

THE SOMAIYA SCHOOL

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Namaste, & Welcome !

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK



Dear Parents:

Welcome to the August edition of **WAYS – the Somaiya School newsletter**.

As Frank Smith says, *“One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way.”* We urge all of you to speak more and more languages at home with your child, especially the mother tongue. Language is the most effective source of communication in our life. Strong and fundamental language and communication skills will help your children to think and evaluate complex-looking ideas and scenarios.

In this edition, among other updates, we bring you snippets of the French Day & Sanskrit Day celebrations held at our school. Enthusiastic participation from the students as well as the staff along with game stalls, contests, songs, skits et al comprised the day long celebrations. We hope you would take few minutes to peruse the same.

Festivals are an important part of our culture, and at the Somaiya School, we try and include as many celebrations as possible. August was packed with festivities of *Janmashtami, Ganpati*, Independence Day Celebration, *Raksha Bandhan* amongst others. Our students participated in all the events, glimpses of which are seen in this edition.

Our students are also taking part in various events like Diplomathon, DSO sports competitions, IRIS Science Fair etc. We believe in the overall development of students and these events would augment their team-player & life skills.

Am also very pleased to announce that **The Somaiya School is ranked No.3 under CBSE category in Mumbai city and No. 16 in Maharashtra** (Source : Education Today Magazine—Aug 2017 edition). We owe our success to all our stakeholders and aspire to reach greater heights.

As always, I invite feedback on this newsletter from our staff and parents alike and would greatly appreciate if you do write in to me at: principal.tss@somaiya.edu on how we can make this better and collaborative.

Look forward to your valuable & constructive inputs.

Warmly,

Ms. Parveen Shaikh

(Principal – The Somaiya School)

Cultural & Academic updates - Primary & Secondary

Janmashtami celebrations : The assembly by grade 4 revolved around the teachings of Bhagavad Gita and how we can incorporate it in our daily lives

Independence day :The patriotic feelings for the country could be seen in the performance put up by the children of grade 1 to celebrate 70 years of freedom.

Solo & Inter-house group singing competition was held on 16th Aug 2017. Our ex-principal Mrs. **Kavita Vaidya** was one of the judges along with Ms. **Sunita Gan-grade** and the results are as follows:

Solo : 1st Prize : Ms. **Rhea Ranjith** (8A), 2nd Prize : Ms. **Bhakti Baswan** (9A), 3rd Prize : Ms. **Janani Jagannarayan** (7C). Consolation Prizes : Mst. **Arya Jayram** (6C), Mst. **Gajanan Nerurkar** (7C)

Group Singing : 1st Place—**Rigveda**, 2nd place—**Samveda**

Inputs : Mr. **Sagar Mestry** (Music Teacher—TSS)



Eco-friendly Ganesha workshop for students as well as the out side community was held on 19th August. We had our students making their own miniature versions of the Elephant God.

An assembly was conducted by the students of Grade 3 to celebrate the festival of **Lord Ganesha**. The assembly was carried out with a lot of zest and zeal. It was a power packed performance which contained a dance, a skit and so many other activities that helped the students learn about the festival of Ganesh Chaturthi and all the celebrations that follow.



There was a dance competition held on 24th August in the school in both Classical & Semi Classical dance forms. Following are the winners :

Classical Dance—1st Prize : **Mst. Soham Ajwani** (6A), 2nd prize : **Ms. Gunjan Kulkarni** (9B), 3rd prize : **Ms. Rutuja Kolkur** (5A). Consolation Prize: **Ms. Jia Wadhwa** (7A)

Semi Classical—1st prize : **Ms. Anushka Gangane** (8B), 2nd prize : **Ms. Tejaswi Bhosale** (6B), 3rd Prize: **Ms. Dharmee Pandya** (6B), Consolation Prizes : **Ms. Dhriti Nair** (8A) & **Ms. Aishani Mishra** (8A). Inputs : **Ms. Sujatha Nair** (Dance Teacher—TSS)



Ms. Shreya Parekh (9B), **Ms. Aahilya Seshadri** (9A), **Ms. Yutika Pathak** (9B) participated in "The Amateur Scientist" contest at the **PES University, Bangalore**. Overall, it was an incredible experience, where the students got to compete with 85+ schools. The ideas were very imaginative and innovative and it was very appealing to get such terrific ideas from young minds. Titled, "**A Unique Way To Identify Fingerprints - loop, whorl, arch,**" the school's project was based on an idea to find an Individual's personality, strengths and weaknesses. Each school was given a stall where they could present and explain their innovative concepts to two experienced judges. Many of the schools presented a notion which could be applied for future use to benefit the human race.

Inputs—**Ms. Akshata Shetty** (Science Faculty —TSS)

Teacher Spotlight - 1

An Alumnus and college topper of the prestigious “Institute of Science” (Colaba, Mumbai) and graduating with an M.Sc. (Physics), **Mr. Mahesh** is a popular science teacher at The Somaiya School and believes in the quote by Napoleon Hill—*“If you can't do great things, do small things in a great way.”*

An avid singer and winner of many awards, he is a man of many talents & a CTET qualified teacher. He is the recipient of Smt. S. K. Somaiya Award for **Promising Teacher of the Year** for the academic year 2015-16, **Excellence in Teaching** by Akhil Ghatkopar Gujarati Mahajan group in year 2015. He has completed his B.Ed. from Pillai College, Mumbai and PGDME from Somaiya College and conducted several demo teaching sessions for B.Ed. students. Mr. Mahesh is also the housemaster for Atharva Ved house at TSS for 2014-17, which has been winning accolades consistently.

Team Communication (TSS) met Mr. Mahesh for a small interaction. Excerpts:

Q : What got you into teaching ?

A : I started my full time teaching stint at Universal school, Mumbai where I worked for two years and by then, the teaching bug had bitten me. I was passionate about science and physics in particular, and wanted to teach young minds.

Q: How challenging is teaching science, especially physics to this new generation ?

A: I want to demystify physics for my students. Most students are interested in science because of the hands-on experiments that they get to do in their early years. Once they move to high school, the ratio of content of syllabus : experiments rises drastically and hands-on work experience comes down. As a teacher, even if I wanted to conduct experiments, the workload of the syllabus draws us down. This is where most students opt to drop out of science. But as a teacher, one must innovate newer methods to make science fun and engage students constantly.

Q: Talk to us about CRED Talk

A: CRED talk started off as a student talk and got innovated on the go. Today, we have students talking about things that were never imagined or thought of—from reptiles to Quantum physics to theory of relativity. It really gladdens me to see these young minds do so much research and speak confidently.

Q: Despite so much interest in science, India is not really in the top rung for R&D & research. What are your thoughts ?

A: It's easy to fly off the handle in pure sciences & research as it is not only time and energy consuming, but also pays a miniscule of what we would otherwise earn. Plus there is the lure of computer science and technology where people prefer to be techies. However, in the long run, if it was indeed made viable with lots of support and good pay from the government, research would take center-stage in India.

Team TSS thanks Mr. Mahesh for his time and valuable inputs.



On working at TSS, Mr. Mahesh says:

Here at TSS I have always got support from both our previous principal, Kavita ma'am, current Principal Parveen ma'am and all my colleagues.

I have always been encouraged and been given freedom in conducting the class the way I want which has allowed me to do experimentation with my teaching as per the need of students: CRED talk is also result of that freedom only.

I have got many opportunities at TSS to host events like Musical Day, Art mela, sports days, and various school assemblies which has made a confident speaker out of me.

I look forward to contribute a lot more to the success of The Somaiya School.

Teacher Spotlight - 2



On working at TSS:

"Working at TSS has become more exciting because of the support I receive from my colleagues and the management. The constant encouragement from my mentors has also given me more impetus. I look forward to improving the team image more positively during my tenure as the Maths HoD."

A soft-spoken teacher, yet a man with deep insights, **Mr. Pradeep Panigrahi** comes with over 16+ years of teaching Mathematics. A post graduate in Economics with additional qualification of PGDME, he has worked at several organisations including Tata Power at Andheri, Mumbai. He has also been involved with IAYP (The International Award for Young People) as an Adventure Sports enthusiast, and has certified more than 100 students on various IAYP levels in student camps across India.

Mr. Pradeep originally hails from Orissa, and has made Mumbai his home over the past two decades with his joint family including his two lovable kids. Team Communication (TSS) met Mr. Pradeep for a small interaction. Read on to find out his take on how learning Mathematics can be enjoyable, amongst other things.

Q: What was your journey towards taking up teaching as a career ?

A: I was working at a company in Mumbai when I met a couple of diploma students and I helped them out with Mathematics. They turned out very well, and that was a huge motivation for me to take up teaching as a career. Most of the students I have taught at KJ Somaiya College 2002 onwards are doing extremely well, and am very happy for their success. I have also been with PG Garodia school teaching Maths to secondary students from 2006 to 2016 and joined TSS in Sep 2016.

Q: There is a myth about Mathematics being tough. How do you view it ?

A: The onus of making Maths fun lies with both the teachers and parents alike. For e.g.: Shopping can be a tool to teach profit and loss, Banking to teach inflation and money power, a visit to the local vegetable vendor can be a lesson in weights, measure & approximation. A pizza can be used to learn fractions. Parents and teachers need to work together and remove the phobia behind learning Mathematics.

Q: In this age of gadgets , huge distraction and instant answers from Google, how can students study Maths better ?

A: First of all, Maths has to be felt, not just taught/learned. You need to understand that tests and exams are a mirror to show you what you don't know, and not just what you are capable of : therefore reflect deeply once you write an exam and analyze your answers to sharpen your skills the next time around. A student of mathematics needs to change his practice techniques based on the complexity. Needless to say, regularity and solving a handful of problems EVERYDAY + double checking them is a must. This way, the distilled attention span will help them perform better. Learn Maths as small learning blocks, as concepts, rather than huge exercises that need to be solved at one go.

Q: What are your views on Mathematics as a research subject for this generation ?

A: The scope for a mathematics student / scholar is right now limited to the teaching field, although few companies are now recruiting people with a mathematics background. There needs to be enough market acceptability and traction gained for this to become a viable and financially stable career option. Having said that, however, applicability of mathematics is seen everywhere from rocket technology to restaurants.

One quote you live by : (Mr. Pradeep has himself coined this wonderful quote) : *"If you are successful, all your errors become definitions. If you are unsuccessful, all your definitions become errors."*

Team Communication thanks Mr. Pradeep for his time & a very insightful conversation.

Sanskrit Diwas Celebrations



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he intellectual debt of Europe on Sanskrit literature has been undeniably great. It may perhaps become greater still in the years that are to come. We (Europeans) are still behind in making even our alphabet a perfect one. - Prof. Macdonell



Also known as the “Dev Bhasha” or the Language of the Gods, Sanskrit has garnered worldwide attention about its importance. A few startling facts about this language:

- ◆ Sanskrit is the oldest language known to humanity. It is the oldest, most technical, systematic language in the world.
- ◆ The word “Sanskrit” is a combination of two words – “Sanskar” and “Krit”; “Krit” meaning “Inculcating” and “Sanskar” meaning “Essence of Moral Values”. Thus Sanskrit means a language that has the capacity to indoctrinate higher values in an individual.
- ◆ The Sanskrit vocabulary uses 49 sounds, generated from five distinct areas of the mouth, allowing phonetic accuracy. Amazingly every Sanskrit letter has a precise sound in any word it is used in, all the time.
- ◆ Sanskrit is the best language for use in the computers : Sanskrit has an *amazing* wealth of words and synonyms to give it great versatility . It has in *fact* over 70 words for water while English has just got one. Even elephant has *amazing* 100 names in Sanskrit each with specific meaning.
- ◆ NASA contains over 60,000 manuscripts of palm leaf with them written in Sanskrit under research and study for the various underlying ancient technologies in it.



The theme for this year’s **Sanskrit Diwas celebrations** at TSS was “**Learn Sanskrit, Speak Sanskrit**”. The students across grades 1 to 8 participated in the celebration held on 4th August 2017. The students of **grade 1 to 4** demonstrated their language skill with songs, stories, drama and speech. Parents were invited as guests for cheer their wards. They were left enthralled and spell bound seeing the children so confident and fluent in the language. Students and parents played a wide variety of language enrichment games. This was a truly enjoyable experience for everyone.



The **Assembly for Sanskrit Diwas** was conducted by students of **grade 6 to 8**. It began with a welcome song, followed by a qawali in Sanskrit that brought out the importance of Sanskrit. A traditional Maharashtrian style of singing “Powada” was also sung in Sanskrit. The students also spoke about the importance of this ancient, classical language in daily life. A humorous stotra on “Mobile phones” was presented by students of grade 6. A skit on animals was presented by students of grade 5.

Students also spoke about the importance of stotra in our daily lives. Previously our stotras invoked the blessings of the gods .Today our stotras include our mobile phones, Whatsapp and our technological gadgets :)

In this manner, a tradition continues.....

Inputs & Photo Credits: **Ms. Nandita Chougule , Sanskrit teacher, TSS.**



Bienvenue en France (Welcome to France) —French Day Celebrations

TSS celebrated **French Day on 9th Aug 2017**. A slew of activities from game stalls to Crossword Puzzles to singing the French National Anthem to a hilarious play kept the audience & the visitors enthralled. We had special visitors from the **French Consulate** : M. **André RUCHE** Deputy Consul, Head of Chancery & M. **Christophe LEGRIS**, Linguistic & Education Attaché who were both very impressed with the performance.



Students who compered the event were Ms. **Jia Wadhwa** & Mst. **Vedant Thakkar** (both 7A), Ms. **Ninupta Srinath** (8A) & Mst. **Madhav Taneja** (5A).

The following were part of the event, and students participated with great alacrity and enthusiasm:

Poem on Days of the week (**Grade 3**)

Alouette—song presentation (**Grade 4**)

Presentation on The Eiffel Tower, a historical and popular tourist landmark of Paris (**Grade 5**)

Skit : 'Au (Oh!!) Restaurant' (**Grade 6**)

French National Anthem (**Grade 7**)

Song : 'See you again' (**Grade 8**)

We can see that both the French teachers **Ms. Pooja** & **Ms. Gomathi** trained these students really well, and the performance was top notch.

Lets see what some students had to say about this event :

- * I learnt a lot of facts about the Eiffel Tower during the event, the play was also hilarious—**Mst. Aditya G (8A)**
- * It was organized very well, and even the non-French speaking students could follow by context—**Ms. Simran**
- * The fluency and lyrics of the songs were amazing, the comical situations of the Indian couple in the play was an absolute hit—**Mst. Jineet Kayani**
- * Really loved compering the show, and totally inspired by M.Ruche's and M. Legris speaking to us. Look forward to compering many more—**Ms. Ninupta Srinath (8A)**
- * The numerous fun & game stalls set up by the Primary section were real fun ! The songs were great too—**Mst. Tanish Chheda (8B)**

Some teachers shared their feedback too :

- * I was surprised to learn so many interesting facts about the Eiffel Tower. Students were just brilliant !—**Ms. Tandra Chakraborty**
- * The assembly was very well organized, and the game stalls very engaging too. Well done! - **Ms. Nikita & Ms. Soraya.**
- * While some students need to overcome their stage fright, the overall performance was very good and the play was exceptionally funny & informative too —**Ms. Aditi Agrawal Gupta.**
- * Perfect pronunciation & confidence with the language were the highlights of the day. The visitors' presence added a fillip to the occasion—**Ms. Trupti Saraiya.**



Inputs & Picture Credits: **Ms. Pooja** & **Ms. Gomathi** (French language teachers—TSS)



From the Sports Corner...



TSS participated in the interschool competition at JankiDevi Public School on 19th Aug 2017. Mst. Priyansh Thakker won the first prize (Gold) & Mst. Shreyansh Gala clinched the third prize (bronze) in the Table Tennis Competition.



Another feather in the cap is that team TSS Matches participated in the **DSO under 14 Football** events held from 19 to 22 August 2017. Now **Team TSS is in top 4 in Mumbai suburban football competition** and we are now qualified for District level Football competition.



Congratulations to all winners ! The teams were ably led and supported by our ever popular sports teachers **Mr. Manik & Ms. Reema**.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

On **22nd August**, we had Mr. **Anil Swarup**, IAS (Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Government of India) & Mr. **Nand Kumar**, IAS (Hon'ble Principal Secretary—Maharashtra School Education & Sport Department) visit our school. They were received by the principal, school management, trustees and other office bearers who interacted with them. The visitors spent ample time with our students and select staff in the school campus, and were very happy to see the innovative teaching techniques used in the school.

Following are some glimpses from the event:



Corrigendum

In the previous edition of RAYS (July 2017), under the article—“Self Boosters”, LS has to read as Life Skills (an independent subject at TSS), and not Learning Skills. The error is regretted.