kishore sir and Arun sir. The students of class 9th and 10th do these folk dances every Saturday from 6.30 to 7.30 pm.

Once the students come to the second term of class 8, the ninths teach them the folk dances. This year too, the ninths are teaching 8A and 8B the dances in their free time in the senior auditorium. By the 14th of January, the 8ths had picked up six dances this term. In Sahyadri, it is a tradition that students learn the folk dances only when they become seniors.

There are certain rules to be followed in the dance space. There is a dress code for boys and girls. Girls should wear kurtas and boys should wear full-length jeans with T-shirts. Another rule is that students should not make a lot of noise and should conduct themselves in a well-mannered way.

Meera of class 10 says that she likes 'Hanakudem' because it has both slow and fast rhythms. Mona of class 10 likes 'Manavu' because it's a slow and soothing song.



## SOMETHING'S OUT THERE

reported by Avishkar

Sahyadri abounds in natural life. One weekend club that gives us the opportunity to observe birds, insects and plants, is the Nature Club.

It all began with Prabhat Sir going alone for walks and some students wanting to join him. Over time, the group became larger, and called itself the Nature Club. It has grown and continued because many people want to observe nature.

The club goes for a nature walk every Sunday morning at 6.15 a.m., selecting different routes. The group goes along the Parikrama path, on the banks of the Bhima, to the end of Python Hill, or some times even as far as Shambhu Hill, to observe natural life.

Prabhat sir conducts the Nature Club. This year, mainly students from classes 4, 5, 6 and 8 come for the club. Only one or two seniors attend it, at times. The people who attend nature walks most regularly are Ayush, Apeksha, Mithil, Neer and Avishkar. Students who come for nature walks bring along a pen or a pencil, binoculars, and, at times, a bird reference book.

Prabhat Sir doesn't like people chattering on nature walks because the birds fly away and the rest of the group gets distracted. When the group notices birds, insects or animals, the children observe their number, their movement, their size and their shape, and then note down these observations.

In the middle of the nature walk, there is a time when Prabhat Sir makes everyone sit individually, without making any noise, to observe nature and note down what one sees. This is called the 'silent time'.

On nature walks, the most common birds are bulbuls, crows, white eyes and sunbirds. The rare birds are white-eyed buzzards, Asian paradise flycatchers, Indian rollers, woodpeckers, owls, shikras, Steppe eagles, grey partridges, crested buntings, grey herons and wagtails.

Avishkar of class 6 says, "Observing, learning, writing, remembering... WOW ! It's such a pleasure to have a club like this to just learn about nature."



## VIEW-REVIEW

reported by Neha

After a long, hectic week, during which teachers and students have a very busy schedule, everyone looks forward to the weekend, which brings with it hobby classes, clubs, special meals, the folk dance and so on. One of the chief highlights of the weekend is the Sunday movie.

Weekend movies are shown every Sunday in the evenings or afternoons. They are screened in the Senior Audi by the audio-visual team. This year, the movies are chosen by Rahee akka and Menaka akka, who first watch them themselves to check if there is too much violence and abusive language or if there are scenes that are inappropriate for youngsters. The movie should be appropriate for viewing in school, otherwise a different movie is selected.

Menaka akka says, "It is very difficult to decide for the middle school if they should see Junior movies or Senior movies." They can't always see animation movies, and horror movies may scare them too much. The six movies that were shown this term before 6th Jan were: Cars-2, Kung Fu Panda, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows-2, Monster House, The Hook, and Terminal.

Sometimes there is a separate movie organized for Juniors. The reason for this is that the movies which the Seniors see can be subtle, and so difficult for Juniors to understand, or may be frightening for young children. A teacher accompanies the children for the movie show. This term, teachers are being assigned this duty in alphabetical order.

Vedant and Meka of class 4 say, "We normally like the movies shown because they are entertaining. Sometimes we don't like the movies, if they are boring." Manogina and Meera of class 10 feel the movies shown are good because a large variety of genres is shown. They also suggest that comedy movies, which everyone can enjoy, should be screened once in a way.

## POST-SCRIPT

reported by Neha

In our school, students communicate with their parents in different ways. The juniors write letters home and make monthly calls, while the seniors send e-mails. This is because of certain constraints on students' time as well as on facilities. Students can e-mail only in their unstructured time. There are thirteen computers in the computer lab. On Saturdays, the Non-resident Indian students email their parents, because letters would take a long time to reach abroad. Bhau dada, who handles e-mailing, attends to other work on Wednesday and has a holiday on Sunday. That leaves only four days for the other students and so only four classes can e-mail. The school has decided that the 4th, 5th and 6th can write letters and make monthly calls, as some of them can't type fast.

E-mailing became available to students in 2007. Students e-mail once in a week. As there are thirteen computers in the lab, thirteen students can e-mail at a time. Class 7 email on Friday from 4.30 to 5.30 pm and class 8 on Thursday from 5.20 to 6.45 pm. The class 9 slot is on Tuesday from 5.20 to 6.30 pm, and class 10 email on Monday from 5.30 to 6.45 pm.

When students are e-mailing, if their parents are online, they can chat with them. The students' e-mails go to the server. The server checks for e-mails every minute. If it finds any e-mail, it is sent to the parents, and the parents reply. If the connection is down, e-mailing still happens, but the e-mails now go to the server and stop. When the connection comes back, the e-mails are sent off by the server.

Bhau dada has problems when people come late, or if they ask him to let them email even if it's not their day. For students, problems arise when a computer isn't working, but Bhau dada immediately repairs it.

One student of class 8 feels that e-mailing is good, but she would prefer to make a monthly call. She feels that sometimes writing letters is also good, because you can decorate the letter paper.

## EXIT-EXAMS

reported by Daksh & Saloni

A student joining Sahyadri in fourth has no exams till the eighth grade. It is only in the second term of grade eight that one experiences one's first tests. However, board exams enter the picture as soon as one reaches the ninth. The policy of not having exams upto class eight was decided by the KFI (Krishnamurti Foundation India), and applies to Sahyadri as well as the other KFI schools.

There are many reasons why Sahyadri has opted to do away with exams. According to Amresh Sir, exams are not the only way to assess whether learning is taking place or not. Exams make students anxious, and concerned to get good marks rather than help them take interest in learning. Exams create competitiveness on the basis of how many marks have been scored. Prabhat sir feels that exams generally don't add any value to students' learning. In Kishore sir's opinion, there are better ways to find out how much students have understood and how much they haven't. He adds that exams can be harmful as they bring in competitiveness; they do not tell much about a child's learning, and may label a child's ability. Shubhang sir, who teaches Maths, says that if exams are conducted, a pressure may be created, resulting in less learning. According to Arun sir, it may be difficult for a junior child to apply a concept even though the child has understood it. So, an exam that requires one to apply concepts may give a false measure of one's learning. Anjali akka, who teaches English, says that exams are not an effective tool to assess one's learning as they measure one's learning only on a particular occasion. Also, they often bring about comparison between students. In schools like Sahyadri, by observing a student's daily work, the teacher assesses the learning of the child.

Why then does Sahyadri have exams in the ninth and tenth, if they are not a true measure of one's learning? The reason is that when one passes out from

the tenth grade, one may need a standard certificate to get admission in other schools or colleges. In most schools, exams are a commonly used assessment tool, meant to evaluate students' learning. These schools want students to experience exams because in higher classes they will have to give boards and pre-boards. Shubhang sir feels that through exams the teacher can know how well you have understood a topic and therefore where there is need for modification. According to Vandan akka, exams give you a certain amount of pressure, so you try to study.

Without exams, what makes students study? Arun sir and Shubhang sir say that one will learn if the material taught is neither too easy nor too difficult. Anjali akka says that when there are no exams, teachers try to make the subject interesting by using different methods. One has to then understand the real reasons for learning a subject. She adds, "The urge to learn in human beings is very strong, and students can learn just for the joy of learning."

So, if there are no exams, is assessment of any form necessary? Shubhang sir says, "Yes, assessment is mandatory as the teacher needs to know what the students are learning." Anjali akka says, "Keeping track of a student's work is necessary. What would be a good form of assessment is a question that educators are still grappling with. Some forms of assessment can do more harm than good."

In Sahyadri, teachers have the freedom to design their own syllabus. For Science in class 7, Arun sir uses a text book based on NCERT recommendation. He and Shubhang sir feel that not having exams doesn't affect the syllabus. Shubhang sir uses a textbook as a tool to teach Maths to class 6. In their faculty meetings, the Maths teachers decide the syllabus for each class. Anjali akka, who teaches English to classes 4 and 6, prepares the syllabus by noting down her intent and making sure all essential English skills which would be useful to a child are covered. The content and methods keep growing over time as akka discovers new ideas. She spends a lot of time planning her syllabus and

makes sure all the work that she plans would be meaningful to a child. Anjali akka says, “If there were exams, the syllabus would be quite different because when there are exams, teachers mainly teach things that could be tested in the exams and the syllabus is dictated by the exam. When there are no exams, the teacher is not under pressure to complete a topic quickly, and can explore it in depth.”

It is a challenge for teachers to teach with no exams. Amresh sir says, “They need to make their classes interesting and enjoyable so the students look forward to learning new things.” Teachers also have to find other ways of assessing students’ learning.

## BITS AND PIECES

reported by Pranav

### **Whither adventure?**

Parth sir took over the Adventure club when he joined the school in the year 2009. Before him, Gopal sir had anchored the club for five years. He was the teacher who had started the adventure club. Parth sir anchored the club for a year.

Because of his hobby class, studies and so on, Parth sir no longer has the time to run the club. When Parth sir anchored the club, he and the students went to random places around the campus. Their longest trek was 12 km. Around 40 to 50 students would join the trek. It has been stopped now, but many people want the adventure club to start again.

### **Smash, don’t splash**

Since the school started, it has never had a swimming pool or a tennis court. According to Amresh sir, there are plans to build a tennis court. Most probably there will be a concrete court. The court is likely to be on the edge of the football field near the first goal post. However, a swimming pool has not been planned because it would be difficult to maintain.

### **Far from the madding crowd**

Many people were searching for a location for Sahyadri School in different places. Krishnaji always wanted his schools to be near nature and far from the city. According to Prabhat sir, Achyut Patwardhan, Pama Patwardhan and Sunanda Patwardhan helped in identifying the Tiwai hill top as a beautiful spot for the school.

Living closely with nature nurtures the human spirit. Humans are part of nature and this connection needs to be sensed through close contact with nature.

The other KFI schools are far away from the city, but two schools - Rajghat Besant School in Varanasi, and The School, Chennai, are near the city.

Many students are happy that Sahyadri School is situated far away from the city, because the crowds, noise and pollution of the city would disturb them.



## REGARDING RULES

reported by Abhiram

Many electronic gadgets like laptops, PSPs, iMac, iPods and iPads are commonly used by young people. However, in Sahyadri School, students are not allowed to bring electronic gadgets of any kind. What might the reasons behind this rule be? What do teachers and students feel about it?

Seema akka remembers that electronic gadgets were banned from the starting of the school. Students are not allowed to bring electronic gadgets to school because they are very expensive and these things have an addictive quality, so students might get obsessed with them. According to Prabhat sir, this rule is unlikely to change in the near future.

Anjali akka feels glad that electronic gadgets are not allowed in school, as they are distracting and might hinder students' learning in school. She feels that the school should be a place of leisure, where students find the space to explore what is really important. If we are too busy, and our life full of entertainment, there is no space for deeper learning. "Entertainment" keeps us away from observing people and nature. Telang sir says, "We have come to this school to learn how to live with fewer resources."

Devarsh of class 6 wants laptops, PSPs and phones to be allowed. He suggests that there should be a slot in the week for using them. Neer of class five is glad that electronic gadgets are not allowed. He feels that everyone will only stick to them and might not be with other people. Rishi of class 5 wants to save paper by avoiding textbooks and notebooks and using an iPad. Shubhankar of class 9 says, "Electronic gadgets should be allowed, but only for senior school, because seniors are more responsible for their things." Rohan Patil of class 10 says, "These things should be allowed in school but only for educational use."

## UNDER THE BANNER

reported by Devarsh

There are many rules in Sahyadri. One of them is that students are not allowed to bring personal deodorants, hair gel or printed T-shirts to the school. According to Prabhat Sir, this rule has existed for at least the past eight years. However, many students enjoy using these items, or would like to keep personal tuck. So, what are the reasons for these rules?

Personal tuck, deodorants, hair gel and printed T-shirts are not allowed for a number of reasons. If different students bring different kinds of tuck, some may feel tempted to have what others bring. Stealing or fighting over tuck may occur, and this would create problems. If everybody brings tuck, they may bring junk that contains harmful chemicals which are bad for health.

The reason why printed T-shirts are not allowed is that it is inappropriate in this atmosphere. The students are all here to learn things. Text on T-shirts makes people curious, and may distract them. There may be some inappropriate message printed on a T-shirt. Deodorants and hair gel are not allowed in school as all the students are expected to live a simple life. Such products may contain toxic substances that can be harmful.

One person from 6 B uses Setwet gel, and one from 9 B likes to use Nike Extreme deodorant. They both like to bring personal tuck. Both say that "These items should be allowed." The 6 B student who uses these says he feels shy when he does so. Their parents know that they use these items.

An ex-tenth named Archit says that he used to use Oriflame deodorant as a student at Sahyadri. He only used this item to have a good image, and didn't like to use it after taking a bath. When he used these items he felt a bit scared. He was happier when he did not use them. His parents knew that he brought this item to school. People from his dorm used to bring such things, and the house parent confiscated these items.

Archit feels it is good to ban these items.

Two boys of class 10 admitted that they like to use Adidas deodorant, and one of them says he likes to use Gatsby gel as well. They feel this rule is useless. Their parents know that they bring these items to school, and allow them to do so. People from their dorm who used to bring personal tuck got caught.

Although these items are banned by the school, some people still bring them, so this is a problem that is difficult to solve.

## OF TENTHS AND TRIBALS

reported by Anjali

Every year, about twenty students of class ten of Sahyadri School go to SPS, along with two or three escorts. They go for ten or twelve days in the Diwali vacations. The headquarters of SPS is located in Neemkheda near Indore, in Devas Taluka in Madhya Pradesh. The students and escorts take a sixteen hour journey to Indore by the Avantika Express. A three-hour bus drive takes the group from Indore to the centre, which is in Neemkheda.

Ten people started SPS about twenty years back, as they were unhappy to see the tribal people being exploited. SPS could have helped them by lending them money, but they felt that the person borrowing from them might feel small. The trips to SPS from Sahyadri started in the year 2008. So far, four batches of class ten students have gone to SPS.

The full form, of SPS is Samaj Pragati Sahayog. Samaj the first word, stands for 'society'. Pragati stands for 'progress' and sahayog for 'getting together and doing something.' SPS is a non-governmental organization.

The most important work SPS does is to conserve water. SPS has been helpful to the tribal women, who now conduct a Micro-credit programme. The women do this by meeting every month, collecting money from the group and later depositing it in the bank. When anyone in the group needs the money for a particular

reason, she takes the needed amount from the bank, if the rest of the women agree. One of the problems the tribal women faced was that when they had to sell anything, they were exploited by the merchants who work in the market. The merchants would offer a very small amount of money, and the women didn't have any choice but to accept it. Now, SPS has helped these women to form a self-help group (SHG), to empower them. SPS also trains other organizations, according to their requirement. The trainees can also help others with the knowledge acquired from SPS.

SPS also has an agricultural program, and integrated watershed management along with a milk collection that has a cooling system which enables milk to reach cities.

The tenths go to SPS to understand the tribal people and to interact with them. As the students also need to pay attention to their studies, the school keeps the trip optional. The students stay in three dormitories in Neemkheda, in the training institute for non-governmental organizations.

According to Prabhat Sir, interacting with the people and children of the tribal community, having sessions with the founders of SPS, and helping farmers with their work, are very important and valuable experiences for the tenths. Alok of class ten feels that learning the difficulties of the tribal people, learning the farming techniques and learning how the government helps SPS is a very valuable experience.



## MELGHAT MUSINGS

reported by Aishwarya (Class 7)

Recognizing the educational value of excursions, Sahyadri School sends different classes to different places. The 7th standard students have been going to Melghat for the last four years.

Before the school selected Melghat as the excursion spot, the 7ths used to visit the Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary in Wayanad in Kerala, a place that teems with natural life. The people there, Wolfgang, Sandy, Suprabha and others, cared so much about the plants that if you brushed against the plants and the leaves fell, they would scold you. These people are taking care of the land and helping to revive the natural vegetation, and have a lot of work to do, so they found they could not give time to students and stopped conducting camps. Thereafter, Sahyadri chose to send the 7ths to Melghat, a tiger reserve.

Being a 7th standard student, this year I got a chance to visit Melghat. The two sections, 7A and 7B, were sent in different batches. I went in the first batch from the 1st to the 8th of January, and the second batch were in Melghat from the 8th to the 15th of January. Like most people, I too enjoy travelling by train. As luck would have it, the school had arranged for us to travel by train from Pune to Badnera, and then by car till the camp. This was my first train journey. Starting at five in the evening, we reached Badnera station by six the next morning. Then we boarded the three jeeps, which had come to drop us till the camp. The jeep journey was almost four hours long, and also very tiring.

Melghat turned out to be completely different from what I had thought it would be, full of mist, with dry trees and grass all around. It was like walking through a cloud. As soon as we entered the area, “chirp, chirp” sounds just filled the air! The campus we stayed in was the buffer area of the tiger reserve, which was constructed in 2006. Our hosts there were: Kishore Sir, Sachin Sir, Rahul Sir, Pradeep Sir, Vishal Sir, Amol

Sir and Adwait. They don't use electricity generally on campus, except an hour a day. The lights work on solar energy. The water used in the wash rooms is reused after being processed. They also have a nursery, a kitchen garden and two dogs. The dogs bark when carnivores are around, and keep the campus safe from wild animals.

“If we steal anything from here, it will be your cooks!” we jokingly told Kishore Sir, the Manager of the camp. The food was just too good. We got Bournvita and biscuits in the morning as well as for tea in the evenings. We had to wash our own plates, cups, mugs, and spoons. As there were only three teachers escorting us-- Prabhat Sir, Shephali akka and Seema akka, it was difficult for them to keep track of how many servings of food we had already taken, and so we were very lucky!



The organisers had a planned schedule for us; we did nearly the same things every day. We would get up early in the morning and go for a safari. They had three Gypsies, jeeps with seats in the back, and no top. Shramdan, which kept us busy every afternoon, involved gathering stones and sand for making a plane surface or a platform. Building check dams was also a part of Shramdan. Going for a nature walk with the guides in the evening was a very interesting experience. We were divided into three groups. Every group went to a different place, gathering information about the campus.

Watching documentaries just before dinner sure caught our interest! We watched documentaries about the animals and birds in the reserve, and how the forests are getting affected because of our habits. After every documentary, we got hot and sour soup, which was scrumptious. All of us looked ahead to the documentaries for the soup that followed! Diary writing was not much fun, as it got too late at night and the cold made our fingers numb. It was very difficult to write due to the cold, and all of us got too sleepy after all the activities. Here is an excerpt from Parth Pathak's diary...



'In the morning, we went to a bird watch in the buffer area. On the way we saw birds like the blue jay, green parakeets, jungle babblers, jungle fowl, grey hornbills, peacocks and raptors...'

Like Parth, all of us wrote an account of what we did and what we saw every day.

Have you ever tried getting lost in a tiger reserve? If not, then you must try it! Once, as we went for a safari, Vedika, Sravani, Shaurya, Kishan, Prabhat Sir and I got lost. We were walking behind everyone and had stopped to observe a bird. We turned to find everyone gone. We walked ahead and didn't stop. After a long time, we started walking backwards, and on the way, we saw everyone waiting for us. It was fun, but we had hoped to see wild animals! We also knew the way back, so it wasn't that scary.

Some of us had problems dealing with the cold. The

air was icy out there. As the sun set, the temperature dropped by almost 13 degrees Celsius. At night, all of us got into our sleeping bags with jackets, gloves, monkey caps and socks on. But the fun we had out there more than made up for all the trouble!

## HEADLINES

reported by Saumya P.

Sahyadri School has had five heads in the past sixteen years. The first headmistress was Uma Kalyanram; the next head was G. Gopalan. The third was Chittaranjan Kaul and then came Dr. Harshad Parekh, who was followed by Geetha Iyer. After her, the present head is Amresh Kumar. The head is usually selected by the KFI (Krishnamurti Foundation India), which interviews the candidates. The person who can best handle the role of the head is selected.

The school needs a head. Why? That's the question. The school needs a head because somebody needs to be responsible for the work of the school, and needs to provide guidance for the staff members and the school. The head of Sahyadri does his work in his official cabin. He works sometimes even on Sundays and sometimes even when children have a holiday. He has no fixed timings, but usually he works from 8.00 am to 1.00 pm; and then 2.30 pm to 5.00 pm.

The Principal has to do many tasks, like writing letters to parents and other people, planning school activities, conducting meetings, arranging for ICSE exams and so on. Amresh sir feels that the most challenging aspect of being a head is having to do so many different kinds of things. What appeals most to him is the possibility of creating opportunities for students and teachers to learn and be creative.

The Principal sometimes has problems. Often, he has to work till late at night. While he is having a personal meeting, sometimes people come to meet him. It's important for outsiders to take appointments before meeting the Principal. If the Principal is very busy with his work, then students and teachers also need

to take an appointment. The office staff help the head the most, by sending letters or taking appointments from parents.

Amresh sir says, “The work has changed over the years. For example, my skills have grown, things get better defined, and work gets easier to do.” Amresh Sir adds that the advantage of being the Principal is that there is learning for him about all that is involved in holding such a role. “The disadvantage is that I may not have a lot of leisure to spend time with family and to pursue personal interests.”

Menaka akka says, “As the Principal, Amresh is a person who is easily approachable. This makes it very easy for me as a teacher to deal with my work in school. He is a very supportive person. If you have a problem, you can talk it over with him.”

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*a newsletter by class 6 students of Sabyadri School*