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IMPACT-FOCUSED S<mark>CHOOL</mark> COMMUNITY MAGAZINE



Healthy, Wealthy and Wise Mind and Body Matters

## Content

#### Editor's Note......



#### **STUDENT VOICE**

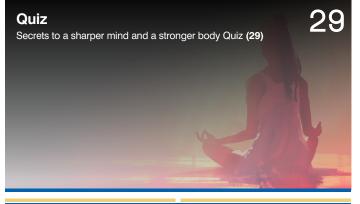












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# Editorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the October 2025 edition of FairGaze Schoolastic News. Guided by our theme "**Healthy, Wealthy and Wise – Mind and Body Matters**", this issue explores what it truly means to nurture the mind, strengthen the body, and live wisely in today's world.

Our theme of the month articles, penned by students from across schools, shine a light on this idea in diverse ways through poetry, reflection, research, and storytelling. From thoughtful verses on health and happiness to powerful insights on nutrition, counselling, sports, and the **Mid-Day Meal scheme**, these pieces remind us that wellness is not just personal, but also social and cultural.

This edition also carries vibrant student voices, a poetic review of the movie Sam Bahadur and an imaginative tale "The Whispering Forest of Health and Wisdom" which shows how stories of courage and creativity inspire young minds.

On the educator's side, we present an in-depth interview with **Dr. Madhumati Singh**, where she speaks about mental health, motivation, and mindset essential lessons for students and teachers alike.

Our education event reports celebrate innovation and dialogue: from **Sci-Ex 2025** at Fortune World School, which transformed curiosity into creativity, to the **Bharat Education Forum**, which is pioneering conversations on Al and social and emotional learning. We also bring an insightful interview with the principal of **Salwan Public School** on setting new standards in holistic education.

In educator focus, the remarkable and courageous work of **Savitribai Phule and Fatima Sheikh** remind us that education has always been the strongest weapon against inequality. Their courage and vision continue to inspire classrooms across India.

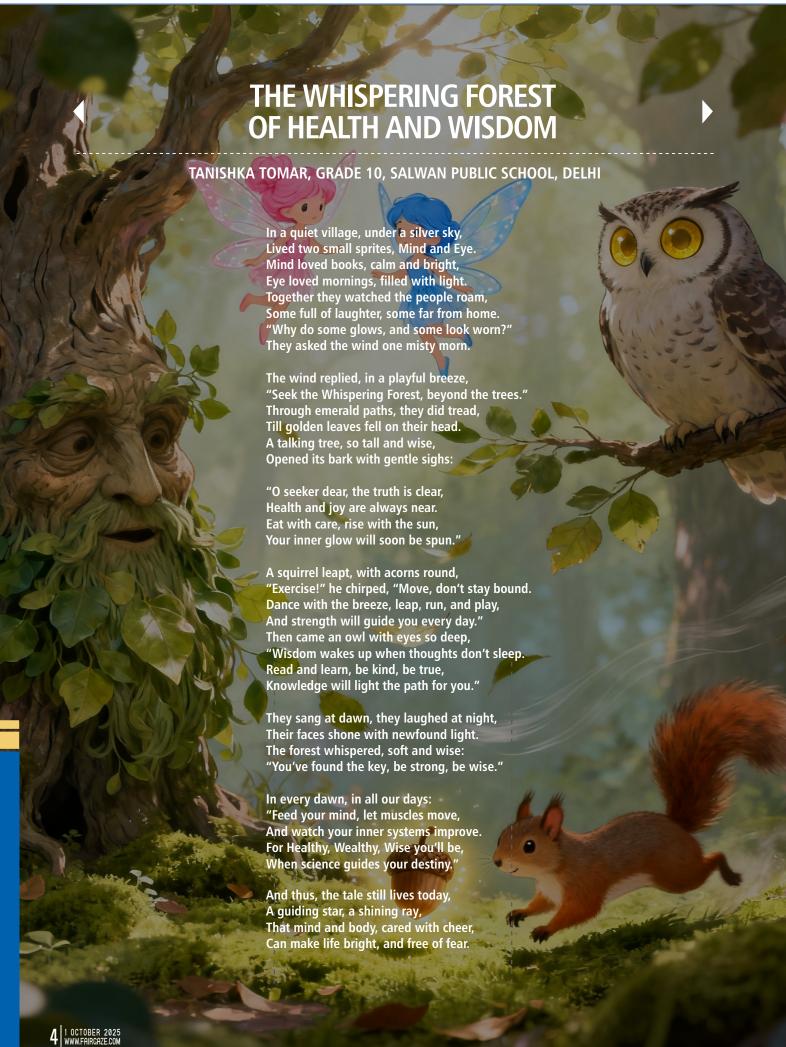
Our **special quiz** "Secrets to a Sharper Mind and a Stronger Body" add an interactive, joyful dimension to the edition.

As always, we thank our partner schools, educators, and students who breathe life into these pages. Looking forward the November edition will carry another thought-provoking theme, and we warmly invite your submissions articles, poems, reflections, and artwork to keep this journey alive.

As you turn the pages, remember strength of body fuels clarity of mind, and wisdom lights the way forward. To be healthy, wealthy, and wise is not just an old saying, it is a way of life worth embracing now, and as we must in the future too.

Warm regards,

The Editorial Team FairGaze Team



# HEALTHY, WEALTHY AND WISE, MIND AND BODY MATTERS

KRISHANKANT, GRADE IX, GURU NANAK SR. SEC. PUBLIC SCHOOL, SHIKOHABAD



roper nutrition can impact social & emotional development. When children and adolescents feel well, they are more likely to engage in social interaction and participate in learning experiences. Hungry children have more social and behavioural problems because they feel bad, have less energy for complex social interaction & cannot adapt as effectively to environmental stresses.

Food and proper nutrition lead to a healthier life. Developing healthy eating habits during childhood acts as the foundation for lifelong dietary choices. Good nutrition positively impacts students and families for generations. Often students do not know what they will be able to eat; it can lead to a series of physical, mental, and emotional challenges that make it harder to stay in

school and do well.

Globally, the prevalence of overweight and obesity rose by 47.1% for children and 27.5% for adults between 1980 and 2013. A recent WHO (World Health Organization) Commission report stated if these trends were to continue, then by the end of 2025, 70 million children are predicted to be affected.

Globally, the prevalence of overweight and obesity is increasing among children and younger adults; it is associated with unhealthy dietary habits and lack of physical activity.

Nutrition impacts overall health, including the immune system, etc. School and college students with access to proper nutrition are more likely to have better overall health and development outcomes.

For many young adults, leaving their parental home to go to university or hostel is a critical transition period, which includes new challenges such as taking charge of their own eating habits. During childhood, the physiological need for nutrition increases and the consumption of a diet high in nutritional quality is particularly important.

Food plays a vital role in preparing children and students to learn and making sure they are healthy enough to attend school each day. Nutrition impacts brain development, memory and cognitive function, energy, attention and focus, which are all critical to the ability to absorb and retain information.

Children who have a balanced diet are more likely to have improved school attendance, better grades and higher test scores than those with poor dietary when children feel hungry, stress and anxiety often negatively impact their learning outcomes.

Nutrition impacts mental health; when students lack the healthy foods they need, stress and anxiety can interfere with learning and well-being. When nutritional needs are met, students can begin to focus on their wellness.

Findings from this academic article suggest that applying multi-component interventions (environmental, educational, physical change strategies) along with parental involvement and long-term initiatives may be promising for improving dietary habits and other childhood-related diseases among primary school children.

Speaking of mental wellbeing, according to me, the work of the

counselling department in providing proper and right guidelines to the students is important. It acts as a crucial resource for students, families, and the broader school community.

School counsellors are equipped to address a range of issues, including academic pressures, social dynamics, emotional difficulties, and behavioural concerns. But also, they have a responsibility to guide their students about proper diet, as per the availability for students. They should eat to be healthy and focus on studying. But I think this is more of the responsibility of parents to take care of their children's nutrition availability more than the counsellors.

In our school too, we have counsellors. Whenever we do have some doubt in

maintaining proper nutrition, diet to focus on study, we just consult with them and with their help we are able to study with more focus and concentration without any distractions. In our school we do not have a canteen but because of our teachers mostly students bring food rich in nutrition.

I would like to thank my mentor Mr. Dev Sir who guided me through it and encouraged me since this is my first article.



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# BEYOND THE RUFFLES AND GLITTER



ANIKA ANURAG TIWARI, GRADE XI-D, SALWAN PUBLIC SCHOOL, MAYUR VIHAR, DELHI

What are the heaps of glittering gold
Without a life which once blooms,
And learns to wither and grow old?
What use are heavy pockets with jingling coins,
If I have not the strength to sustain their weight,
If I have not a life, I can call mine,
If I have not a life where I am not its slave....

The sound of jingling coins, ruffling notes.

The glitter of silver and gold.

It has the power to make our eyes shine,
to give us a thrill- the gushing kind.

But, in this facade we remain blind,
to what the universe has blessed us with, so kind.

We forget that this jingle isn't the steady rhythm of our heart,
that this ruffling is no work of art.

We forget the greatest gift, right before our eyes.

hen asked, any person would reply that power is money, that power is how much wealth you have accumulated in your life. They forget that the power is the way your heart pumps blood when you cycle down the roads, that power is the way your limbs move when you dance, that power is the way adrenaline flows in your veins when you sprint, that power is the body nature has bestowed on us so kindly, lovingly, but we turn it a blind eye, running after monetary, materialistic pleasures, so easily and blissfully forgetting that it's our body that helps us run so.

In this frenzy of trying to run after a world of monetary bliss, we forget that the one who enables us to run needs care as well. It needs nutrition for strength, the proper support, love and care for mental fruition, and a strong beam to hold up the emotional burden that adds onto our shoulders every day. Our body is like a plant which is trying

to grow and sustain, keeping up with the pace. Nutrition is the sunlight it needs to sprout out of the confines of its seed, and grow taller, stronger. Mental health is the support around which it coils its tendrils to balance and take aid in holding it up as it grows. And finally, emotional well-being is the love, care, and encouragement it needs to blossom into a veritable posy of flowers.

Nutrition has started to become the talking subject of schools. Students are at the cusp of growth and transition, from toddlers to children to teenagers to adults; a beautiful metamorphosis. Nutrition is the catalyst which facilitates the transition. It is very important for students to get the right amount of diet and exercise in a balanced manner, so that they can get the optimum nutrients they need for growth and development of the body. It is also very important for learning because nutrition helps develop human resources. It enhances the students by making sure they are mentally and physically fit, thus

enhancing the human resources and enabling students to perform better. After all, studies cannot happen on an empty stomach; a tried and tested statement.

The cafeteria in our school serves a wide array of food, a different signature for every day besides the daily usuals. It is a perfectly balanced, healthy meal, but also makes sure to include treats occasionally for the students to enjoy their meals and look forward to it. The food served in cafeterias is a representation of the culture of that country, a blend of nutrition, homely customs, and pure mouth-watering deliciousness. For example, schools in Japan serve a type of meat for protein, rice for carbohydrates, a side of vegetables or boiled greens for vitamins/minerals, and milk for minerals and some fat- the perfect balanced meal. Schools in America, on the other hand, serve food like burgers, pizza, French fries with mashed potatoes, fruit and sometimes dessert form a stark contrast from the healthy options students get in Japan.

Like the food served in our school, the food across Indian schools varies because every 5 kilometres, the culture, food habits, and consumption changes. For example, lunch in Kashmir includes the famous, flavourful biryani/pulao, a meat curry, vegetables, lentils, rotis etc. while Tamil Nadu, in an evident contrast, serves rice, sambhar, along with Rassam, Kootu, Poriyal, Kozumbhe, and many more. This is how different the food served in India is.

India's journey has truly been unique when it comes to help the feet of nutrition reach every home and fill every stomach. Where the government's attempts at increasing food availability and feasibility failed to

provide nutrition, mid-day meals put on their cape and came swinging in to save the day. By launching this unique concept of mid-day meals, where schools serve the students lunch which either affordable, cheap, or sometimes even free like in government schools, the government successfully hit three birds with a single arrow- increased the attendance, helped students get proper nutrition, and enhanced a human resource. The prospect of food acts like an incentive for many students to attend school, and to not leave after the lunch break, the blend of perfectly balanced food has helped to soothe the scars of malnutrition many children bore the brunt of, and enhanced nutrition leads to better and more learning, thus enhancing human resources.

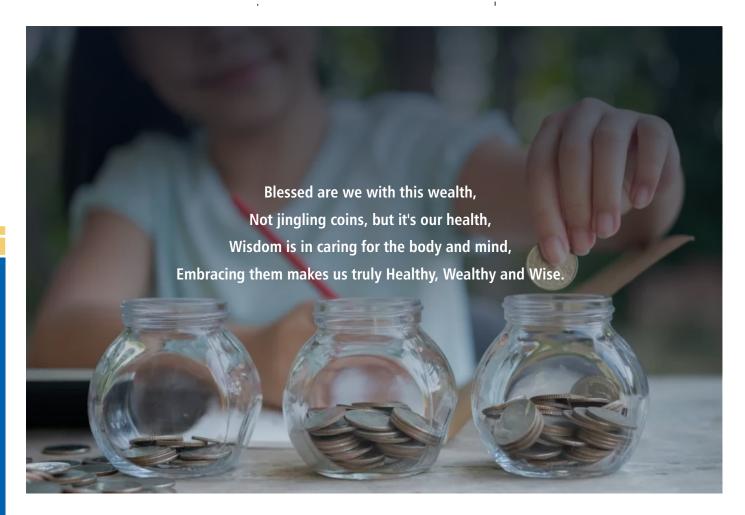
Now when we talk about health, we can most certainly not leave out sports. They are like a syzygy, they align perfectly. Sports enhance the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of a person. It makes them physically fit by

allowing them to explore with movement and channel their energy to something productive, gives them strength in those developing muscles of theirs, and gets that heart pumping. It is a tremendous way of releasing stressletting the mind wander around running, jumping, kicking, hitting... sometimes even imagining the faces of someone who has made your life miserable on that shuttlecock or football. It is the lock that frees our mind from the shackles of stress. And, of course, when we laugh with friends, bond with teammates, and have our parents cheer on us, albeit too loudly sometimes, it gives our heart that warm, fuzzy feeling which just blankets you in a cozy embrace, melting burdens, anxiety, and stress.

Another thing that has gained a lot of influence in educational institutions is counselling department. Counselling, in simple words, is guidance be it mental, emotional, or academic. Counselling departments have become a salient aspect of

educational institutions as they are the guiding light students need to find their way in life; a support they are reluctant to get otherwise.

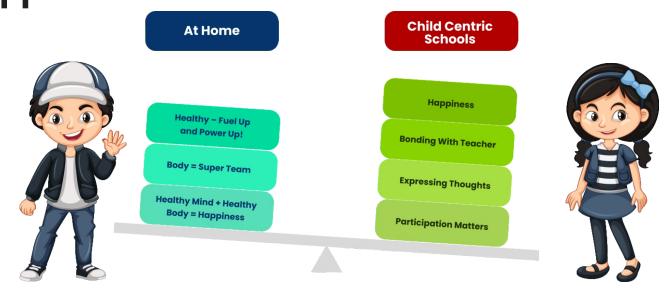
After all this, there is only one appropriate way to conclude, one appropriate way to pay tribute- our body is a gift, a blessing, which requires nutrition, support, and love to thrive. Mental, physical, and emotional health matters to our body, to the families that have given us their hearts to love and keep, to the friends who smile when we laugh. So, as the topic suggests, health is taking care of our body, mind and soul, wealth is not lighting up with dollar signs at any materialistic opportunity, but to take care, love, and embrace this wealth bestowed on us. And to be wise? Well, it is not to plot how to outshine your sister-in-law at your brother's wedding, but to invest in something that returns infinitely, to nurture something that loves unconditionally, and to build something that stands resolute eternally.



# SUPER COMBOS THAT BRING OUT YOUR BEST

LAKSHITA PANWAR, GRADE 7, SAHAJ INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, DELHI

ealthy, wealthy, and wise is not just a cool phrase, it is a guide to being your best, it' is about feeling good in your body, and thinking clearly even when things get tough.



**Mind** + **Body** = **Super Team** A healthy body helps mind to work better. On days when we exercise, we feel more awake and efficient and ready to do a task but, when we are stressed, even an easy task feels hard to do.

**Healthy Mind** + **Healthy Body** = **Happiness** It is universally said that a healthy mind in a healthy body feels happy.

**Happiness** For a kid who goes to school can find happiness in small activities that he or she performs in the school as 25 to 30% of time he or she spends in school.

**Bonding With Teacher** A strong bond with the teacher who is supportive, listens and respects the child's thoughts can build A positive attitude which makes the child feel happy.

**Helping Environment** Helping the child's friends in the project or in any other need can create a positive impact and trust among their classmates can make them feel joyful.

**Participation Matters** Participating in different activities in school allows kids to attain relief from stress and boost confidence which makes the kid feel fortunate.

Expressing Thoughts When kids express their thoughts, the courage to explore without fear makes them feel confident and good

**Child Centric Schools** A child centric school with a positive learning atmosphere, proper facilities and holistic development presents a happy environment. If this type of environment is provided for the kids, they will always be happy

**At Home** A child can find happiness at home by establishing healthy routines like sleep, nutrition, and exercise, creating a positive & supportive family environment through open communications and activities, & getting in meaningful experiences like helping others etc.

**Healthy** — **Fuel Up and Power Up!** Taking care of your body is easier than it sounds! Eating the right foods, sleeping on time, and stretching regularly can make a huge difference

**Fun fact:** Did you know? Even 20 minutes of stretching or walking daily can boost your mood and help your brain work faster! You do not need to be perfect, small changes make a big difference! Taking care of your body and mind helps you feel stronger, smarter, and ready for whatever comes your way. Whether it is eating healthy snacks or learning to stay calm, every step counts! The higher your energy level the more efficient your body, the better you feel and the more you use your talent to produce outstanding results.

# SERVING NUTRITION WORLDWIDE A COMPARATIVE LOOK AT INDIA'S MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME

**SIDHI ARORA** 



tarted in 1995, the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Yojana is one of India's most impactful welfare programs and it is about far more than just feeding children. For millions of students, especially from poor and marginalized communities, it is a strong reason to attend school regularly, stay focused in class, and get at least one nutritious meal each day. This simple initiative has significantly helped in reducing dropout rates, especially among girls and children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

With global hunger on the rise, as per a recent UN report, over 828 million people go hungry daily and 149 million children under 5 are stunted due to malnutrition, India faces a similar crisis. Nearly one-third of Indian children under five suffer from malnutrition. In such a scenario, the MDM scheme plays a vital role by ensuring school children receive meals that typically include grains,

pulses, vegetables, and fruits helping to combat hunger and improve child health.

#### A Meal That Fuels More Than Just the Body

Nutrition is the foundation of a child's ability to learn. A well-fed student is more alert, focused, and active in class. The study (School Feeding and Learning Achievement: Evidence from India's Midday Meal Program," by Rajshri Jayaraman (ESMT) and Tanika Chakraborty (IIT/IIM)) have shown that children who receive mid-day meals consistently for three to four years score up to 18% higher in reading assessments than those who do not. The impact goes beyond marks, proper nutrition improves memory, concentration, and even classroom behaviour. And it is not just about the food. These meals often represent the only reliable source of nutrition for many children from lowincome families. For them, the lunch bell does not just signal a break it signals hope.

One of the most unique and heartwarming aspects of the MDMS is how it breaks social and economic barriers. Children from different castes, religions, and backgrounds sit together and eat the same meal, often served by women from local communities. In a country where deep-rooted divisions still exist, this daily act of sharing lunch becomes a subtle, yet powerful lesson in Moreover, the program equality. supports local farmers by sourcing grains, vegetables, and pulses from markets. This not only strengthens local agriculture but also keeps menus regionally relevant and cost-effective.

India's MDMS ensures that children attending government and government-aided schools receive one freshly cooked,

nutritious meal per school day. The program is a vital source of daily nutrition for many children, especially in rural and underserved areas. It has contributed to improved school attendance, reduced dropout rates, and better health outcomes. Meals are typically prepared on-site by local cooks, often mothers from the same community, which not only empowers women but also creates local employment.

The scheme continues to evolve with efforts to enhance menu diversity, fortify food with micronutrients, and integrate local produce. State governments have the flexibility to customize menus based on regional tastes and nutritional needs, ensuring cultural relevance and acceptance.

#### Global Practices in School Meals: Inspiration from Across the World

While India has made impressive strides, other countries offer different models and innovations that reflect their unique cultures, governance systems, and priorities. Here is a look at how various nations approach school meals, offering ideas and insights for mutual learning and inspiration.

#### Japan: School Meals as a Learning Experience

In Japan, school meals are more than just food they are part of the educational curriculum. Children eat together in classrooms, taking turns serving food to their peers, which fosters teamwork, hygiene habits, and respect for food. Meals are cooked in hygienic, centralized kitchens or school-based facilities and are carefully planned by licensed

nutritionists to ensure balance and variety. Beyond nutrition, the experience emphasizes manners, discipline, and community all while maintaining high standards of cleanliness and food safety.

#### Finland: Universal, Nutritious, and Equal

Finland offers free, hot school lunches to all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background. The philosophy is rooted in equality every child receives the same meal, served with dignity. Menus are designed by nutritionists, featuring whole grains, fresh vegetables, fruits, dairy products, and a source of protein like fish, meat, or legumes. Hygiene is maintained through well-resourced kitchens and a culture of accountability and trust. Seasonal and available ingredients locally prioritized to ensure freshness and sustainability.

#### Brazil: School Meals That Support Farmers and Culture

Brazil's National School Feeding Program (PNAE) is a model that connects nutrition with local agriculture, cultural diversity, and social inclusion. A minimum of 30% of school food ingredients must come small-scale local farmers. supporting rural livelihoods while bringing fresh, diverse produce to school kitchens. Menus are developed by municipal nutritionists who ensure that meals meet nutritional standards and reflect regional food traditions. Schools often involve parents and communities in meal planning and implementation, turning food into a shared civic responsibility.



#### South Korea: Technology-Driven and Nutrition-Focused

South Korea offers well-balanced meals through state-funded school cafeterias, equipped with modern kitchens and cold storage facilities. The country leverages technology to manage quality and transparency with digital systems that track student participation, monitor budgets, and ensure hygiene standards. Menus are curated by nutrition experts, incorporating diverse food groups, including traditional Korean staples, fresh vegetables, and protein-rich options. The emphasis is on precision, safety, and dietary education, making mealtimes an integral part of students' well-being.

Across all these diverse models from India to Japan, Finland to Brazil, one thing is clear: school meal programs are about much more than food. They are investments in education, health, equality, and national development. Each country brings its own strengths. India's continued commitment to expanding and refining the MDMS through infrastructure upgrades, nutrition fortification, digital transparency tools, and community engagement shows that it is poised to lead by example. By learning from global best practices and celebrating its own innovations, India can further enhance the impact of this vital program.

#### Summing Up

The Mid-Day Meal Yojana is one of India's boldest and most inclusive efforts to address child hunger and boost education. While it has changed millions of lives, the time has come to modernize the scheme, learn from global best practices, and close the existing gaps. With the right reforms, the MDM scheme has the potential not just to feed young minds but to nourish a stronger, healthier, and more equal India.

In a world where no child should learn on an empty stomach, school meal programs stand as a powerful expression of care and commitment ensuring that every child, everywhere, has the fuel to reach their full potential.

#### **SAM BAHADUR (MANEKSHAW)**

ANJALI KUMARI, GRADE 11 A, ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL JAMMU CANTT, JAMMU



A Poetic Review
In reels of history, the canvas shines,
A soldier's story, etched in lines.
Sam Bahadur walks, both fierce and kind,
A leader of heart, with a fearless mind.
Vicky Kaushal dons the frame,
With voice and gait that echoed his name.
Field Marshal Sam, the legend untold,
Brought to life with courage bold.
The battles roar, the borders burn,
But calm within, his instincts turn.
Not just a fighter, but wise in speech,
Every word is a lesson, a life to teach.
The film's not war alone to show,

It's grit, its humour, a soldier's glow. From mess hall jokes to battlefield fire, It fuels the heart, makes spirits higher. The lens of Meghna, sharp and clear

Takes us close, yet keeps him near.

A tale of service, sacrifice, cheer,
That stirs the soul and drowns the fear.

Not perfect frames, yet perfect aim,
To honour a hero, beyond mere fame.
A nation's pride, in khaki's hue,
The film reminds what one can do.
So, if your heart feels weak, unsure,
Watch this march, both strong and pure.
For Sam Bahadur's tale will say—
"Courage wins the hardest day."

## ◆ MIND AND BODY, SIDE BY SIDE →

ANWESHA SINGH, GRADE IX F, ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL, JAMMU CANTT, JAMMU

Strong in body, calm in mind,
That's the treasure we must find.
Healthy meals and active days,
Shape our future in countless ways.

Wealth, not just notes we earn,
But habits are good and lessons we learn.
Sharing kindness, playing fair,
Builds wisdom beyond compare.



# THE POWER OF MIND AND BODY

AYUSH KUSHWAH, GRADE 9, GURU NANAK PUBLIC SCHOOL, SHIKOHABAD

here is a famous saying: "Health is wealth." We hear it often, but do we really live by it? In today's world, where success is usually measured by marks, money, or gadgets, we sometimes forget that without a healthy body and a wise mind, nothing else truly matters.

When we think of the word "wealth," the first thing that comes to mind is money. But real wealth is not stored in a bank it lives in our energy, our happiness, and our ability to live life to the fullest. A person with millions but poor health cannot enjoy life, while a healthy person with modest means feels rich every single day.

A Healthy Body = A Sharp Mind. Our body and mind are best friends. When we eat well, exercise, and sleep properly, our mind becomes sharper, more creative, and more positive. On the other hand, junk food, late nights, and too much screen time make us tired, irritable, and less focused. For students, this balance is extra important because a healthy lifestyle directly boosts memory, concentration, and confidence.

The Power of a Wise Mind is that it helps us make choices that keep both body and spirit strong. Stress, anxiety, and negative thinking harm us as much as unhealthy food. That is why practices like yoga, meditation, and even simple breathing exercises are powerful. They calm our mind and give us strength to handle challenges. A wise mind guides us to live in balance, rather than chasing success at the cost of health.

In our busy routines, it is easy to skip meals, ignore exercise, or stay glued to our phones. What is the Secret to True Success? As students, we often think that success means high marks or trophies. But imagine winning a prize while



Small, consistent habits make a big difference:

- Choose home-cooked meals over junk food.
- Spend at least 30 minutes outdoors every day.
- Play sports, cycle, dance, or practice yoga.
- Sleep well and wake up fresh.
- Take time for hobbies, reading, or quiet reflection.
- These little steps keep both mind and body happy.

feeling sick, tired, or stressed would it still feel like success? True achievement comes when our body is strong, our mind is peaceful, and our heart is full of energy. That is the kind of wealth no one can take away from us.

The theme "Healthy, Wealthy and Wise: Mind and Body Matters" reminds us that success is not just about what we earn, but about how we live. When we care for our body and guide our life with wisdom, we create real prosperity. In the end, money can be spent, trophies may gather dust, but a healthy body and a

wise mind will always remain our greatest treasures. So, let us promise ourselves to live healthier, think wiser, and treasure the wealth that truly matters.

"A healthy body and a wise mind are the richest treasures of life."



## MENTAL HEALTH, **■ MOTIVATION & MINDSET**

## A CANDID CONVERSATION WITH DR. MADHUMATI SINGH

#### THE SCHOOLASTIC EDITORIAL TEAM

"Mental health is not a luxury anymore; it is a necessity. If we want our children to grow into confident, compassionate, and capable individuals, we must address their emotional needs with the same urgency as their academic ones."



he FairGaze Schoolastic team had an insightful interview with Dr. Madhumati Singh, renowned psychologist, and board member of FairGaze, focusing on the vital topic of mental health. The interview serves as a reminder that in today's fast-paced environment, staying mentally healthy goes hand in hand with developing life skills that support resilience and focus.

Schoolastic Team: Let us begin with foundational. something Mental health is often misunderstood or only associated with mental illness. From your perspective, what does mental health truly mean and why is it important in our daily lives?

Dr. Singh: Mental health, for me, is like the head of the headquarters. The main centre. Everything is regulated from the brain: emotions, skills, cognitive and abstract thinking, regulation of body organs, and even stress (like in the amygdala). That is why we say the mind is the headquarters. When the mind is regulated, the rest of the body is too. It is no rocket science. Why is it important? Because that is all that is. The mind has its ups and downs what we think, what we feel, and it all comes from the brain. Mental health is everything.

In India, we are still in the baby steps of understanding mental health and even further away from prevention. Any health-related issue mind or body enquires us to catch symptoms before they become a full-fledged disorder. For example: A regular school-going child suddenly stops doing homework, avoids eating, and sits alone. This behaviour change does not mean a mental disorder immediately, but it is a change. If these different behaviours persist for 2-4 weeks, it may indicate a psychological issue like depression or anxiety. We need a preventative approach, and that starts with identifying what makes behaviour not normal. Any symptom that persists and deteriorates over weeks such as avoiding school is a red flag. Otherwise, feelings like anger, sadness, or being upset are normal. But when these continue a quantum basis for over three to four weeks, we call it a psychological problem, and help is needed.

ST: Board exams, competition, peer pressure, there is a lot on students' minds. What advice would you give to a stressed-out student who feels overwhelmed by studies?

Dr. Singh: Students of classes 8 to 12 are not stressed because of studies; they are stressed because they are not regular with academics. Regular means doing your work every day, not postponing it. Stress builds up only when you are lagging. Children who do well are not necessarily more intelligent. That is a myth. Most of us fall under average IQ (95-110). The real difference is discipline, regularity, and attitude.

The root of board exam stress is irregularity. Do not overwork in weak areas. Focus on your strengths, push in average ones, and pass the weaker ones. Reduce stress with disciplined eating and sleep routines. Do not rely on last-minute cramming it is risky. Start board exam prep early. After class 9 exams, take a 10-day break, then begin class 10 studies. Students who start early are ahead when topics are taught in class. For them, it becomes revision. High performers are not gifted they are smart with their time.

ST: Do you believe traditional "study harder" advice still works? Or do today's students need a different approach to learning and preparing for exams?

Dr. Singh: There are no shortcut and no substitute for sustained efforts. Sustained means regular, everyday work all 7 days, not just weekdays. Just like a parent takes pride in their job, a student must take pride in theirs. When you do well in your role, your self-worth grows. Studying 1.5 hours daily is enough.

Take out your notebook, underline keywords, maintain your homework and classwork. When you come home, revise just 2–3 pages. No teacher finishes a full chapter in one class, so daily revision keeps you sorted.

The CBSE system has changed, it is now application-based, not rote learning. You must understand the concept. Sleep 10 hours, play 4–5 hours you still have time. Just 2 hours of study a day is doable. The benefit? No Monday blues, no weekend withdrawal. You will feel confident and enjoy school like those who are doing well. It is a win-win: study 1.5–2 hours daily, all 7 days. Sustained effort is the key to success.

ST: Between class 6 and 12, students start discovering what they like and what they do not. How important is it to help them explore different fields before choosing a stream or career?

**Dr. Singh:** Middle school is when there is a sudden jump in the syllabus. Subjects become more detailed, instead of just EVS, students now learn science, geography, civics, and others separately. Often, children do not know what they truly like. Even high achievers in class 10 may say they like all subjects because they have done well in all.

During these years, you do not need to actively search for your interest it will come naturally. For example, when a geography teacher teaches and you feel excited about the globe or maps, that interest arises on its own. That is how you identify your favourite subject something that clicks and feels fun. And when it is fun, you usually score better. Subjects you do not like may get average marks unless you try harder.

Why are we talking about marks? Because marks still matter. They show what you have learned. It is not about scoring 90%, but marks reflect your potential to an extent. Beyond academics, student life matters too. Earlier, students were active in sports, but now sports, library, art class all are part of your overall development. If it is a library period, pick a book and read. If it is art class, engage fully.

When teachers ask for volunteers for activities or schoolwork, do not avoid it, you miss holistic growth.

ST: With the rise in anxiety, depression, and burnout among school students, what early signs should parents and teachers watch out for?

**Dr. Singh:** First and foremost, the important part is that when the child is avoiding going to school, avoiding going to tuition, avoiding doing the homework, copy is not done, homework copy is not completed, there looks to be an obstacle. Please remember, no child is doing it deliberately. It is not something he or she is doing out of fun, out of joy. It indicates somewhere there is a laq.

Also, there could be some eating issues. Some kids tend to overeat, some begin to lose weight, they feel queasy. Irritability, mood swings where they become defiant and where they are not calm and cool. They may be escaping into phones and everything. So, it could be a combination of symptoms.



ST: How can schools create a space where students feel safe asking for help without fear of judgment?

**Dr Singh:** I think one of the best things that have happened in our education system, is we have the school counsellor. It is the school counsellors who follow ethics and keep information confidential, and they try and sort it out with the child and the parents.

But in some cases, it is important for the counsellor to share some information with the school authorities, the administration, the authorities as per protocol. But in most schools, counsellors are very well trained to be able to take care of what looks to be a problem and help the child.

ST: How can schools be encouraged to take mental health as seriously as academics?

**Dr. Singh:** School can have regular workshops. PTM is a very good time, where the school counsellor can organize like a 30–45-minute short workshops for parents whose children are in different grade bands within the PTM. This can be done three or four times a year because that also helps the parents to talk about issues that their kids are going through or just parenting tips, certain things that can help. A school counsellor can organize that.

That is a very effective way. Also, in some cases, we have these drop boxes in the PTM. You know, for example, a parent can write a particular problem of their child and put it there without telling which kid it is. They can write the class. So that the counsellor comes to know that this class has these set of problems, which can be dealt with. So, it becomes more a pointed kind of approach.

ST: What is one mental health warning sign students should never ignore, no matter how small it feels?

**Dr. Singh:** Students, perhaps they take phone addiction or electronic media addiction very lightly. They think it is easily doable. They can solve it. Whereas it is an addiction and they do not realize that their brain is not allowing them to concentrate on their studies, because it is filled with information from reels, memes etc, and they should not take it lightly.

The second is if they are having concentration issues on a regular basis. It could be a diet related issue, a particular mineral deficiency say B6, B12, where they have constant concentration problems or a nagging headache or feeling lethargy, feeling very sleepy; and certain physical symptoms, which could

be because of some psychological issues that they may be going through.

## ST: How can teachers encourage quieter students to participate without embarrassing them?

**Dr. Singh:** One is a backbencher. The other one is a quiet person. They are two separate things. Backbenchers may not be an introvert, maybe they just sit and observe. I think in a lot of schools, they have classroom seating on a rotational basis. That is a good thing.

Secondly, I really feel that kids who do not answer, maybe it is their temperament. One of the ways to encourage them would be to appreciate the child's responses. As a teacher you can respond in two ways when the student is quiet—either they can say, "okay, sit down. Okay, fine. Good answer"; or be appreciative and say, "okay, you very rarely answer. We are so happy to hear your response". So positive reinforcement is helpful.

Some kids are raising their hand for everything. Out of those so many kids who raise their hand, give everybody a chance. But the kids who do not raise their hand will do so in time, but some do not, and I do not think we as teachers need to make them more uncomfortable because it is just their nature. I do not think it is an issue. Not everybody needs to be an extrovert. Not everybody needs to get up and speak. It is again a myth.

## ST: If you could go back in time and give your 12-year-old self a piece of advice about learning, what would it

**Dr. Singh:** Something that I did, was that I enjoyed school life, each single period had its own fun. It is almost like I spread myself thin in the school life. I have beautiful memories of it. I remember being friendly with people junior to me, senior to me, because I would be involved in something or the other. There is an annual day, or if there is something that the teacher wants from the staff room, I will go and get that. I was popular with the teachers. I experienced school life holistically.

Do not just stick to just one thing, like go to your classroom study and come back.

That piece of advice would be that I wish I had studied every day of my life and not in the last minute and panic. My studies were not so organized. I wish I was a little more organized.

## ST: If every student from class 6 to 12 could hear one message from you right now, what would it be?

**Dr. Singh:** I would like to share something very important with students from Class 6 to 12 something that most of us do not usually do, but it can make a huge difference.

#### First Tip:

Whenever you have guests or relatives visiting your home, and with your parents' permission, I want you to go and sit with them in the living room for a few minutes. Spend just five minutes asking them:

- What do they do for a living?
- · Where do they work?
- How did they reach there?
- What did they study to get to that career?

This simple act will expand your entire world to the next level. You will learn so much from real people about real careers. It is a valuable resource use it! Before they arrive, ask your parents, "Can I sit in the drawing room for 5 minutes? I'd like to speak to uncle or aunty." Usually, what happens is the opposite parents tell kids to go inside the room or go out and play. But I strongly request you to do the opposite go and learn from these real-life experiences.

#### Second Tip:

At least once a week, discuss different careers with your parents or family members. It could be just one parent, or any elder in the house. Just take one career per week and talk about:

- · What that career involves,
- What qualifications are needed,
- What kind of work it includes.

These two small efforts will expand your thinking to the next level. Because let us face it, we all study so we can do well in life and have a good career. But many students do not even know what careers are available, and that limits their

thinking. When you know what is possible, you feel more motivated to study and work towards something.

Our Schoolastic Team concluded our interview with Dr. Singh with a rapid fire "Myth or Fact" round. She did remarkably well in her responses. What would your responses be like? Write in to us and let us know.

- Toppers always become successful adults. Myth
- Studying late at night helps you remember better. **Myth**
- Arts are only for students who cannot handle science or commerce.
   Mvth
- Marks define your intelligence.
   Mvth
- All children learn in the same way.
   Myth
- Left-handed children are more creative. Fact
- Girls are naturally better at languages, and boys at math. Fact
- Intelligence is fixed at birth. Myth
- You should avoid talking about mental health with kids—it confuses them. Myth
- Taking breaks while studying reduces concentration. Myth (but only for 2-min break is allowed)
- Video games always have a negative impact on learning. Myth
- Children mimic the emotional states of their parents. Fact
- Multitasking while studying improves productivity. Myth
- Introverts cannot be good leaders.

# NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS 4.0 (PART I)

Diplomacy in Action

BHAVNA SHARMA AND VANSH TYAGI



he National Model United Nations (NMUN) 4.0 began with a session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) that immediately set a high bar for intellectual depth and diplomatic engagement. Delegates gathered with the mandate to deliberate on a profoundly complex and globally relevant agenda:

"Deliberation upon the Global Arms Trade and the Usage of Private Military Companies, with Special Emphasis on the U.S. Second Amendment."

What followed was more than just debate, it was a simulation of real-world diplomacy, where young voices confronted questions of sovereignty, accountability, and the ethical dilemmas of modern warfare.

#### Setting the Stage: Why This Agenda Matters

The global arms trade remains one of the most pressing challenges of our times. With billions of dollars' worth of weapons circulating across borders, questions of control, misuse, and responsibility dominate international relations. Adding to this, the rise of Private Military Companies (PMCs) armed groups hired by governments or corporations has introduced new complications.

For young delegates, this was not just an academic topic. It was a window into the fragile balance between national interests and global security, and the responsibilities that come with leadership in a globalized world.

#### **Debates that Reflected the Real World**

From the very outset, the committee room came alive with passionate arguments and powerful rebuttals. Representing the African Bloc, the delegate of Nigeria made a striking statement:

"Legitimate? PMCs are mercenaries in disguise. They destabilize our nations, exploit resources, and operate outside international law. The UNGA cannot allow warfare to become a business."

The clarity and conviction of this remark resonated strongly, underscoring the concerns of nations where PMCs have been accused of exploiting fragile political situations.

On the other hand, delegate of Russia defended its necessity, framing them as practical solutions in fragile states:



"Private military companies provide necessary security solutions where governments are weak. They are a legitimate part of international security."

This clash of perspectives set the tone for a debate that mirrored the very discussions unfolding at the real UN. The delegate of France brought the debate into sharper focus with reference to historical tragedies:

"The Nisour Square massacre in Iraq is a tragic reminder that PMCs act without accountability. We must push for a UN framework to regulate them."

While France emphasized accountability. the United Kingdom argued for realism:

"While regulation is necessary, banning PMCs entirely is unrealistic. They provide support in peacekeeping, critical reconstruction, and counterterrorism."

These exchanges reflected the diversity of opinion from strong moral objections to pragmatic acceptance demonstrating the true essence of diplomacy: reconciling differences to work toward solutions.

#### Building Consensus: From Words to Resolution

Despite differences, the delegates showcased remarkable negotiation skills. Through moderated caucuses. unmoderated discussions, and draft proposals, they moved step by step

toward consensus.

The final resolution carried the weight of these deliberations, calling for:

- Strengthening the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT): Closing loopholes to ensure stricter global monitoring of weapons transfers.
- Establishing a binding UN framework for PMCs: To regulate their recruitment, operations, and accountability under international law.
- Balancing sovereignty with global responsibility: Respecting constitutional rights, such as the U.S. Second Amendment, while ensuring they do not compromise international peace and security.

For many first-time delegates, this process was eye-opening showing that international diplomacy is not about winning an argument but about finding middle ground where every voice is heard.

#### Beyond the Debate: Lessons in Leadership

What made the UNGA session of NMUN 4.0 truly memorable was not just the topics discussed but the skills it nurtured.

 Critical Thinking: Delegates researched complex issues and learned to present informed arguments.

- Negotiation: They discovered the importance of compromise in resolving conflicts.
- Empathy: By representing different nations. students stepped into perspectives far removed from their own.
- Collaboration: Drafting resolutions required teamwork, persuasion, and the ability to respect differing opinions.

Every raised placard, every moderated speech, and every draft amendment added to the experience of being a diplomat in action.

#### **A Step Toward the Future**

The first part of National MUN 4.0 set a powerful tone for the rest of the conference. By grappling with issues as serious as the global arms trade and the role of PMCs, students not only simulated international diplomacy but also demonstrated that the youth of today can engage with the challenges of tomorrow.

The session concluded with applause not just for the resolutions passed, but for the spirit of dialogue and the determination to build a world where accountability and peace go hand in hand. As one looked around the committee room, it was clear: this was more than an academic exercise. it was a rehearsal for real-world leadership.

# SCI-EX 2025 AT FORTUNE WORLD SCHOOL, TURNING CURIOSITY INTO CREATIVITY

THE SCHOOLASTIC EDITORIAL TEAM REPORT



n 23 August 2025, Fortune World School proudly hosted its muchanticipated annual science exhibition, Sci-Ex: Sciencophilia — Curiosity to Creativity. The event, which began at 9:00 AM at the school's Sector-105, Noida campus, was a vibrant celebration of innovation and imagination, drawing students, parents, educators, and science enthusiasts together for a day filled with exploration and inspiration.

From the moment visitors entered the exhibition halls, they were greeted by an atmosphere buzzing with excitement and curiosity. Brightly decorated stalls, meticulously crafted models, and eager student presenters set the tone for a day dedicated to scientific inquiry and creative problem-solving.

The displays ranged widely in theme and complexity, showcasing the depth of students' skills and their commitment to meaningful innovation. Magnetic levitation models, hydraulic lifts, Al-

powered helmets, and plastic-to-fibre conversion projects stood side by side with renewable energy initiatives, eco-friendly prototypes, and recycling innovations. Each project highlighted students' ability to merge classroom concepts with real-world applications, bringing science to life in ways that were both engaging and inspiring.

But Sci-Ex was not only about presenting finished projects, it was about the learning journey behind every creation. Over weeks of preparation, students immersed themselves in brainstorming sessions, collaborative research, trial-anderror experiments, and countless rehearsals. This process allowed them to sharpen 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication.

The exhibition also reflected Fortune World's strong emphasis on values and global responsibility. Many students used their projects to address pressing

environmental and social issues, from sustainable energy solutions to innovations aimed at reducing waste. Their work demonstrated a forward-thinking mindset, encouraging peers and visitors alike to see science as a tool for building a better and more sustainable future.

As guests toured the exhibition, the excitement of the young innovators was palpable. Students confidently explained their concepts to an engaged audience of parents, teachers, and peers, receiving feedback and encouragement that strengthened their self-belief. Behind every stall were stories of challenges overcoming experiments that failed, designs that had to be reworked, and spent perfecting presentations. The resilience and dedication displayed by the students were as inspiring as the projects themselves.

Sci-Ex also offered a rare opportunity for students to experience science in a practical, hands-on context, bridging the gap between theoretical learning and real-world application. Teachers observed that this experiential approach not only nurtured scientific curiosity but also instilled leadership qualities, time management skills, and confidence in students of all ages.

The Schoolastic team spoke with two special guests, Ms. Alisha, Head of Chemistry (PGD) at NCRT Modern School has extensive experience in education and research, and Ms. Somul, Principal of Forshore World School. They shared their insights on how such events nurture creativity and critical thinking in students, preparing them to become innovators of tomorrow.



ST: What kind of innovations do you think students can bring into their lives through experiences like this, and how can these skills help them become better individuals who contribute to society?

Ms. Alisha: "I am deeply impressed by the quality of the event. As a PGD Chemistry, I have spent years observing schools and their approaches to teaching science. I must say, I am yet to witness a better Science Exhibition than this one. These events are all about shaping young minds. If schools lay the right foundation, we have students ready for scientific research even before they leave school. By the time they graduate, they are prepared to become scholars and innovators, ready to make their mark in science.

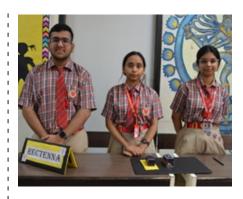
Nothing works by magic; everything works with logic. That is an essential lesson for children to learn early on. By participating in exhibitions like this, they develop a mindset that prepares them not only for academic success but also for contributing meaningfully to society. It is a powerful way of shaping them into better individuals."



**Principal Somul** added her perspective, emphasizing how these experiences build confidence and essential skills.

"Our students have been proactive in identifying real-world problems and presenting thoughtful solutions. This not only enhances their problem-solving abilities but also helps them develop strong communication skills. As they spoke about their projects today, it was clear how much creativity and innovation they have brought to the table.

They are observing the world around them, seeing where change is needed, and taking the initiative to contribute solutions for their communities. This exhibition is only the beginning of their journey. What they have created today is just the start, and I believe we can take these ideas even further in the future."



critical thought. By providing platforms like Sci-Ex, the school continues to create an environment where curiosity is celebrated, creativity is encouraged, and learning becomes an exciting journey rather than a destination.



The Science Exhibition highlighted the school's commitment to experiential learning and nurturing a scientific temperament in students. It provided them with an opportunity to not just showcase knowledge, but to think critically, create solutions, and inspire others. With guidance from dedicated educators and platforms like these, students are being empowered to see science not just as a subject, but to understand, question, and shape the world around them.

The event was a true celebration of Fortune World School's vision: to nurture future-ready learners who are capable of innovation, empathy, and

In the words of one enthusiastic visitor, "Sci-Ex wasn't just an exhibition; it was a window into the minds of the next generation of problem-solvers and change-makers."

As the day concluded, it was clear that Sciencophilia 2025 had succeeded in its mission: to transform curiosity into creativity and inspire every student to see themselves as innovators capable of shaping a brighter tomorrow.

## **BHARAT EDUCATION FORUM:**

# PIONEERING CONVERSATIONS ON AI AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

THE SCHOOLASTIC EDITORIAL TEAM REPORT

he Bharat Education Forum (BEF) is fast emerging as one of India's most inclusive and forward-looking platforms dedicated to transforming education. Established as a nationwide movement, BEF brings together schools, preschools, higher education institutions, edtech companies, policymakers, publishers, and education leaders with one shared vision: to make education accessible, inclusive, and future-ready.

In line with the national vision of Viksit **Bharat 2047.** the Forum is actively working to empower educators and learners by encouraging collaboration and removing financial barriers. In a bold move. BEF has announced free for 2025. membership inviting changemakers from across the country to contribute their expertise and ideas without constraint.

The Forum marked a major milestone with its Founding Members First Networking Meet, held on 30th August 2025 at Gulmohar Hall, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. This exclusive, invite-only event brought together education leaders, innovators, and policymakers for a day of impactful networking, keynote addresses, thoughtprovoking panel discussions, a felicitation ceremony, and curated lunch and high tea. The gathering provided a unique platform for dialogue on the future of education in India, with a strong focus on artificial intelligence, emotional learning, and holistic development.

We had thought-provoking conversations with key leaders at the Forum on Al and Social and Emotional Learning.

AI: A Tool, not a Master. Insights from Mr. Sumit Verma, Founder and President, BEF

ST: As the conversation today is all about AI, how is AI going to shape the



workforce today? What does the future hold?

**Mr. Sumit Verma:** "Al is today's world. Right from its early days, when this technology began evolving, everyone thought it would be very difficult to implement. But now with things are improving, it is shaping and changing the world with a complete 360-degree view; and not just one country.

Al has a lot to do with the workforce. Especially in education, it provides precise and comprehensive information. While humans may take time to analyse and process things, Al gives instant answers to questions. However, there is a limitation—emotional—and—social intelligence—and, truly understanding a person cannot be replicated by Al.

The truth is that humans created AI; AI did not create humans. The human brain is irreplaceable. AI may be faster and more competitive, but it is only a tool, not a replacement for intelligence.

Today's world is indeed becoming more Al-driven, and our country is working hard in this field. I hope it shapes well, especially as youth is driving it. The most important thing I want to tell everyone is do not become a slave to AI, make it your tool. It is human intelligence that created AI. With such brilliance, AI can be made to serve humanity, not the other way around. It is an extraordinary technological tool doing wonders, but it should not be the only thing we depend on."

Social-Emotional Learning: Building Emotional Strength Early. Ms. Aakansha Jain, Managing Director, Sapphire International School, Anand Vihar

ST: What is the role of socialemotional learning in education?

**Ms.** Aakansha Jain: "Social-emotional development begins in the very early years. When a child is born, emotions are already at play, people are celebrating



while the child is crying. It all depends on how we calm that child. A mother's presence is the most comforting, and from there emotional growth begins.

At the preschool level, we pay special attention to emotional security. We follow a settling period of at least fifteen days, during which toddlers attend school for 40 minutes initially, then 45 minutes, then an hour, 1.5 hours, and gradually extends to 3 hours. We also maintain a teacher-to-student ratio of 2:10, because every child's needs whether crying, thirsty, or hungry must be addressed first. Emotional growth cannot happen without basic comfort and care.

Social-emotional skills are built from the foundation stage. If we want to raise emotionally strong yet empathetic individuals, we must start early. At our school, we ensure this through personalized attention celebrating festivals birthdays, like Diwali, Grandparents' Day, acknowledgment, appreciation, and guiding children to understand what is right and wrong. These practices help them handle situations emotionally and develop empathy."

#### The Forum's Vision

The Bharat Education Forum's First Networking Meet is more than just an event; it represents a movement of educators, leaders, and innovators working together to shape India's education system. By championing responsible integration of AI, as emphasized by Mr. Sumit Verma, and promoting social-emotional learning and empathy, as highlighted by Ms. Aakansha Jain, BEF envisions a future where technology and human connection complement each other to prepare students for a rapidly evolving world. This landmark gathering is the first of many steps toward a stronger, more connected education community one that values both cutting-edge innovation and the irreplaceable role of human intelligence and empathy in shaping young minds.





Mr. Deepak Vohra, retired Indian diplomat of the Indian Foreign Service who has served as an Indian Ambassador to Armenia, Poland and Sudan was the Chief Guest at the Forum . He gave the welcome address.

# THE TORCHBEARERS FOR GIRL'S EDUCATION SAVITRIBAI PHULE & FATIMA SHEIKH

#### MANGLA DWIVEDI

oday, stepping into a classroom feels natural. But imagine living in a time when girls were forbidden to read or write, when children from marginalized communities were told education was "not for them". That was 19th-century India, where knowledge was a privilege reserved for a few.

In this world of darkness, Savitribai Phule and Fatima Sheikh lit a lamp that still burns brightly. Together, they started India's first school for girls in 1848, fought caste and gender discrimination, and redefined education as a right for all. Their courage changed history, and their story carries lessons for every student today.

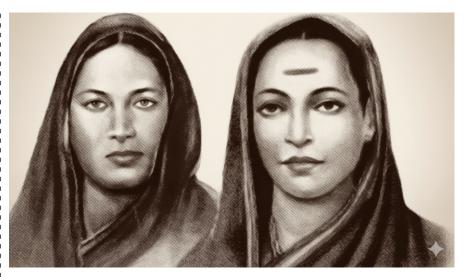
#### Savitribai's Journey: From Child Bride to First Female Teacher of India

Savitribai was born on **3 January 1831** in Naigaon, Maharashtra. Like most girls of her time, she was married young at just nine years old to Jyotirao Phule. But unlike most marriages of that era, this one became a partnership built on mutual respect and a shared mission for equality.

Her husband, Jyotirao Phule, already an outspoken critic of caste oppression, encouraged Savitribai to study. He taught her at home, and later, she attended a teacher training program at Normal School in Pune, becoming India's first trained female teacher. This was radical, a woman not only learning but preparing to teach others. Her determination can be summed up in her powerful words, "Awake, arise, and educate. Smash traditions liberate."

#### Fatima Sheikh: The Ally who Stood Shoulder to Shoulder

While Savitribai is celebrated, Fatima



Sheikh's story is equally inspiring. Born into a Muslim family in Pune, Fatima was one of the first Indian Muslim women educators. When society shunned the Phules for their revolutionary ideas, Fatima's family opened their home Bhide Wada to start the first girls' school.

Fatima too trained as a teacher and joined Savitribai in running the school. She became the first Muslim woman teacher in India, visiting homes to convince reluctant parents to educate their daughters. Her friendship with Savitribai was a living example of unity across caste and religion. Fatima's courage reminds us that change is never the work of one person alone. She risked criticism from her own community to stand up for a larger cause, equal education.

#### The First Girls' School: A Revolution in a Small Room

On 1 January 1848, Savitribai and Fatima opened the first girls' school at Bhide Wada, Pune, with just nine

students. This small classroom marked the beginning of a revolution. The curriculum was modern and progressive:

- Reading, writing, and mathematics.
- · Science, social studies, & moral lessons.
- Practical skills to help students live independently.

Their mission was clear, education should empower, not just inform. In her writings, Savitribai often called knowledge "the greatest weapon against oppression". By the end of 1851, the Phules had established 18 schools with nearly 1,500 students, proving that there was a thirst for education, if given the chance.

#### The Resistance they Faced

Their success came with fierce opposition. Many saw teaching girls as a threat to tradition. Savitribai was often abused in public, people threw stones, mud, and cow dung at her as she walked to school. She carried an extra sari to change into when she arrived. Fatima faced a similar resistance, especially from the

conservative sections of her community. Yet, they persisted. They believed education was not a privilege but a birthright, "Education should be for all, not just the few," wrote Savitribai in one of her poems.

#### **Breaking Barriers Beyond Education**

Savitribai and Fatima's vision was broader than just teaching reading and writing. They saw education as a tool for social reform.

#### **Fighting Caste Discrimination**

Savitribai and Jyotirao opened schools for children from oppressed castes, defying the social order of their time. She wrote poems against untouchability and challenged caste hierarchies head-on.

Supporting Widows and Abandoned Women. They established a home for widows and encouraged widow remarriage. Savitribai even organized a 'Balhatya Pratibandhak Griha' (home to prevent infanticide), and offered shelter pregnant widows who to abandoned by society.

Healthcare During Epidemics. During the plague outbreak of 1897, Savitribai turned their school into a care centre, personally carrying patients to hospitals. Sadly, she contracted the plague while serving others and passed away at the age of sixty-six.

Library and Adult Education Programs. They opened libraries and adult education classes, emphasizing that learning never stops.

#### Fatima Sheikh's Lasting Impact

Fatima Sheikh's contribution is slowly being rediscovered. She was not just a helper; she was a pioneer in her own right as the first Muslim woman teacher in India, as the co-founder of India's first girls' school, and as a social reformer who brought marginalized communities into classrooms.

2022, the Indian government In recognized her contribution, placing her in school textbooks. But her true legacy lives on in every girl who walks confidently into a classroom today.

#### What Students Can Learn from Them

For students of today, Savitribai and Fatima's story is more than history; it is a auide for life.

**Education is a Superpower.** Savitribai wrote, "Knowledge always destroys ignorance... spread education to destroy caste." Your ability to think critically and learn is the most powerful tool for changing the world.

Be Courageous. Both Savitribai and Fatima faced ridicule daily, yet they persevered. They show us that bravery is not about being fearless but about acting despite fear.

Value Equality. The friendship of a Hindu woman and a Muslim woman fighting side by side reminds us that diversity is strength. Schools today are spaces where students from all backgrounds can learn together. This was their dream.

Give Back to Society. Their lives teach that education is not just for personal success but for uplifting others.

#### A Legacy That Shapes the Future

Savitribai Phule is rightly remembered as not just 'India's first female teacher', but also a thinker and activist who brought gender and marginalization to the discussion table. Fatima Sheikh is now recognized as a co-pioneer of education reform, a woman who broke barriers of gender and religion to champion equality. Together, they built the foundation of modern education in India. Every school, every classroom, and every student's achievement is a tribute to their tireless efforts

Next time you sit in a classroom, think of Savitribai walking to school with an extra sari, and Fatima opening her home to create a space for learning. Their courage carved the path you walk today. As Savitribai wrote in one of her poems,

"Go, get education, be self-reliant, be industrious... Work, gather wisdom, and remove caste barriers."

Her words are not just history they are a call to action. You are the future they dreamed of. Now it is your turn to keep the lamp of education burning bright.



## SALWAN PUBLIC SCHOOL: SETTING NEW STANDARDS IN HOLISTIC EDUCATION

#### A SCHOOLASTIC EDITORIAL TEAM REPORT

etting New Standards in Holistic Education in the heart of Delhi, Salwan Public School, Mayur Vihar Phase-III, has set a new benchmark in education. Its impressive performance in Indian Institutional Ranking Framework (IIRF) 2025 Rankings, one of India's data-driven evaluation systems, reflects the school's commitment to holistic growth. The IIRF evaluates schools, colleges, and universities on multiple parameters such as academic excellence. infrastructure, research contributions, inclusivity, and community engagement. By offering a transparent and comprehensive assessment, it helps parents, students, and educators identify institutions that truly make a difference.

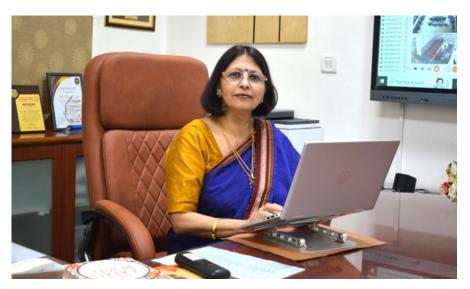
Fairgaze Schoolastic Editorial team had the privilege of speaking with Principal Capt. Richa Sharma Katyal (Retd.), who shared how the school blends tradition, innovation, values, and sports to create an environment where every child flourishes not just academically, but as a responsible and empathetic citizen.



#### **Sports Beyond Limits**

ST: How do you support sports activities in your school?

**RS:** At Salwan Public School, Mayur Vihar, sports are deeply woven into our culture. Our legacy includes hosting the Salwan Marathon, featured in the Limca Book of Records as the world's largest children's race with 52,000 participants, including visually impaired and differently abled



students. Our students excel gymnastics, athletics, Jiu-Jitsu, football, volleyball, winning national recognition, scholarships under the Play and Progress Scheme, and selections for Khelo India. Adventurous activities like cycling to Agra also reflect our spirit. Even teachers are role models, with some winning gold at the 2018 Asia-Pacific Masters Games in Malaysia. Sports remains a stronghold, supported through collaborations with experts from Australia and the United Kingdom.

We run an open gymnasium for students and staff, emphasizing fitness as the foundation of sports. The school is also certified under the Fit India Movement, reinforcing our dedication to holistic fitness. Recently, our Sub-Junior Girls' Volleyball team clinched first position at the CBSE Cluster Championship 2025, with 32 teams competing, marking a proud moment as CBSE gold medalists.

#### **Clubs that Build Character**

ST: How do clubs and co-curricular initiatives help students become holistic individuals?

**RS**: At Salwan, co-curricular activities are not "extra", they are part of the core

curriculum. A child needs more than academic success; they need communication skills, physical fitness, mental wellness, and emotional resilience.

We encourage experiential learning, where students develop creativity, problem-solving, and acceptance of failure. Our clubs range from theatre, photography, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), robotics, aero-modelling, astronomy, and Vedic Mathematics to sports like football, cricket, basketball, volleyball, shooting, and even golf.

Every morning at 7:30 AM, the campus comes alive with professional coaching in football, cricket, basketball, and volleyball. Stage activities, assemblies, and performances also celebrate cultural heritage while building confidence.

"Excellence is a continuous endeavour, not an immediate result," says Capt. Katyal.

#### **Prioritizing Mental Well-Being**

ST: What counselling and guidance services do you provide to students?

RS: At Salwan, mental well-being is not a programme, it's a way of life. Our day



begins with mindful moments, meditation after sports, and daily affirmations that set a positive tone. Assemblies are designed to nurture both intellectual growth and inner strength, while the day concludes with a short reflection that allows children to pause and recognise their learnings and accomplishments.

We run a full-fledged counselling cell, with a counsellor trained under the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)-Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) MATE programme. Teachers are prepared as first-level counsellors through the "Know Your Child" initiative. Each class includes dedicated moral and ethical education periods, and a structured mentor-mentee programme ensures that every student receives personalised quidance and support.

Students also undergo peer educator training at CBSE and internship institutions like VIMHANS, enabling them to support classmates and promote mental wellness. Our approach is further enriched by traditional wisdom, including teachings from the Bhagavad Gita and Heartfulness practices, which deepen emotional awareness and character development.

"At Salwan, mental well-being is not a program—it's a way of life."

#### **Rooted in Community and Service**

ST: What community outreach projects has your school taken?

Community service is deeply embedded in the ethos of Salwan. reflected through a wide range of outreach initiatives that nurture empathy, responsibility, and cultural pride. The school has undertaken awareness campaigns for the restoration of Sher Mandal at Purana Qila, heritage walks, surveys, and cleanliness drives to instill appreciation for history, culture, and civic responsibility.

Collaborations with NGOs such as Saksham and Asha School, along with regular student visits to old-age homes, blind schools, and cultural preservation projects, further amplify its social impact. Under the Karma Project, the school repaired and painted the Blind School at I.P. Extension, provided furniture to the Blind School in R.K. Puram, conducted plantation drives, and extended support to the underprivileged through donations of books, toys, woollens, clothing, and food during natural disasters. Other initiatives include beautification of metro pillars with vibrant student-created murals. environmental awareness programmes, and the annual Hunar Mela, which not only celebrates India's crafts but also promotes cultural awareness and supports sustainable livelihoods for rural artisans.

The flagship programme Desh Aur Hum **3.0**, organised by the National Academy of Direct Taxes (NADT) in collaboration with the Salwan Education Trust, highlighted the importance of taxation in nation-building through creative competitions and student engagement

Parent partnership programmes further enrich learning by offering workshops and expert sessions on cyber security, career guidance, wellness, and first aid, ensuring that education extends beyond classrooms to build compassionate, responsible citizens.

#### **Inclusion at the Core**

ST: How do you support inclusion in your school?

RS: At Salwan, inclusivity is not an initiative—it is our ethos. Every child is unique, and we currently support a reasonable number of specially abled students, including those who are visually and hearing impaired, as well as children with autism and learning disabilities. With a dedicated counselling cell, special educator, and individual education plans, we ensure equal opportunities for all. Inclusion extends to every sphere of school life, where children of all abilities and social backgrounds study, eat, and grow together. Our buddy system and peer educator programme foster empathy and belonging, while success stories of students, from a visually challenged Humanities topper invited to the President's House to others excelling in literature, para-sports, and technology, inspire the entire community.

We are proud that inclusivity is not an initiative but part of our ethos.

#### **A School Beyond Academics**

Our conversation with Principal Capt. Richa Sharma Katyal (Retd.), brought to light the everyday routines at Salwan Public School that nurtures the vision of holistic education. With its equal celebration and focus on sports, cocurricular excellence, mental well-being, community service, academics and inclusion, the school nurtures compassionate and future-ready citizens.

Indian Institutional Ranking Framework (IIRF) 2025 Ranking is not just an award, it is a reiteration of the school's ongoing journey to redefine education in India. With visionary leadership, dedicated teachers, and value-driven practices, Salwan Public School continues to inspire a generation of learners to grow as leaders, innovators, and changemakers.



#### THINKING ALOUD

# Calling all budding student writers, artists, poets, reviewers to send in their submissions for November 2025 Theme

Thank you, students, teachers, and schools, for contributing so generously to our October Issue 'Healthy, Wealthy and Wise, Mind and Body Matters'. We loved reading your unique perspectives and hearing your voices.

Send us your original **articles, poems, reviews** for November. Any copyright-free photos, even better if it is your original illustration or drawing in jpeg file.

November Theme: The Climate - Biodiversity Nexus

Deadline: 15 October 2025, 6 pm

Email: Send your submissions to schoolasticeditorial@fairgaze.com

We invite you to write on any one of these questions and mail it to us. Do remember to put November Theme in your subject line. Give your piece a title. Write your name, your grade, your school's name, and address so that we can reach back to you in case of a query.

Our November theme "The Climate -Biodiversity Nexus" takes a deep and broad look at the world we humans call home, through the lens of other species and ecosystems. What has been the impact of human actions on the world around us? What is climate action from your perspective? We hear many words such as sustainable development, environmental awareness, greenhouse effect, carbon emission; what do you understand of this? How are schools taking steps to be ecofriendly? Can students lead campaigns to reduce waste, energy consumption, or water usage? What innovations or projects are happening in your school or city to make the planet greener? How do lifestyle choices, such as diet, travel, and consumption, impact climate change? Do you know of inspiring youth movements or campaigns across India or the world that speak of Green Planet or Sustainability?

The festival season spills into November too. Write to us also about the festivals you celebrate and any environmental or sustainability aspects connected to them. Read up, find out, let us know what your take is **on any one of these.** 

#### November 2025 Book Suggestions

Hope you enjoyed the October book suggestions. Here is a list for November based on our Theme "Climate Action Campaign". Do read and send us a review by 15 October 2025 at schoolasticeditorial@fairgaze.com

#### For Students:

Our House is on Fire by Greta Thunberg The Elephant Whisperer – Documentary

For Teachers:

Silent Spring by Rachel Carson

Aaj Bhi Khare Hain Talaab by Shri Anupam Mishra

## **EaseMyTrip Space Quiz**

### Mind and Body Matters Quiz!

Think you know the secrets to a sharper mind and a stronger body? Prove it! Take part in our Quiz and stand a chance to win a ₹2,700 EaseMyTrip discount voucher! Remember, it is First Come, First WIN!

Only the first student with all correct answers will claim the prize.

Send your entries to: schoolasticeditorial@fairgze.com.

- This vitamin is produced in your skin when exposed to sunlight and helps in calcium absorption.
- The biological process by which your body converts food into energy.
- A mineral essential for strong bones and teeth, abundant in milk and dairy products.
- Nutrient found in eggs, meat, and legumes that helps build muscles.
- A mineral present in red blood cells that carries oxygen throughout the body.
- A natural defence system of the body against diseases and infections.
- Practice involving controlled breathing and focused attention to reduce stress.
- An ancient Indian discipline involving postures, breathing, and mindfulness
- A chemical in the brain known as the "happiness hormone."
- The organ responsible for controlling memory, thoughts, and decision-making.
- Practice of writing daily thoughts to reflect, relieve stress, and improve clarity.
- This proverb by Benjamin Franklin emphasizes the benefits of early sleep and waking.
- Hormone released during exercise that boosts mood and reduces stress.
- Habit of limiting screen time and getting adequate sleep promotes better.
- Short periods of deep breathing done intentionally to calm the mind are called.



Congratulations to Vibhu Raj Singh, 12 class, Delhi International School, Rohni sector 13, Delhi for the correct responses to our Space Quiz.

- •ISRO was established on August 15, 1969.
- •India's first satellite was called Aryabhata, and it was launched on April 19, 1975.
- •India's Chandrayaan-3 landed on the moon recently. Where on the moon did it land?
- •Chandrayaan-3 landed in the high latitude highland region near the Moon's south pole.
- •The first Indian to travel to space was Rakesh Sharma in 1984.
- •Shubhanshu Shukla recently visited the International Space Station (ISS) as part of the Axiom-4 mission.
- •Since 1975, India has successfully launched nearly 150 satellites.
- •India's primary launch pad is the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. A second spaceport is also being built in Kulasekarapattinam to launch smaller rockets.
- •Currently, the heaviest rocket is the Launch Vehicle Mark 3 (LVM3). However, ISRO is building a new, much heavier rocket called the Lunar Module Launch Vehicle (LMLV) that will be ready by 2035.
- •The farthest an Indian spacecraft has traveled is to Mars with the Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan).
- •One of ISRO's greatest achievements is the Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan), as it was the first country to succeed on its first attempt. Another huge accomplishment was launching 104 satellites with a single rocket.
- •The Nobel Prize in Physics in 1983 was awarded to Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar for his studies on the structure and evolution of stars.
- •The Soviet Union was the first nation to send a rocket into space with the launch of Sputnik I in 1957. .
- •The Voyager I spacecraft has travelled the farthest in space. Launched in 1977, it entered interstellar space in 2012 and is still sending back data.
- •This imaginary line is called the Kármán Line. It is located 100 kilometres (about 62 miles) above sea level.
- •Space looks black to us. However, if you could add up all the light from all the stars and galaxies, the average colour of the universe would be a slightly beige-white colour.
- •According to one definition, 682 people have reached the altitude of space.
- •The first chimpanzee to go into space was Ham in 1961, and the first to orbit the Earth was Enos, later that same year.
- •As of March 2025, 12 countries and one inter-governmental organization (the European Space Agency) have the capability to launch their own rockets into orbit.
- •The first person to walk on the Moon was Neil Armstrong on July 21, 1969.
- A total of 12 people have walked on the Moon.
- •A Lagrange point is a spot in space where the gravitational pull of two large objects, like the Sun and Earth, perfectly balances out, allowing a smaller object to stay in a stable position.
- •The Indian observatory at a Lagrange point is called the Aditya-L1 Mission.
- •The James Webb Space Telescope can see up to 98% of the way back to the Big Bang, looking at light from some of the very first galaxies.



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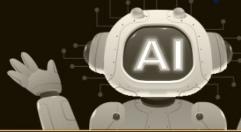
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