



Dear Readers,
Every new beginning comes from some other end.

The year had ended and begun- in more ways than one. As 2018 drew to a close, the batch of 2019 readied themselves for their farewell and the eighth grade students entered a new walk of life with their first Model United Nations, while our batch of 2021 prepared for the climax of their tenth grade.

This, the year-end edition of 'The Circle Times', brings to you events that all of Shikshantar looks forward to annually. The winter ShikMUN, the X grade 'Good Luck' party and the farewell for the outgoing batch. The MUN, held on December 20 and 21, has been covered by Mallika Gera (Class VIII), who brings to light the feelings of anxiety and excitement that come with a first-time MUN and Govind Hari(Class IX), who writes from the perspective of an experienced participant.

Following this we have Devina Singh, who has described the good luck party for Class X and how their teachers gave them a send-off for their Board Exams.

Lastly we have Srushti Joshi (XI) and Siddharth Agarwal (XII) presenting opposing perspectives on the farewell for the outgoing batch; the side that said goodbye and the side that went away. The editorial team personally hopes these articles, or poems in the latter case, evoke the nostalgic feelings that stay with us more or less forever.



A FIRST TIMER'S MUN EXPERIENCE

Participating in an MUN for the first time was like sitting on a roller coaster ride; long, scary, bumpy and unpredictable. It was an extremely fascinating experience. Being a first timer, there are multiple things that are new to you and you tend to be afraid. I was very anxious about what might or could happen.

As a journalist, questions such as, "What if my reports are not completed on time?" or "What if my reports are not good enough?", started arising in my mind. However, once I overcame that feeling of nervousness and fear, I started embracing the fact that I had got such a wonderful opportunity and what its worth was. If I had spent all my time worrying about other things that might or might not even happen, I wouldn't have realized this. It taught me that being a beginner is fine, being confused and scared at first is okay. As long as you are trying your best to learn, you will be fine. Don't be intimidated by people more experienced, rather learn from them. Don't be too hard on yourself!



An MUN not only gives you more confidence in yourself but also opens your eye to multiple problems being faced by the current world and sparks your interest in world crises. This not only makes you aware of your surroundings but also increases your understanding on many topics. All in all, I really enjoyed participating in the MUN. It has helped me learn things and create memories to treasure. It was like sitting on a roller coaster ride, long, scary, bumpy and unpredictable, but worthwhile and momentous.

-Mallika Gera

A VEILED BEAUTY

Finally exploring what puts the 'mann' in the Model United Nations (MUN)

The event that occurs in many schools across the globe, the same one that many hearts both cherish and dread, a time of practical learning that goes far beyond the reaches of bookish knowledge, is none other than the famed biannual Model United Nations. Today, the secrets of what makes this particular clock tick are finally revealed.

These MUNs hold in store a vast plethora of information, not just academic, but also social and political. The participating students become aware of world issues. They also devise various solutions to solve these problems, putting their logical and analytical skills to the test. Their ability to improvise and out-of-the-box thinking are made use of when various hurdles are thrown at them, as the 'crisis' situations, an essential part of every MUN. The collaboration and teamwork on such a large scale, with their peers is brought about by this event.

The recent MUN that took place in Shikshantar, was attended by many from grades VIII – XI, with the exception of grade X and XII, due to their impending Board exams. It was the Winter Edition, the marginally smaller counterpart to the Summer edition of Shik'MUN. Fruitful debates, accompanied with the occasional laugh comprised this event, and was considered a highlight of the school year by many. The committees ranged from the omnipresent General Assembly and the Security Council to the ruthless war cabinets of the Allied and the Axis powers, a leap back in history to the Second World War. An assorted array of agendas were debated upon, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Western Sahara Conflict. A first for an intra-school Shik'MUN was also witnessed at the conference- a football committee (UEFA) was held and proved to be a great success! It was enjoyed by the attending delegates as well as the Executive Board and also made great strides in terms of progress with respect to their agenda. So, the next time an announcement for the MUN is placed on the notice board, jump with joy, for you will be part of a larger world, one that will sear an impression in your memory; an event that will serve as an inspiration, a time of exposure to life outside the walls of our beloved school. This fabulous beauty is the true visage of a Model United Nations conferences.



-Govind Hari

Good Luck Party

The year 2019, a group of nervous tenth graders preparing to face the 'Boards' gathered to celebrate the end of a tough year and relive some memories of their younger years at their good luck party.



The party was a light-hearted event with lots of laughter and cheering as our Didis and Bhaiyas shared their experiences with us. They wished us luck as they shared some tips for studying and, more importantly, taking breaks.

Memories came flooding by as we celebrated our journey from 'Vanar Years' to 'Finding Self'. Our teachers shared their memories of watching us bloom and grow, as we skinned our knees climbing champa trees and refused to learn our ABC's. Such is our facilitators' connect with us that they even wrote us a song!

Then it was time for a game, to show us how much our teachers knew about us and how much we knew about each other. Three adjectives were read out for each child and we had to identify who it was. It was heartwarming to see how much effort had been put into picking out quotes that best described each one of the 74 tenth graders. That quote became a memento in the form of a bookmark for each one of us. Along with that, we got our class photo to help us remember our batch of 2021.



The day had two more reasons to celebrate; the birthdays of two of our batchmates, Mehar and Viraaaj!

The proceedings came to an end with all us hungry teenagers devouring the feast laid out for us. The day ended with excited chatter about what was to come and what had already passed.

-Devina Singh

FAREWELL Batch of 2019

had not already done that. Succeeding the game was the emotional music performances by the 11th graders and the infamous rap and encore of Aryan and Satyansh. There was little room for boredom in the whole environment in between the laughs and the waterworks.

“Nothing lasts forever, forever’s a lie, all we have is what is between hello and goodbye” The Farewell has always been one of the highlights of the year for the people in 11th and 12th everywhere, and our school was no different. This highly sensitive time is when the students of the seniormost batch of the school step out to start their journeys outside of school, and in the words of Garima Didi, “become lighthouses for Shikshantar” wherever they go. This is the time when the realization of having to leave school hits them hard. Such times leave scarce scope for dry eyes in the house.

The dance and drama witnessed on the day of the farewell though, would be nothing compared to what went behind the scenes. There were the fights for authority; there were the disagreements with authority, a clash of opinions and so much more that made everyone doubt the abilities of a whole batch to be able to do the simplest of tasks.

Saying blood would be an exaggeration, but behind the tears did go some sweat of the December heat. The 11th grade spent a considerable amount of time and thoughts trying to give their seniors what they rightfully deserve for a farewell. Of course the 12th grade would eventually get to witness the fruit of the efforts put forward by their juniors, but that did not stop them from sneaking and spying and trying to find out what they ultimately would in a matter of a few days.

Naturally though, during such a crushing time, talking about things that hurt helps ease the pain of the realization, and hence followed the speeches made by the teachers. The students got glimpses of vulnerability and humanness in their otherwise scary teachers. The things that they said really made evident the genuine love our Didis and Bhaiyas have for us- something they may not otherwise show, being caught up with the everyday antics. The students too shared about their experiences and journey in Shikshantar leaving everyone in an overwhelmed state of emotions. It’s a two-edged sword if you think about it. Having this last hurrah before parting ways, but also having to leave behind a familiar world that had till now provided the comforts of great bonding and warmth. This school has given to us so much more than just education or socialization;

The event started off with the arrival of the suited and dressed up 12th graders who had probably been preparing their outfits for longer than they studied for their exams, to of course look good for the little photo booth and complement some of their comparatively underdressed juniors. After the whole photo affair was the traditional Diya lighting to somewhat brighten their futures.



it is a safe space to fall back on when things don’t go your way.

There were a number of acts, performances and decorations primed to let the audience know that they are cared for. The highly uncoordinated but sweet dance was one of the highlights of the evening. A lot of people who were least expected to join the dance floor came along. This dance was followed by the greatly creative game and present prepared to add a little humour to the very sentimental evening, as if the dance

This realization though, not only hits the ones who are leaving but also the ones who are about to. It hurts to face reality, of knowing that they will have to go through the same a year from now.

The evening of the Farewell concluded with one of the most important things in life- food, a little fancier than normal. Everyone went home, and on with their lives with hearts a little heavier than before. This brings me to say a few words inspired by Robert Frost-

*To you we bid farewell today,
But do return another day,
There may be promises for you to keep,
And miles to go before you sleep,
Hence right now you seem to be leaving,
But do stop by the woods on a snowy evening.*



आखिर तेरह दिन ही तो बाकी है

नवम्बर का महीना शुरू हुआ और हमने दिन गिनने शुरू कर दिए। दूसरे स्कूल के मेरे दोस्त जब मुझसे पूछते के अब तो boards सर पर है, अब क्यों स्कूल जा रहा है तो मैं यही कहता अब तेरह दिन ही तो बचे हैं। स्कूल में घूमते घूमते हम गरिमा दीदी से लेकर गार्ड भैया को बोलते फिरते 'अब तेरह दिन बचे है।' हमने जैसे यह सोच लिया था कि इन तेरह दिनों को स्कूल के सबसे यादगार लम्हें बनाएंगे। मानों जैसे इन तेरह सालों का बोझ हमने इन तेरह दिनों के सर पर ही डाल दिया हो। स्कूल के आखिरी हफ्ते में हमने सोचा कि इन तेरह सालों के सारे अनोखे खेलों को खेला जाए। इन दिनों मानो जैसे हमारा मासूम बचपन कुछ पलों के लिए लौट आया हो। जैसे चोर पुलिस में हार्दिक को पकड़ना marks लाने से ज़्यादा ज़रूरी हो गया हो और मारम-पिट्टी में विवेक को मारना पार्टी में जाने से ज़्यादा ज़रूरी हो गया। Farewell की सुबह मेरे मन में बहुत अलग-अलग तरह के ख्याल लाई। जहाँ एक ओर बहुत सारा उत्साह और excitement थी वहीं दूसरी मन में डर बना हुआ था। There was one thing I had been 'looking forward' to and after this, there would be nothing to look forward to। खुद ही को बेवकूफ बनाते हुए मैंने पढ़ने की भी बहुत कोशिश की पर सब नाकाम था। खूब सजे-धजे सभी school पहुँचे। ग्यारहवीं के विद्यार्थियों ने पूरी शिद्दत से तैयारियाँ की थी। उस दिन को हमारे लिए खास बनाने में उन्होंने कोई कसर न छोड़ी थी।

'Dance performance' और 'posters' में सबने बहुत मेहनत करी। पर जो सबका दिल ले गये वो थे आर्यन जैन और सत्यांश यादव। फिर सभी अध्यापकों ने 'for a change' हमारे बारे में बहुत अच्छी अच्छी बातें की जो सुनने में 'for a change' हमें बहुत मज़ा आया।

जैसे-जैसे एक-एक व्यक्ति अपने शिक्षान्तर के सफ़र के बारे में बात कर रहा था महौल बेहद भावुक होता जा रहा था। 'Farewell' का वह समारोह बहुत ही कामयाब रहा पर उसके बावजूद भी दिल के किसी कोने में कुछ अधूरा सा महसूस हो रहा था।



the following poem was recited by Siddharth Agarwal on the farewell. We cried, so hopefully you do too.

Monkey Bar पे लटककर झूलों पर झूलकर

Slide पर फिसलकर ही तो हमने अपना बचपन गुजारा था

वह दुनिया जो वानर वाटिका कहलाती है हमारे लिए तो वही सबसे खूबसूरत नज़ारा था।

वानर वाटिका के उस tunnel में हमने अपना घर बसाया था।

कभी हंसते को रूलाया था कभी रोते को हंसाया था।

दीदी से थोड़ी शाबाशी मिल जाए तो उस ही में मन भर जाता था

किसी के हाथ में chocolate दिख जाए तो हमारा भी मन कर जाता था।

कुछ बातें हंसा दें कुछ बातें दिल को छू जाएं ऐसी ही बातें हमें पसंद थीं

परेशानियां सारी जैसे किसी पिंजरे में बंद थीं।

पूरे दिन बस choice time का इंतजार करते थे।

ना facebook ना Insta बस आज़ादी से प्यार करते थे।

Sand pit में mount बनाना तो ठीक पर दोस्त के पहाड़ तोड़ने का मज़ा लाजवाब था।

और बनाएं तो अपना पहाड़ सबसे ऊँचा खड़ा हो ऐसा ही एक मासूम सा ख्याब था।

इस ख्याब में भी सिर्फ नादानी थी बचपना था

ना कोई लालच था ना नीचा दिखाने का इरादा था

ना life में कोई tension थी ना कंधे पे कोई जिम्मेदारी थी

और तब भी जो मुझे सबसे प्यारी थी वो तुम्हारी यारी थी।

आलू bread, cheese bread, pizza bread से लेकर आलू के परांटों के साथ अचार

हमने हर तरह के टिफिन बांटे हैं।

कभी पानी भरने के तो कभी medical room के बहाने से

lunch room के दो चार चक्कर रोज़ाना काटे हैं।

उस lunch की हमने की खूब बुराई है

कभी कभी तो lunch room की खिड़की से देखकर ही reject करा है

फिर भी sweet dish इतनी खाई है पेट भर गया मन नहीं भरा है।

Exam से पहले की रात existential crisis के दौरान

अपनी life का purpose खोजा है

फिर exam के दौरान paper की जगह Trump controversy के बारे में सोचा है।

कागज़ पे स्याही न उतारी गई तो बस compass से table पर अपना नाम खरोँचा है।

उतरी हुई शक्ति लेकर exam hall से निकलना

और बाकियों के रोते हुए चेहरे देखकर हंसी छूट जाना

बगल वाले exam room से दोस्त वक्त पे washroom न आया तो बड़ी cutely उससे रूठ जाना

एक नालायक ऐसा भी था जो fail होने की बातें करता था और top करता था

उसकी सबने मिलकर खूब मारी है

फिर भी जो मुझे सबसे प्यारी है वो तो तुम्हारी यारी है।

इस आस में कि शायद दीदी absent हों खिड़की दरवाज़े से झाँकते रहना

चलती हुई class में blackboard की जगह घड़ी की सूई को ताकते रहना।

समझ नहीं आया आज तक कि यह teachers का कोई काला जादू था

या हम किसी अनजान दुनिया में खोते थे

क्योंकि 40 मिनट पूरी शिद्दत और concentration से पढ़ने के बाद भी

घड़ी में सिर्फ दस minute ही होते थे।

पर इस मामले में आशीष भैया बड़े दयालू हैं

कभी कभी तो रोज़ाना से पहले छोड़ देते थे उस दिन भैया सिर्फ पाँच ही minute extra लेते थे

समय के इस ही तिलस्मानी हेर फेर में तेरी गंदी शक्ति देखकर

तुझ संग आँखों में बातें करके ही तो हमने सारी boring classes गुज़ारी हैं

जो मुझे सबसे प्यारी है वो तो तेरी यारी है।

अब अलग हो चुकी हैं मंज़िलें अलग होने वाली हमारी राहें हैं

फिर भी हाथ तेरी ओर ही बढ़ता है तेरे लिए ही फैलती बाँहें हैं।

यहीं तो बनाई हमने ढेरों यादें हैं

निभाए कई अनगिनत वादे हैं

यहीं तो हमारे ख्याबों ने पंख ढूँढ़े

उन पंखों में समाए हमारे इरादे हैं।

यहीं तो अपने ख्याबों को हमने सींचा है

अब वो विशाल हैं अब वो बड़ें हैं

अपने बल अब वो ऊँचे खड़े हैं

फिर भी एक दूसरे से ही तो जुड़ी हम सबकी जड़ें हैं

इन जड़ों के सहारे ही तो हर चुनौती से लड़ें हैं।

चूज़े बनकर आए थे अब परिंदे बन चुके हैं।

पंख फैलाने से न डरना तुम्हारे आगे दुनिया झुकी है।

उड़ान भरोगे जब देखती रह जाएगी दुनिया सारी ये

जो मुझे सबसे प्यारी है वो तो तुम्हारी यारी है।

अपनी speech के बाद से मैं अंदर से सुन्न था। कहीं ना कहीं एक इंतजार उन जज्बातों का जो कहीं दबे हुए थे। इंतजार था उस realization का कि अब 6:30 बजे रोज़ 'world's worst alarm sound' नहीं बजेगी। सुबह फिर वही 'sprouts' बनाने के लिए मम्मी पर गुस्सा न होना होगा और ना ही ठंडे और गर्म पानी के बीच वह जंग होगी। यह तेरह साल हँसते हँसाते ही कट गये। किसी ज़माने में चीटीं हाथी के चुटकुलों पर हँसते थे तो कभी सन्ता वन्ता पर। फिर कोई extra pen माँगता था तो उस ही पर हँस दिया करते थे। कभी दोस्त की टाँग ही खींच ली तो कभी किसी की बुराई पर हँस दिए। पर सब में एक तरह की नादानी थी। ज़हन तो जानता था यह सब खत्म हो चुका है पर इस दिल का कौन समझाए?

Farewell के अगले दिन जब मैं उठा तो कुछ देर तक ख्यालों में डूबा घर में इधर-उधर घूमता रहा। समझ नहीं आ रहा था कि करूँ तो क्या? फिर कुछ देर बगीचे में जाकर शांति से बैठा और कुछ लिखना शुरू करा।

उस सर्द सुबह यँ ही एक पेड़ के नीचे बैठे-बैठे मैं कुछ सोच रहा था। जिसका जवाब हो तुम सब उस सवाल को मैं खोज रहा था। कुछ जज़्बात कुछ ख्याल मेरे ज़हन से गुजर रहे थे। कुछ आँसू मेरी भीगी पलकों से निकलकर मेरे ठंडे गालों से उतर रहे थे। उन यादों को मैंने बाँधा संभाला उन यादों को मैंने बटोरा था। वो सर्द हवा मेरे गालों पर एक चाँटे जैसी लग रही थी और आँखों के सामने सिर्फ़ ठहरा हुआ कोहरा था। अंदर से मैं भी रो रहा था वह शांत चेहरा तो सिर्फ़ एक मुखौटा था। पर मैंने कुबूल कर लिया था कि यह जुदाई अब टल नहीं सकती है। जो कली फूल बन चुकी है वो वापिस खिल नहीं सकती है।

इसलिए मैं बैठा रहा उस पेड़ के नीचे इन सर्द हवाओं के बीच शांत सा मायूस सा।



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