



# The Aga Khan Academy Mombasa, Newsletter

## Dates to remember

- MYP in Year 6 Parents' Meeting and Year 9 Personal Projects Parents' Evening, 5.30pm, Thursday 30 Jan
- Junior School 3-way conferences and Book Fair, 5-6 February
- IB workshops 7 February, non-contact day
- Mid-Term break 17-21 February

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January 2014

## MYP One in Year Six

Dear Parents/Guardians

The Academy opened its doors in 2003 with an intention of eventually becoming an IB World school, changing from offering the British National Curriculum in the first six years, followed by the five-year IGCSE programme and culminating in the two-year A-Level university entry preparation.

While recognising that the three IBO programmes are designed as a continuum, it is also possible for them to be taught as standalone entities. We began by obtaining authorisation for the programmes that differ least from the traditional curricula. These are The Primary Years Programme (PYP), and the Diploma Programme (DP). Accordingly, the school was authorised to offer those two programmes in 2006.

The Middle Years Programme (MYP) is the most fundamentally different in approach from the IGCSE course that it replaces and it is therefore most important to implement it with minimal disruption to our students' education. For that reason, we wanted to establish it first, before dealing with the issue of its duration.

Our MYP programme was

officially accredited in 2009, after two years of implementation and the recent review by the IBO team and our results over the past three years, have confirmed that our programme is robust. The Diploma results of the first cohort of the MYP has gone a long way to confirm that our programme, in spite of being a year shorter, prepares students for the Diploma just as well, if not better, than the IGCSE.

So we now feel confident to decrease the transdisciplinary component of the students' experience at the school, in favour of the interdisciplinary engagement of the MYP. As announced earlier, the current Year 6 students will proceed to the MYP in Year 7, similar to the cohorts ahead of them.

The current Year 5 class will start the MYP programme in Year 6 but the change will be more in approach than in content. Instead of the curriculum being delivered through the PYP method, the same content will now be delivered through stand-alone subjects. Our real hope is to benefit from an earlier switch from PYP to MYP methods, which research reveals will lead to a smoother transition to an interdisciplinary method.

The Year 6 Class of 2014-15 will continue to be housed in



Simon Otieno

the Junior School, as they pursue their first year of the MYP. This and the use of PYP teachers converted to MYP practitioners, and appropriate timetabling, are seen as part of the process to ease them into the Middle School. One of the consequences of this move will be a combined PYP Exhibition for the two cohorts at the end of this Academic Year. Several parents' meetings have also been planned to ensure that all are on board with the new arrangement. In due course, classroom visits by parents will be arranged to demonstrate the difference between what has been and what will be.

We are most encouraged by your support in this new endeavour.

**Simon Otieno**  
*Head of Academy*



Ms Rose Iminza



Mr Howard Omukami



Whole school photo, on sale for 400KShs

## Staff News

Further to the introduction of Mr Enos Kiforo in the last Newsletter, two more staff have joined the PDC's Strengthening Education Systems in East Africa (SESEA) project team.

Ms Rose Iminza is a Master Trainer, School Support Programme, and has been a Professional Development Trainer (PDT) in Educational Leadership and Management since 2010. She has also worked at Shanzu Teachers' Training College as Head of the Physical Education and Games Department and holds a MEd (Educational Leadership and Management) from Aga Khan University-Institute of Education Development (AKU-IED), Tanzania. She has extensive experience in conducting workshops and seminars for Head Teachers both in Kenya and Tanzania, in areas of experiential

Pedagogical Leadership, and has also participated in curriculum planning and review, book evaluation and curriculum support material development for KICD to support Teacher Education for Secondary and Primary schools.

Mr Howard Omukami is a Master Trainer, Numeracy and holds a MSc in Statistics. He is a PhD candidate and is currently working on a publication on Logistic Order Statistics. Mr Omukami has a strong background in practical pedagogy and was previously a full time lecturer at Inoorero University, also lecturing part time at Jomo Kenyatta University. He has taught at Notre Dame International School in Nairobi and Moi Girls', Vokoli and is a member of the Statistical Research Team of the University of Nairobi—Chiromo campus. *(Staff news cont'd on p 3 and p 6)*

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## Notices and Coming Events

MYP 1 in Year 6 Parents' Meeting—30 January, 5.30pm, concurrent with Year 9 Personal Project Parents' Information evening

Semester 1 Reports collection day—31 January

Junior School three-way conferences and Book Fair—5-6 February

Year 10 Personal Project Exhibition—6 February 12 noon to 3.30pm, followed by MYP-DP Transition Meeting for parents at 5.30pm

IB workshops—7-9 February (7 February is a non-contact day for students)

Taita Trip (Residential Students)—17-20 February

Mid-Term break—17-21 February

A whole school photo was taken in December to celebrate our 10th Anniversary. A4 prints are available from the Bursar for 400KShs as are Choir CDs: cost 500KShs. Also on sale from Ms Angela, the Senior School PA, are 10th Anniversary items: branded 8GB flash drive (1000KShs) and tee-shirts (700Kshs). Be sure to purchase a memento of our wonderful 10th Anniversary celebrations.

## Junior School News

Junior School celebrations continue apace. After various activities towards the end of last term, including Crazy Hair Day on 6 December, an Assembly celebrating the Muslim faith, and participation in the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events, the Junior School recently heard word that our sister-school in Hyderabad has received confirmation of their PYP authorisation. “Big sister” Mombasa promptly rehearsed and delivered a message of congratulations to “little sister” Hyderabad via a video and photos.

The SRC has forged ahead with its next project and has presented to the Senior Management Team a proposal to rid the Commons of crows by the installation of beaded curtains at the doors. They await feedback from the Team.

## Staff News (cont’d)



In December we farewelled the inimitable Mr Alistair Lowe, who has contributed so much to Art and Drama in the Junior School as well as in the wider Mombasa community. Amongst other gifts he was presented with a tee-shirt celebrating the school productions that he has been the chief architect of over the past seven years. He will be greatly missed and we wish him well as he returns to Zimbabwe to settle.

We have also welcomed four new staff members this term. Mr Jeff Tunga replaces Mr Lowe as the Junior School Art teacher and Ms Mary Odera is teaching Art in the Senior School while Ms Mary Agnes Ngala is on parental

leave. Badi Mbarak Kakwaya has also joined the staff as a driver. Also new on the scene is Mr Robert Shiholo, who has joined us as Facilities Manager. Mr Shiholo comes with a wealth of experience in facilities management, plant and equipment maintenance, project planning, execution and management, staff management and working with contractors, suppliers and third party employees. He has mostly worked in Nairobi, more recently with Wrigley’s Company East Africa Limited.

To all new staff we extend a warm karibuni and hope your tenures here are long and happy.

In January we bid farewell to Teaching Fellows Ms Shazma Wadhwanian and Ms Zahra Asharia, Mr Rahim Dharamsi – Internal Auditor, and also to Mr Tony and Mrs Ursula Ryan, the Head of Expressive Arts, and Communications, Events and Extension Programmes Manager respectively, who are leaving to take a new posting in Singapore. We wish them well and thank them for their endeavours over the past two years.



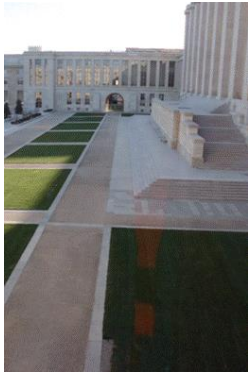
The “big sister” congratulates the “little sister”



Junior School Crazy Hair Day



Mr Tony and Mrs Ursula Ryan



United Nations  
Headquarters

*“This trip had a great impact on our lives and how we view society around us.”*



Mrs Gogulescu with  
Shivam Vyas, Aabid  
Shamji, Karishma  
Savani and Neha  
Dhalani

## Our Geneva Experience

In early December four students, Neha Dhalani, Karishma Svani, Shivam Vyas and Aabid Shamji, accompanied by Mrs Joanne Gogulescu, had the privilege of going to Geneva. The main aim of the trip was to attend the Earth Focus conference on the future of human rights and its connection with the environment. The forums that were led by esteemed experts and professors helped broaden our knowledge on human rights and their impact on the environment. Moreover, as the Aga Khan Academy representatives we got a chance to present the issue of the M23 rebels in the DRC and its impact not only on human rights, but also on the environment. We also took part in organising various discussion groups about general human rights issues and possible solutions. This was very stimulating as all age groups and professions worked together to come up with solutions to problems that were brought up in the forums.

Our visit to the Red Cross Museum was a very different experience. This is because we got the chance to learn about the history of the Red Cross, and its contributions to the global community. Moreover, we got the chance to hear from several victims of torture, which gave us a better idea of how the world is, about their suffering, and the reasons for their grievances. We also got to read several memoirs of soldiers and prisoners from World War 2 and their distress during that time.

The United Nations visit was one of the best experiences of the trip. This is because it is the Global headquarters for Human Rights and has a lot of history and connections with the League of Nations. We were thrilled by the architecture of the buildings and the sculptures donated by various nations and NGOs. Furthermore, we had a chance to learn about the history of the UN and we got to see the difference between the old League of Nations building and the modern UN buildings.

Our visit to the Aga Khan Foundation helped us further understand the roots of our school and the purpose of the Academies. In addition we also got to learn about the history of the AKDN and how its various agencies have helped solve global problems to make the world a better place.

The trip was an enlightening and interactive experience. It was interesting to meet students, professors and experts from all over the world and to learn about their ideas and views on different global issues especially human rights and the environment. Visiting the Red Cross Museum, the famous United Nations headquarters, the Aga Khan Foundation, and even a day side-trip to France, made this an experience that cannot be forgotten. We can honestly say that this trip has had a great impact on our lives and how we view society around us.—  
*Reporter: Shivam Vyas*

## 10th Anniversary Celebrations

The Academy celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a series of events in early December. On 7 December, the fantastically successful Zawadi Bazaar was held at the Academy – no effort was spared to make it the biggest and best yet – and it was, providing a wonderful day out for all. There were people everywhere; there were more stalls than ever, and then there were all the other attractions: camel rides (even Father Christmas arrived on the camel, looking splendid, though finding it slightly less comfortable than his more usual sleigh transport), the Flying Panthers acrobat troupe, who engaged the students in their act, even hoisting one or two high in the air, a bouncy castle, the auction of promises, a monster raffle, lots of musical entertainment – the list is practically endless.

Student stalls were also in abundance with 26 groups raising funds for a variety of community service projects, along with a stall for each Year 10 group. It was a great day and over 300,000KShs has been raised for the Citizenship fund. We thank all the vendors and all those who came along and we especially thank our wonderful PA Committee who were indeed Santa's helpers and who had earlier amassed a staggering number of prizes for the raffle! It was a wonderful Zawadi Bazaar and a great day out.

On Monday 9 December, our annual Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony was held – this year using one of the large Royal Palms that dominate the front courtyard as the Christmas tree. The evening concert began with musical

offerings from the orchestra, Junior and Senior choirs and the Staff choir, along with smaller ensembles, and The Tribe (the Block 6 boys). As the light dimmed, the Head of Academy, Mr Simon Otieno, spoke and then the tree was lit – it was a magical moment.

On Tuesday 10 December a full school assembly was held to formally mark the first ten years of the school and also to celebrate Kenya's 50 years of independence. The hall was draped both in the colours of the Kenyan flag and the school colours and each student and staff member was given a piece of the anniversary cake as they left the ceremony. We also acknowledged those staff members who have been at the Academy for the whole ten years and congratulated them on a job very well done.

Then in the evening celebratory events culminated in a formal gala dinner. The evening commenced with speeches from Mr Otieno, past and present students, the SRC presidents and the Chair of the Parents' Association. It was a time for reflection and rejoicing and was interspersed with entertainment: a Tajik dance, an Indian dance and an African dance. Also performing were The Tribe presenting Cold Play's *Fix You* to great acclaim from the audience. After the sumptuous food prepared by our kitchen staff it was time for the main act, Eric Wainaina and his band, who kept the large crowd wonderfully entertained.

Happy 10<sup>th</sup> birthday to The Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa!



Zawadi Bazaar



Christmas tree lighting



Eric Wainaina performing to an enthusiastic audience

## Royal Visitors at the Academy

On 17 January, the Academy was honoured by a visit from Prince Rahim Aga Khan and Princess Salwa. They were welcomed by the acting Principal of the Senior School, Mr Naheed Bardai. Prince Rahim and Princess Salwa were taken on a tour of the school grounds where they visited the Junior and Senior Schools, the residential areas and sports facilities. They also had the opportunity to visit a dual language class and a chemistry class, and to see the Senior School Choir perform and they met with many students and spoke with them about their experiences at the Academy. We were delighted by the visit and it was an exciting afternoon for the many students who managed to catch a glimpse, to shake hands or to talk with them.

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## Residential Talent Night

Our annual Residential Talent Night was held in early December. Residential students had put in a lot of effort in the preceding weeks devising and practising their contributions and it provided a great night's entertainment. There was an impressive line-up of judges, coming from as far afield as France, and the eventual winners were the Block 6 Boys, while Block 2 was placed second and Block 4 third. However, although it is always nice to win, not everyone can, and it was a great display of the very real talents of all of the residential students.

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## Golden Climate International Environmental Project Olympiad (GCIEPO)

The science department is registering students who wish to participate in the science Olympiad which is being organised by Light Academy schools. The contest is divided into two parts: a National round, to be held on 25-26 February, and an International round to be held in Nairobi on 29-20 April. It is also divided into an open Junior section (ages 11-14) and a Senior category (ages 15-19) where students are required to design projects on the following themes: Engineering, Environment, Energy and Agriculture. We wish all participants success.

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## Staff News (cont'd from p 3)

During the Full School Assembly held on 10 December, marking both our 10th anniversary and Kenya's 50 years of independence, we acknowledged those staff members who have been employed here for the entire 10 years. They included Junior and Senior School teachers and support staff: Mr Samson Obura, Mrs Amita Dave, Mr Jimmy Bockle, Ms Georgina Thiong'o, Mr John Rockey, Mr Juma Ngaluko, Mr Tungwa Nyiro, Ms Eunice Indulachi, Mr Bakari Kazungu, Ms Elizabeth Bwana, Mr Philip Lisuza, Mrs Mary Nyandieka, Mr Anthony Gioko, Mr Benard Dudi, Mrs Alice Ndung'u, Ms Ruth Adede, and Ms Judith Misigo. Each was presented with an Academy pin and sincere thanks from all. One of the recipients, Mr Jimmy Bockle, also retired on the same day—we thank him for his 10 years of service and wish him a long and happy retirement.

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