

# Senior School Newsletter



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The Aga Khan Academy, Hyderabad

## From The Head of Academy...

Dear Parents of the Senior School,

January to March of this school year seems to have gone by in no time at all and yet, as is the case with every active school, so much has taken place. With our first group of diploma candidates to be prepared for their final IB examinations, the term began with “the Mocks”. Those exams gave them an idea of what to expect in May. For many it was a shock to find that much more effort is needed to attain the grades that are expected for entrance to good universities, but that is the main point of the mocks – a wake-up call. To assist their study programmes, the teachers have put in place strategies to concentrate learning and we are offering a “Focus Week” of intensive revision and question practice during the last week of the spring holiday.

Meanwhile, other years have been very active in a variety of ways. The Physical Education Department is to be congratulated for staging an excellent sports day for the Senior School - this following on from the previous day, after they had provided the Junior School with a similar sporting opportunity to win medals. The Science Department organized a most informative and

enjoyable Science Day, which included displays and performances from the Junior Section. As I write, the Music Department is in the final stages of preparation for a concert based on “Scheherazade”, and examples of students’ Art are being put on display for an exhibition that bridges the two school sections. At this time, I can hear sounds of rehearsals for the Senior School drama production of “Cleopatra and the Roman Way” coming from our amphitheatre. Amidst this activity, teachers continue to provide lessons intended to develop the students, and we see outcomes of this in the different assemblies that the students have produced and the news that comes to us of provisional acceptances to good universities. I should like to thank Mr. Ray and his teachers who continue to provide the stimuli and learning opportunities enabling your daughters and sons to progress. We shall see the outcomes of that effort, not only in the fun and enjoyment that they provide but in the results of the Diploma Programme (DP) final examinations, and in the outcome of the Middle Years Programme (MYP) authorisation visit scheduled for June.

- I. J. Kerr

## From The Principal's Desk...

Dear Parents

At the time of writing we are about to complete Term 2 of our second year in operation. Students and staff have been working very hard in all areas and deserve a well-earned break. Last week many parents were treated to the Grade 6-8 Musical 'Scheherazade' in the events area of our new Commons building. Mr Nigel and Mr Subhadip are to be congratulated as are all the staff and especially students who took part. We also enjoyed two performances of the play 'Cleopatra and the Roman Way' in the auditorium on a Friday and a Saturday evening. Mr Aaron and the residential students and staff have maintained the celestial standard begun last year, we certainly are blessed with gifted students and staff here at the academy.

Theatrical performances such as the above, in addition to sports exchanges such as the Inaugural Football Tournament which we hosted (and won) as well as the considerable amount of

Community & Service projects conducted all add up to make this a great school. Whilst these enrichment areas are happening in the background, the serious business of teaching and learning is going on in the classrooms. Education is not a race, but there are benchmarks and watershed moments along the way... and three of these are coming up next term.

Parents should note that Grades 7-10 have examinations from April 21-25. The Grade 11 examinations begin in the last week of May and of course the Grade 12 DP2 external exams run from May 5<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>. As you will read in this newsletter, measures have been put in place to assist students in achieving highly in these challenges that lie ahead of them. Your assistance is sought in encouraging your children to have a good rest over the break but also begin revising so that they can prove to everyone how much they have learnt and understood.

As always, I look forward to meeting many parents again at the Parent teacher Meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

Kind Regards,

Ray Zinsli

Secondary Academic Principal



## From the DP Coordinator...

This term has been a roller-coaster ride for most of the DP2 students. Receiving acceptance letters and rejection letters have become part and parcel of life for almost all Grade 12. Though many students met certain coursework deadlines, alarmingly few students managed to hand in all of their Internal Assessments on time.

Procrastination not only increases stress but also decreases achievement and so this has been a difficult lesson in life. On the positive side, we have received confirmed University placements for sixteen of the Grade 12 students, and it is still very early in the admissions/acceptance process so special congratulations should go to these students.

The External (Final) IB Examinations run from May 5<sup>th</sup> until May 21<sup>st</sup> 2014. To provide an extra boost for Grade 12 we shall run a Focus Camp commencing on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April. A special programme has been created which will dramatically improve understanding with revision strategies and specialist tutoring. This will also enhance the students' examination techniques and no doubt dramatically lift student performance and achievement. One key aspect of the Focus Camp will be to provide a large block of time to concentrate upon English and Mathematics. Attendance at this Focus Camp is clearly very important and sure to

reap dividends in substantially raising student final grades.

Having written their DP1 examinations in December 2013, the Grade 11 students are now aware of the rigorous demands and high standards required by the DP programme. Many students are involved in various CAS activities including teaching in Government Schools and taking part in the Shodh Yatra.

The Grade 11 examinations will run from the end of May 2014. These examinations are practice exams for the actual May 2015 IB exams and are *very* important for at least two reasons:

1. They alert students and teachers to deficiencies in understanding as well as allowing practice performances
2. The results are commonly used by universities for generating 'placement offers' which are usually conditional upon a similar or better performance in the actual external examinations.

To briefly summarise, we have had a busy term and are all (especially the students!) working hard toward achieving short-term and medium-term targets which will enable us to realise our long term goals.

- Neeraja Nibhanupudi

## From the MYP Coordinator...

### Introducing the New MYP

The International Baccalaureate Organization is in the process of redesigning the Middle Years Program. MYP: Next chapter changes represent an evolution of the current program, with innovation in terms of external assessment and further development of the program as part of the IB continuum of international education.



### Global contexts

MYP global contexts provide shared starting points for inquiry into what it means to be internationally-minded, framing a curriculum that promotes multilingualism, intercultural understanding and global engagement. These contexts build on the powerful themes of global significance that structure teaching and learning in the IB Primary Years Program. These (and other) contexts for teaching and learning inspire explorations of our common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet. They invite reflection on what it means to members of local, national and global communities, and they reflect the real-life issues and concerns

of adolescent learners.

### MYP subject groups

Language and literature [Language A]  
 Language acquisition [Language B]  
 Individuals and societies [Humanities]  
 Sciences  
 Design [Technology]  
 Physical and health education

### Concept based learning:

Key concepts are big ideas which form the basis of teaching and learning in the MYP. Key concepts engage students in higher order thinking, helping them to connect facts and topics with more complex conceptual understanding. Key concepts provide a focus for transferring knowledge and understanding across disciplines and subject groups. Related concepts promote deep learning. They are grounded in specific disciplines and are useful for exploring key concepts in greater detail. Inquiry into related concepts helps students develop more complex and sophisticated conceptual understanding.

<i><b>PYP transdisciplinary theme</b></i>	<i><b>MYP global context</b></i>
Who we are	identities and relationships
Where we are in place and time	orientation in space and time
Forms of expression	personal and cultural expression
How the world works	scientific and technical innovation
How we organize ourselves	globalization and sustainability
Sharing the planet	fairness and development

## Assessment

MYP criterion-related assessment will be more consistent across subject groups in terms of name, and achievement levels. All subject groups and the personal project will have four criteria, with band levels of 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8.

## MYP eAssessments

There will be three kinds of IB MYP eAssessments which lead to *IB MYP Course*

### Results:

- externally-marked onscreen examinations for selected subjects
- an externally marked ePortfolio—for language acquisition courses in selected languages
- Three internally marked and externally moderated ePortfolios—for selected courses in physical and health education, arts, and design.

### IB MYP Certificates (beginning 2016)

**To achieve the *IB MYP Certificate* a candidate must:**

- Study the program for the recommended period of at least two years, with a minimum of one year, and complete all curriculum requirements in Year 5
- Successfully complete program requirements and eAssessments for a minimum of five disciplines from different subject groups which must include:
  1. language and literature
  2. language acquisition (or a second language and literature)
  3. individuals and societies
  4. sciences
  5. mathematics
- Receive successful moderated results from the submission of at least one ePortfolio from the arts, physical & health education and design groups
- Complete the interdisciplinary eAssessment (best to stick to the same terminology otherwise readers might think that this is a different thing)
- Receive successful moderated results from the submission of the personal project
- Complete the school's requirements for Community Service (service as action).

Source: IBO Next Chapter Developmental Report

- Koel Ray

### From the TOK Coordinator...

This term has been quite hectic for our old timers as well as the new entrants to the course.

While the Diploma year 2 students were busy dusting their essays and presentations to finally send them away to the IBO, the Diploma year 1 students experienced their first formal presentations. Both these activities were enriching as the students were encouraged to give structure to their thoughts

and ideas. Moreover, they learnt to give more profound and pertinent points of view to have sustained and meaningful arguments. As the year proceeds, we shall see more action from the DP 1 students as they will have to gear up for the presentations and the essays to mark the end of this academic year.

- Ujjwala Bhatt

### From the Careers Team...

#### Celebrating the success of our students –

After almost one and a half years of tireless efforts by the students and the counselling department, we have started receiving the fruits of our labour in the form of university

admissions for the Diploma year 2 students. Though we are still awaiting the results for many more students and universities we would like to share with you an update for now.

Student	Universities admitted to	Names of course	Scholarships
<b>Aishwarry Pettie</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Warwick University, UK</li><li>City University, UK</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Economics</li><li>Management</li><li>Business</li></ul>	
<b>Alexis Reddy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>University of Southampton, UK</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Biology</li></ul>	
<b>Azra Lakhani</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>UBC, Canada</li><li>University of Victoria, Canada</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>BSc Psychology</li></ul>	CAD 10000
<b>David Chesney</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Christ College, India</li><li>ISBF, India</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>BA</li><li>Economics and management</li></ul>	
<b>Farida Virani</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>UBC, Canada</li><li>University of Victoria, Canada</li><li>Pepperdine University</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>BSc (Psychology)</li></ul>	
<b>Firoz Amin Dhanani</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>York University, Canada</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Space Engineering</li></ul>	

<b>Imtiyaz Hariyani</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UBC, Canada</li> <li>• University of Alberta, Canada</li> <li>• McGill , Canada</li> <li>• University of Victoria, Canada</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biochemistry</li> <li>• Molecular biology</li> </ul>	CAD 10000/-
<b>Moiez Satyani</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Victoria, Canada</li> <li>• York University, Canada</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engineering</li> </ul>	
<b>Nidhitha Kothapalli</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temple, USA</li> <li>• George Mason University, USA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biology &amp; psychology</li> </ul>	
<b>Pranay Yadav</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• McGill, Canada</li> <li>• Drexel University, USA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physics</li> </ul>	USD 12000
<b>Raesa Rane</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UBC, Canada</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humanities</li> <li>• Management</li> </ul>	
<b>Sadaf Bandeali</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Alberta, Canada</li> <li>• York University, Canada</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History</li> </ul>	
<b>Sai Chaitanya Pilaka</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purdue University</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undeclared</li> </ul>	
<b>Suhail Dayani</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Waterloo, Canada</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engineering</li> </ul>	CAD 2000
<b>Susant Polavarapu</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Colorado, USA</li> <li>• Penn State University, USA</li> <li>• Arizona state University, USA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engineering</li> </ul>	
<b>Taniya Dharani</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading University, UK</li> <li>• Norwich University, UK</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BFA</li> </ul>	
<b>Vishaal Kondoor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emory, USA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-med</li> </ul>	USD 40000/-

## From the Languages Department...

### English

Ending this term the Diploma year 2 students are all geared up for the individual oral commentary while their Written Tasks are sent away to the IBO. Diploma year 1 students have taken their Individual Oral Presentations and Further Oral Activities and awaiting moderation.

During the students of Middle Years 2, 3 and 4 were involved in reading and analysing various novels and media articles, connecting those to health and social education. During the process they learnt to write diary entries, letters and devising quizzes. With increasing grade levels students got into technicalities on the novel through various exercises like role plays, vocabulary building, creative writing,

### French:

The French students experienced a lot of Francophone culture in their classes. This year saw a lot of theme based French songs to enable the students work on their listening as well as speaking skills. Through many creative activities the students learnt to use the language, to explore their imagination and express it in words. The Diploma year 1 Ab Initio students took an imaginative journey to various destinations; they wrote holiday post cards and created brochures of real as well as imaginative destinations, whereas the Diploma year 1 B SL students immersed their selves into hypothetical and

designing posters and writing songs, which made the learning fun and meaningful. Much focus was laid on the usage of appropriate language for expressing their ideas. On the contrary the year 5 students examined poetry in relation to ideology. The works of poets were situated in the context of history and ideology. Audio-visuals were used to which students responded in a reflective manner. Focus was on the aspects of analysis for the unseen commentaries. Creative writing for the school website, proposed by Mr Ian Kerr, witnessed a surge of enthusiasm as students took to writing in earnest.

- Sudeep Ghosh

imaginative situations through the use of the conditional tenses. While the Diploma year 1 students enjoyed exploring their imagination, all the Diploma year 2 students completed their written tasks and orals. The outcome of the written tasks revealed a new passion for the language that the students have for French. In addition, The Diploma year 2 Ab Initio students learnt to use complex structures by creating riddles on their environment especially their campus.

- Ujjwala Bhatt

## Hindi:

Longest term of this session is about to come to the finish line. Particularly this term was the busiest for DP teachers and students, as our first DP batch is done with their Internal Assessments such as Written Assignment and Individual Oral Commentary. They appeared for their Mock Exams in January, and strategies for the upcoming Final DP exam are planned. MYP-5 students completed their Moderation Sample work in Hindi Language, where three sample works are done for MYP moderation. MYP-4 students presented an assembly on the theme of Holi, where in the play depicted the mythological importance of the festival. Student's hard work was hugely admired by the entire school community.

MYP-3 Hindi unit focused on the influence of expression and building an understanding of others on healthy lifestyle. Further students explored how effective and positive use of language can help resolve arbitrary issues and create peaceful communities around us.

MYP-2 got involved in understanding the role of language in building bridges among the societies and standing up against societal prejudices, religious and cultural inequality and racism.

With the festivity of Holi and good wishes for Baisakhi in April, we'll be ready for the next term.

- Dr. Karuna Arya



## From The Humanities Department...

### Reflection on: Talk by guest speakers on Volunteerism to the students of MYP 4 on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

In the process of learning about Volunteerism, the students got a chance to meet and interact with some real life volunteers. One among them was Dr. Sheetal from Nireekshana ACET, an NGO in Hyderabad, who works towards empowering the women and children suffering from AIDS. Dr. Sheetal is not only an active worker of this organization but is also motivated towards sharing her aspirations and



experiences with students. She shared her knowledge about the historical background of volunteerism and various types of voluntary organizations. Followed by this, she shared her thoughts on how volunteerism is becoming an act of helping others and at the same time an act of helping oneself in terms of achieving emotional and personal growth and balance. She was accompanied by Ms. Akansha, another young college student and a volunteer, who also assists her in various volunteering activities. Ms. Akansha believes that the act of volunteering means to reach a “helpers high”- an experience of achieving high level of satisfaction by helping others.

Ms. Mellani who works with ‘My Choice’, an organization that works for the betterment of the Leprosy affected people. Ms. Mellani who hails from USA was taken care by a voluntary organization in USA from a very young age. This led her to dedicate herself for volunteering.

Later students asked several questions to the volunteers and know more about their interpretation

of their services and how they themselves could get involved in such organizations. Students were much delighted to share their experiences of volunteering on various levels both in school and outside.



### The DP Students

Diploma 1 students have been working exceptionally hard in Ethics (SL) and Political Philosophy (HL). In ethics we have been studying normative ethical theories, and have had heated debates about the principles of deontology, utilitarianism and divine command theory. Students have become mini experts in particular areas of Virtue ethics, and have presented their research to the rest of the class. In politics, students have been looking at the difference between state, nation and government. We have been deciding which type of civil society structure fits well with different political ideologies. In addition we have been focusing on social contract theories and just how far they are applicable in 2014.

Having finished the course in December, Diploma 2 students have been busy finalizing their Internal Assessment essays. Many have made great improvements and all final drafts have been submitted. Students have also been engaged in revision and exam preparation.

- Suresh Madhavan, Kanchan Misra & Kesi Charles

## From the Science Department...

To commemorate the achievements of Sir C.V.Raman, Indian Physicist, National Science Day is celebrated across India on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February. Similar to last year, The National science day at AKA, H was a big hit as the students organized and participated in various activities across the junior and senior schools. The day started with welcomes and introductions, followed by the junior school tiny tots presenting their scientific learning and ideas through songs, dances and acts. Dressed in scientific attire, students not only showcased the historical developments but also the scope and application of science in our everyday lives.



Later during the day, while the Junior School students exhibited their creativity to the parents, the Senior School students got involved in action filled activities like Scientific Quizzes, On spot model making, Designing digital posters and Debate competitions.

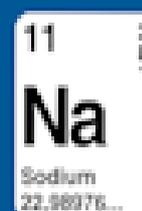
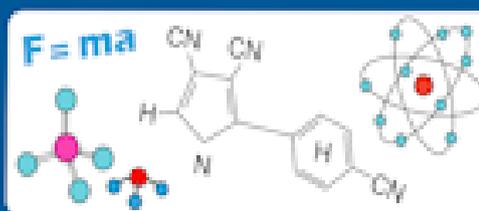
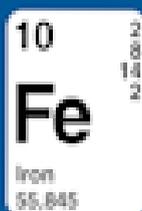
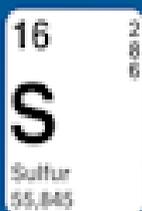
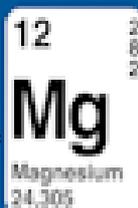
The day was full of learning and laughter, serious involvements and judgments, creativity and

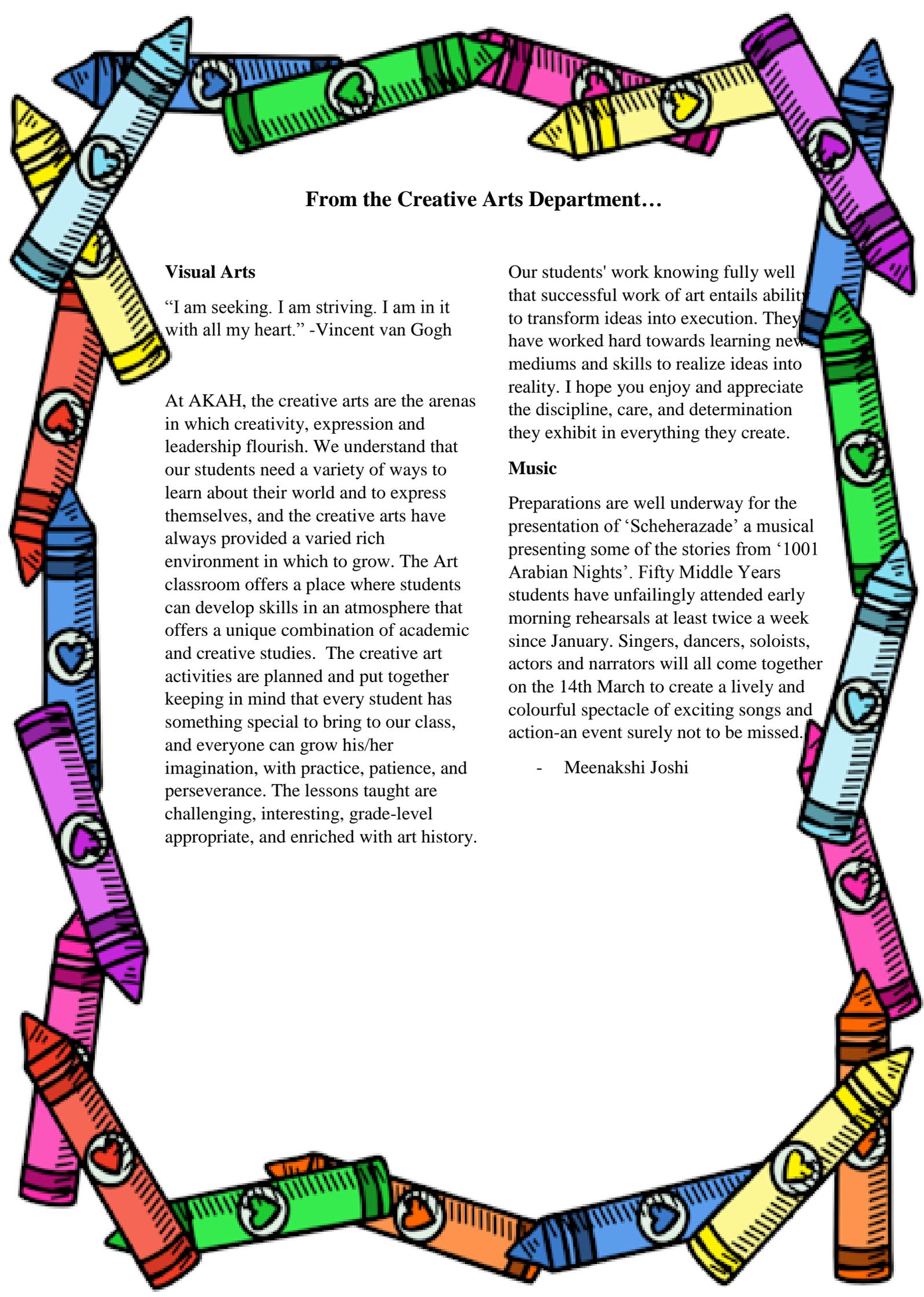


surprises for both the students and the teachers. The event was concluded with awarding participation certificates to all the students who stood out in the activities. We look forward to keep the scientific enthusiasm going and to come in with much greater zeal and creativity in coming years.



- Sudipta Roy





## From the Creative Arts Department...

### Visual Arts

“I am seeking. I am striving. I am in it with all my heart.” -Vincent van Gogh

At AKAH, the creative arts are the arenas in which creativity, expression and leadership flourish. We understand that our students need a variety of ways to learn about their world and to express themselves, and the creative arts have always provided a varied rich environment in which to grow. The Art classroom offers a place where students can develop skills in an atmosphere that offers a unique combination of academic and creative studies. The creative art activities are planned and put together keeping in mind that every student has something special to bring to our class, and everyone can grow his/her imagination, with practice, patience, and perseverance. The lessons taught are challenging, interesting, grade-level appropriate, and enriched with art history.

Our students' work knowing fully well that successful work of art entails ability to transform ideas into execution. They have worked hard towards learning new mediums and skills to realize ideas into reality. I hope you enjoy and appreciate the discipline, care, and determination they exhibit in everything they create.

### Music

Preparations are well underway for the presentation of ‘Scheherazade’ a musical presenting some of the stories from ‘1001 Arabian Nights’. Fifty Middle Years students have unfailingly attended early morning rehearsals at least twice a week since January. Singers, dancers, soloists, actors and narrators will all come together on the 14th March to create a lively and colourful spectacle of exciting songs and action-an event surely not to be missed.

- Meenakshi Joshi

### From the Mathematics Department...

As we started the new year we returned from the experience of the Regional Mathematics Olympiad, where a number of our students represented the school at various levels. In the classrooms, units have ranged from investigating medical statistics in Grade 10, to exploring projectiles through mathematics in Grade 9. Our Grade 7 students have become investment bankers for the term, exploring the stock markets and using mathematics to understand mock investments made on an online trading platform – some of our Grade

10 students even came and offered some special tips to their younger peers.

The 14th March (3/14) saw the celebration of International Pi Day in the school, with a special assembly lead by the Grade 8 students to emphasise the role and history of Pi the number. This then led to a number of lesson based activities including the game Mono-poly!

- Karim Ismail



## From the ICT Department...

This term was full of enthusiasm for the Middle year teens as they explored different software, available in the world of technology. While the youngest of those learnt the application and ethical implication of Image editing through GIMP (Computer Software), the years 3 got involved in promoting country's tourism through culture by creating website using HTML as a tool. Year 4 worked on bringing awareness of the environmental effects on public health through Gamesalad. The year 5 students designed

ecommerce Site to flourish knowledge of ICT even in the remotest areas of a country. In the coming term the students of year 5 will lead their own design cycle in technology. On the whole this term was focused on experiential learning of the tools from ICT and be able to understand their importance in overall development and maintaining the morality of a society.

- Vani Vishwanath





## From the Sports Department...

This term saw the establishment of the Aga Khan Academy Football Tournament, where we hosted Hyderabad schools in a competitive tournament. After two days of challenging matches, the Aga Khan Academy team reached the finals. In front of the whole school in support we reached victory, taking home the cup for the first year. This has certainly set a precedent for the future.

We also saw the first opportunity for our reserve basketball team to compete – participating in a competition at a local school. This was an excellent learning experience for our boys and exposed them to the competition in Hyderabad. They returned after being knocked out in the first round, but with a wealth of experience and pride for having represented the school.

- Karim Ismail

### Cricket

Our cricket team ended the term on a high note with three consecutive victories in home friendlies. The first ever hat-trick and half century were recorded at the home ground. The senior members of the team stepped up in this term to accelerate the careers of a lot of talented cricketers at the Academy.

Season 3 of the ever-popular AKAH Cricket League was also held recently and was a huge success as it actively involved both staff and students. “Pokka Cricketers” won the League and remained unbeaten throughout.

- Imtiyaz Hariyani and Firoz Dhanani

### Newsletter Team:

Arzoo Parbatani, Faridah Lakhani, Firoz Amin Dhanani and Imtiyaz Enayatali Hariyani

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