



# MERAKI

THE MARIAN NEWSLETTER, 2017

October, 2017



## A MESSAGE TO MARIANS

Greetings,

As we enter a new season, it seems like a great time to reflect on what we've accomplished to get to where we are and the plans we have for an exciting, bright future.

I'd like to start by expressing how much I appreciate each member of the Marian team and that I recognize we

wouldn't be where we are without the contributions made by each and every one of our teachers and staff. Thank you. You are our pillar and strength on which the school stands. You all have proved that Truth, Determination and Perseverance provide the finest education to our children.

Our beloved Principal, Alpana Phukan's 25 years of experience in Academics, her leadership in managing the school gives us depth in all phases of development and our Academic Reputation. Thank you for driving the growth of our best practices and discipline across our student base. We are really making strides in achieving our goal of transforming our children into global citizens and have earned a great reputation as a trusted school. We want our reputation for excellence to be unbroken. In the previous academic year, our students have done exceedingly well and achieved all our goals and I expect such a performance or even better in this academic year to continue. Maria's Public School is committed to providing a safe, caring and challenging educational environment that promotes learning and achievement for all students. We recognize and celebrate the diverse learning methodology, interests, talents and cultures of our students and strive to offer a rich variety of meaningful learning experiences that will inspire innovative thinkers and confident learners to be the leaders of tomorrow. We will continue to implement learning programmes that include life skills education, global awareness and exposure, social sciences, health, sports and technology while following practices that develop the welfare of a teacher, parent involvement and community outreach. Our key focus and aim this year is to maintain a safe, respectful learning environment for everyone. I encourage children to talk about their fears and achievements with teachers. We are also focusing on developing our infrastructure to ensure we keep up-to-date security structure. Thank you for your perseverance and commitment to academic excellence.

My door is always open to you.

Sincerely,

**Nellie Ahmed Tanweer**



## PRINCIPAL'S SPEECH ON THE OCCASION OF FOUNDER'S DAY

A very good morning respected Founder and Managing Trustee, Mrs. Nellie Ahmed Tanweer, Head Mistress of Birkuchi Prathomik Bidyalay, Vice Principal, Mr. Anjan Gogoi, Headmistress of the Primary and Sr. Sec. Sections, Mrs. Aradhana Borah and Mrs. Madhavi Goswami respectively, distinguished parents, teachers and students. I am delighted to welcome our dearest Nellie Ma'am to the Founder's Day celebrations today. All of us here take this opportunity, Ma'am, of wishing you a very, very happy birthday on the 27th September and years of good health, happiness and fulfilment. May God bless you, your dear family and the school in abundance and may all your wishes, hopes, dreams and aspirations turn into reality. May there be roses and roses all the way! Here, I would like to inform everyone that since the school will close from tomorrow on account of Durga Puja, we have scheduled the function for today and have also arranged for the Community Feast with our neighboring school to commemorate this auspicious occasion. Founder's day, the 27th September is an extremely significant day for Maria's as it celebrates not only the birthday of our founder but also the birth of the institution, as it steps into its 29th year of existence. So as we celebrate our school, its life, its people and its wonderful years of achievements and accomplishments, we must not fail to rededicate ourselves to our Motto of Truth, Determination and Perseverance and promise to use it to empower ourselves in all that we do. Truth, Determination and Perseverance is a source of wisdom. This school is a dream come true for Nellie Ma'am, who has always lived by that dictum. She had a dream, 29 years ago- a dream to mould young minds and set confident young adults to take on the challenges of tomorrow. Today as she sees her dream unfurling into reality with the remarkable feats achieved by you children, her heart probably bursts with pride. Having spent 26 years of those 29 years in this amazing institution, I find it to be an extraordinary place- with an extraordinary, charming and dynamic visionary, who throws upon you the most unique of ideas that seem impossible at that juncture but with her gentle push and goading, turns out to be the first of its kind in this region. When "Learning Beyond the Classroom" is gathering momentum as the 21st century education all over the globe today, Ma'am had envisaged it in the 20th century itself. When Inclusive Education was unheard of way back in the 80s, Ma'am took in children with hearing impairment and provided to them the best of education and teachers. With the kind of zeal, dedication, commitment and most importantly, humaneness and humility, possessed by this marvelous lady, who has left no stone unturned to take the school to where it stands today, it is no surprise that she has been bestowed with so many awards- Rajiv Gandhi Shiromani Award, The Stree Udhya Award, FICCI FLO North East Entrepreneurship Award, NEDFI North East Education Innovation Award, British Council International School award from 2014-2017 and again for another 4 years thereafter, the White Swan Award for being an influential brand, besides receiving awards for Maria's Public School, instituted by Education World, for two consecutive years. Maria's Public School, built brick by brick by Nellie Ma'am and through many ups and downs, will always be a place of enquiry, of discovery, of hope, of excitement and characterized by a sense of promise and pride of purpose- a happy place buzzing with activity- a place that is important for us because we have spent quality time here, shaping it and being shaped by it. That is primarily the reason why it is important for all of us to come together on this auspicious day and thank and offer our gratitude to Nellie Ma'am for giving us this safe and secure haven to nurture and be nurtured. Before I end, I wish to reiterate my every good wish to Nellie Ma'am and pray that her untiring efforts propel her from strength to strength.

Thank you.

**Alpana Khound Phukan**

# Editor's Note

With immense pleasure and with hearts that have toiled for months but are content, we welcome you readers, to Meraki, the Marian Newsletter, 2017.

With more than half the term already behind us, let us all slap our backs, shall we? This term, like every term at Maria's has been full of activity giving us opportunities galore to pounce upon with all our energy and enthusiasm. Every door- and even window- is a way that help us to see another world, make us learn something new and demands the best of us.

It seems like yesterday that we entered the school gates for a new session. It seems like yesterday that our students went abroad and brought back memories for all of us to cherish. It seems like yesterday that we were just beginning to drink in new knowledge and harass our teachers with our incessant and never-ceasing whispers. It seems like yesterday that we stood together and joined our hands for the all-faith prayer. It feels like yesterday that we were sitting in the exam hall writing that last-minute answer while the seconds passed by. It all feels like yesterday but yet so many months have passed, promising a future just as enriching as the moments that have dissolved in memories.

Our journey through the year has not been a feast of Biryani, it wasn't a buffet laid down for us. Sure we had our moments, but we also had to grit our

teeth, steel our hearts and rise above our failures and try again where we did not succeed before. The motto of our school, *Truth, Determination and Perseverance*, has always showed us the way, strengthening our weakening resolve wherever required.

And thus, with all these behind us, we bring you Meraki. It is a Greek word which means the soul, creativity or love that we put into something; the essence of ourselves that is put into our work. And this is just what it is. We see it reflected in the events that we celebrated, the places that we went, and in the words that we penned down.

Before we take your leave and let you read on further, we would like to acknowledge all of you who have contributed in the making of Meraki: our Founder and Managing Trustee, Nellie Ma'am, for taking her time out to be a part of Meraki and supporting us throughout this journey, Principal Alpana Ma'am for her encouragements and being that invisible force from which we all drew strength from, Ellie Ma'am, our teacher in-charge, for guiding us and relentlessly pushing us forward, Vice Principal Anjan Sir, for his constant support, a special thanks to Biswajit Sir and Rakesh Sir, for providing us with images of the various events of this year that you'll read about as you flip through, and finally special thanks to Mayukh Saikia and Ankit Gogoi of class 10 A, the two designers who gave Meraki its embodiment.

Readers, over to you...

## Editorial Board

Amogha Sarma, Tanim S. Mozumder

Atrika Burgohain, Swapnil Dutta

Kashvi Phukhan, Sparsh C. Rajneesh.

**Teacher In-Charge:** Ellie Dutta

## I Will

*Leadership is all about taking people on a journey. The challenge is that most of the time, we are*

*asking people to follow us to places we ourselves have never been. -Andy Stanley.*



So, with the start of the new session, we the students and teachers of our school, voted for the people who will lead us through the year. And on a sunny morning, on the 22nd of April, the new Marian Cabinet was sworn in. Our Founder and Managing Trustee sent her message and wishes to the new cabinet. She said, "Leadership is not about

asserting your authority over others but it is about being one of the mass, influencing them with your ideas and accepting productive thoughts from all quarters." After a chorus performed by the school choir, the previous Heads of the School officially handed over the responsibility to the present Cabinet. It was followed by the Oath Taking where

the students were asked if they are ready to shoulder the responsibilities and take on their new duties to which they replied, "I will" Then the senior teachers pinned the badges. And with the signing of the Oath, the Investiture Ceremony closed down in a solemn manner.

## **Marian Cabinet, 2017**

**Head Boy**–Padmanav Baruah **Head Girl**–Manpreet Kaur

**Deputy Head Boy**–Sayantan Choudhury **Deputy Head Girl**–Upasana Patgiri

**Discipline Captain**–Cheryl Ziaul **Deputy Discipline Captain**–Nameera Ahmed

**Cultural Captain**–Meghma Kotaky **Deputy Cultural Captain**–Kajree Gautam

**Sports Captain**–Abhilash Kaman **Deputy Sports Captain**–Harshali Kemprai

**Orang House Captain**–Aastha Borthakur **Vice Captain**–Arnab Banikya

**Nameri House Captain**–Devraj Kumar **Vice Captain**–Sanjukta Baishya

**Manas House Captain**–Prince Bharali **Vice Captain**–Pratishruti Barman

**Jatinga House Captain**–Ana Barua **Vice Captain**–Krishanu Kashyap

## **EARTH DAY IS EVERYDAY!**



*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. ~Margaret Mead*

On the 19th of April as the students stood together to celebrate the 47th anniversary of Earth Day, the words of Margaret Mead proved truer than ever.

The event was opened by our Principal Mrs. Alpana Ma'am who shared thoughtful words with us. Then, speeches followed which emphasized the importance of creating a sustainable environment and the incoming threat of a future without the

earth that seems to grow as fast as human greed and also because of it. An impactful skit was followed by the students of class X.

With this the special assembly ended and with renewed love for Mother Earth the students showed their creativity, love and awareness by putting their thought on paper in the form of beautiful pictures. The students also designed t-shirts to raise awareness and wore them for the rest of the day.

When it comes to doing something for the conservation we, Marians set our heart to it. The school has always encouraged green thinking, which the students display while attending conferences, performing plays, in their painting and in numerous other ways. Let us hope that someday we do not need Earth Day to remind us that we have duties that we are failing to perform.



# Reaping Rewards

*The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more. ~Jonas Salk*

For who does not like rewards? And the glory that it brings along with it. The sense of fulfilling an achievement is great but to be rewarded for it makes it more profound.

And thus on the 23rd of May, 2017 Maria's Public School hosted the Annual Prize where our achievers were duly rewarded. The Founder and Managing Trustee, Nellie Ma'am in her address to the gathering said, "Achievement and success are meaningless if you cannot sustain that position and work for higher targets,". Following that, the Chief Guest of the event, Mrs. Mitra Phukan, a renowned author and columnist said that while striving to achieve material gain, people should also work hard to be ethically strong.

And then the crowd of invited dignitaries, prize winners, parents, guardians, students and teachers took to applauding as various prizes were given away such as General Proficiency, Hundred Percent Attendance along with Annual Scholarship awards like, Manimala Das Scholarship, Kelkar Scholarship, Sofia Z Ahmed Scholarship and Nellie Ahmed Scholarship were awarded to the winners. There were also some special awards for Avid Readers and teachers with hundred percent attendance records. Ditty Ma'am and Mercy Ma'am were rewarded for their relentless contribution to the school without a break. The Award winners of the Late Kaushik Dev Choudhury Award for best artists of the year were also awarded on that day. Kajree Gautam, and Sikha Sengupta, two budding writers and Harshita Chatterjee, who attended the national level Girls Guide Camp after bagging the first position in the state of Assam were felicitated in the function.

# Grandparents' Day



*Nobody can do for little children what grandparents do. Grandparents sort of sprinkle stardust over the lives of little children. ~Alex Haley*

A beautiful little quote, isn't it? And it perfectly describes the role grandparents play in our lives. From caring and loving as much as our parents to scolding them for scolding us, from bedtime stories that never get old if after a thousand narration to

explaining new things to them, we have all those little moments with our grandparents that we cherish forever.

On 9th May, 2017 the primary students of the school hosted a school function to showcase their love for their grandparents.

With the tunes of "I just called to say I love you" a Stevie Wonder classic, the little children welcomed their grandparents. Their soft little voices laced with affection clearly made the song more special. Then, the Founder and Managing Trustee, Nellie Ma'am, addressed the gathering and related incidents from her childhood and the role of her grandparents in her upbringing. This was followed by the address of our Principal, Alpana Ma'am, who stressed on the importance of grandparents today in the lives of their grandchildren and others as well. Mr. Naba Kakoti, grandfather of Shreyam Biswamitra, who had come to Guwahati all the way from North Lakhimpur shared a few words and praised the school for hosting such a program.

Shreyashree Chowdhury of Class II sang a 'Borgeet' and Darnell Das of Class III sang an Assamese song for the esteemed guests. There was also a dance performance by the girls of Class II and III which was met with ready applause and enthusiasm from the grandparents as they watched their little angels perform.

Perhaps the most exciting event of the day was the game, "Who is the fastest peeler?" where ever-so-

## At the Peak of Diplomacy



On the 21st, 22nd and 23rd May, 2017, Maria's Public School hosted the third edition of Maria's Model United Nation. With over 170 delegates from 7 different schools across Assam, this year's Maria's Model United Nation was a huge success.

ready-to-show-their-prowess-grandmothers and make their grandchildren proud as they have been doing them for years participated and two of the fastest amongst them were rewarded.

With the note of thanks by the Headmistress of the Primary Section, Mrs. Aradhana Borah, the curtains of the programme were drawn.

This year Maria's Model United Nation had six committees with agendas ranging from Narco State War to US presidency elections 2020.

The conference started with an interactive session with Mr. Huzefa Kapadia the former president of the Ivy League Model United Nation followed by three days of intense debate and discussion. In this span of three days the delegates had to solve fierce crises, lobby with other delegates and most importantly pass resolutions. In the third edition of Maria's Model United Nation, wars were waged, treaties were signed but in the end peace prevailed.

## Green Thumbs at Work

Weather status: Pouring monsoon clouds hovering above our school



The front seats boasted their occupants with Nellie Ma'am, Alpana Ma'am, Anjan Sir, our former Principal Maya Ma'am and Ms. Purnima Devi Barman, our Chief Guest. Shahnaz Ma'am, who introduced the Prakriti and its objectives, delivered the welcome speech. That was followed by the traditional lamp lighting, believed to be a welcoming gesture to the Unseen. Ms. Purnima

Devi Barman was up on the stage next. She showed us a documentary receiving the Green Oscars, her face beamed with pride and joy. She gave an awe inspiring speech about her experiences and struggles to protect the Hargila, an endangered native bird of Assam, against all odds. Hargila is believed to be a bad omen in some quarters and one can imagine the difficulties to

canvass for its conservation. Ms. Purnima Devi Barman was determined and finally achieved her goal in changing the public mindset and rose awareness regarding the need to protect the endangered species. She is of the view that we are the future of the nation and we are the ones on whom the values and responsibilities



towards nature should be instilled. Ms. Purnima Devi Barman insisted on learning and taking care of nature, passing on the knowledge about the nature to our siblings and other people. Lastly, she praised our school and the students for taking up initiatives for nature conservation with utmost enthusiasm and zeal. Then came, Nellie Ma'am, delivering a speech on the importance of nature conservation and steps taken by the school for the environment and the nature. Thereafter, the cultural programme began. First up was a choir by Class IX, whose topic was monsoon. Then came the two peacock dancers, who mesmerized the crowd with their graceful dance. It was followed by a group dance, the troupe that made the whole audience tap their feet to the beats and shake it off. After that, there were traditional dance performances by different classes, showcasing their talent in dance with their perfect steps and coordination. There were some other songs performed by the junior classes praising nature. There was a drama performance by Class XI on ancient Greece where a tyrannical king was killed by the Minister with the help of an unassuming gladiator. With that came the end of the cultural show. Last but not the least was the IT presentation by class 9. It was very informative and fun. Then there was an awareness theme about monsoon failure in some parts of our country, hapless farmers committing suicide for crop failures and repayment of loans. All in all, the event was successful and added another green feather to the Marian Cap.

## A Proud Moment



June, the month most seniors live for- the end of one life and the beginning of another. And like most seniors, so did ours. The 12th of June saw them entering the school grounds talking and laughing, the way they have done it for years. As the chairs filled and the seniors and juniors interacted for perhaps the last time in school, the excitement in the air grew with every second. Mausumi Ma'am anchored the event and welcomed the students and parents. Then Nellie

Ma'am, our founder and Managing Trustee, addressed the gathering. That was followed by the lighting of the ceremonial lamp. The crowd then swayed to the lyrics of the song, "Proud of You."

After which, Dr. Mahfuza Rahman, HOD of Cotton College, Geography Department, our Chief Guest of the occasion addressed the gathering. She talked about the value of time and of the new world that awaited the going-out batch. Then we pricked our ears and sat in attention as the Toppers of each stream gave their farewell speech. For after all, we might just get to know some tips about how they scored the best amongst everyone. And then the big moment arrived. The giving away of the certificates and cash-prizes. Stream wise, the students lined up donned in their graduation gowns and collected the above mentioned as their names were called. As the last of the photographs were taken, they scattered down to the classrooms one last time and sat down together to enjoy the snacks provided to them.

## World Environment Day

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of June, the World Environment Day is celebrated among the people of the world. Every year, this occasion is celebrated to raise global awareness about the environmental issues and motivate people to take positive environmental actions in order to preserve nature on this planet. The host country for this occasion is Canada. It



surprises us that it also coincides with Canada's 150th anniversary celebrations and represents the pride and sense of identity the Canadian people draw from their implausible natural inheritance. The theme of this year's World Environment Day is 'To Reconnect with Nature'. Mutually, we can work to better safeguard and recognize our planet Earth.

Every year, our school engages in various activities related to the conservation and the wellbeing of our natural surroundings. This year, we once again

recall that the condition of our environment is getting declined day-by-day because of pollution and global warming.

Like they say, 'Time will move on ahead without a stop, but it will never return back in the past'. Time is pending, but it's still not too late to create a change. It depends on the youths and citizens of every country in every corner of the world to take the initiative to promote eco-friendly development in our environment for a better and brighter future.

## Learning beyond the Classroom

On the 9th of August, 2017, we, the students of Maria's Public School, gathered together for a special assembly. We started with an all-faith prayer. From the couplets from Quran to couplets in Sanskrit, we were blessed. In such turbulent times, when the country is divided in different factions, we stood together in a single uniform irrespective of our caste, gender, or religion, bowed our heads and united in our thoughts and ambitions. After the prayers, we put our hands together as our Founder and Managing Trustee, Nellie Ma'am began with the felicitation, which was anchored by Nayantara Ma'am. First, the delegation that went to participate in The 6th Raktabh Dutta Choudhury Memorial North-East School Chess Championship 2017 at Jatiya Vidyalay in July was acknowledged and applauded. The young minds bagged the 2nd best school trophy for the school along with other individual prizes. Then Moromi Ma'am gave us a report on the Skill Training Camp attended by the Scouts and Guides where our students bagged the best team trophy amongst the schools which were a part of the event. Then we heard the reports of the delegation that went to West Virginia for SC3x. What one Marian experiences, the other Marian is not deprived of the experiences or the knowledge gained from an excursion.

Pratishruti, Mriganka along with Sushmita Ma'am gave us a detailed account of their trip there. But that was not all. A delegation had recently attended the Global Round of the World Scholar's Cup, 2017 held in Hanoi. Details of the experience and reports were read out by the students as well as the teachers who accompanied them. Along with what we gleaned from their recollections, jokes were never far away. For all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy and there is never a dull day when one is a Marian. Our Vice Principal, Anjan Sir, also shared his thoughts and highlighted the importance of being punctual, public speaking and thinking out of the box. Jabeen Ma'am, the team coordinator stressed on the need to speak better on her account of the trip and cultivating the wit of art and humor. Afsheen Zaman, a student of class 2 and Abhinay Sharma were felicitated for their achievements in Chess and Skating Championships respectively. In the end, Nellie Ma'am, congratulated the various delegations and gave her account on the Hanoi trip.

In her address, she spoke to us about using our consciousness and to keep away from evil. She also stressed on the importance of Critical Thinking and told us that it is the centre spot and we all need to be vigilant and aware of everything that happens around us. All's well that ends well.



# Celebrating Swaraj

15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947 was the day when India, formally gained independence from its English rulers, and since 1947, 15<sup>th</sup> August, is nationally celebrated "to remind ourselves the true significance of this day" said Upasana Patgiri, the Deputy Head girl of the school, as the school begun with the independence day celebration with a special programme-that comprised of various performances by the "little ones" or the juniors of the school. The day commenced with a special prayer, by our Principal Ma'am, and proceeded towards the annual flag hoisting. Followed by the flag hoisting, came the brilliant performances of the juniors of our school. Class 4 students, left everyone awestruck with their well-timed and

compact song, speech, skit and the final dance. The day ended, with the school choir singing the song, "Karchale hum vida jo vatan saathiyon" a song, that was sung during the grim years of Sino-Indo wars, reminding us of the hard times, that our nations faced after its independence.



## MAH Celebrated

*"The purpose of literature is to turn blood into ink" – T.S Eliot*



On the 30<sup>th</sup> of August, 2017, the annual Mafizuddin Ahmed Hazarika Literary Competition had been

held in Maria's Public School, marking the great poet's 147<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary.

The day started with a riveting speech on Mafizuddin Ahmed Hazarika by Nabanita ma'am, which was followed by the lighting of the ceremonial lamp. Gargee Rajbongshi took over next, and recited a poem by Anish Uz Zamani after which, Krishanu Kashyap sang '*Biswa Khanikar*' to mark the start of the events that were to follow.

Various intra -school competitions like quiz, creative writing and elocution were held on that day, with students of various age groups participating in them with zeal. This event served as a platform for the students and received positive feedback by the teachers.

## MAH RESULTS

### ASSAMESE

#### *Elocution Competition*

##### ***Class II and III***

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Shivangi Gautom
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Anubhav Phukan
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Brijesh N. Chaudhury

##### ***Class IV:***

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Poulomi Sar
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Albirah Mannan, Akankhya Bhuyan
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Anuva Saikia

**Class V:**

1<sup>st</sup>: Istika Parvez  
 2<sup>nd</sup>: Gargi Gogoi  
 3<sup>rd</sup>: Swastika Mazumdar

**Class VI – VII**

1<sup>st</sup>: Ahnik Arbasin (VI)  
 2<sup>nd</sup>: Nishtha Priyam (VII)  
 3<sup>rd</sup>: Yashodhara Mahanta (VII)

Consolation:

Iman Talukdar (VII), Dipnalisha Bora (VII)

**Class VIII and X**

1<sup>st</sup>: Shakil Imtiaz (X)  
 2<sup>nd</sup>: Kreetisha Deka (IX), Ishaan Ehsan (VIII)  
 3<sup>rd</sup>: Gargi Rajbongshi (X)

**Creative Writing****Class IX-X**

1<sup>st</sup>: Bedika Baruah (X)  
 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jubilee Kalita (X)  
 3<sup>rd</sup>: Dhritimoni Das (X)

**ENGLISH****Elocution Competition****Class VI-VII**

1<sup>st</sup>: Anusha Hazarika (VI) 2<sup>nd</sup>: Dareen Hannesa (VII) 3<sup>rd</sup>: Shruti Sinha (VII)

**Class IV and V**

1<sup>st</sup>: Istika Parvez (V) 2<sup>nd</sup>: Krishang Bhagawati (V) 3<sup>rd</sup>: Alvira Manana (IV)

Consolation: Niharika Bhuyan

**Class IX-X**

1<sup>st</sup>: Shakil Imtiaz 2<sup>nd</sup>: Dhritimoni Das 3<sup>rd</sup>: Shahnaz Choudhury

Creative Writing

**Group A**

1<sup>st</sup>: Amogha Sharma (X) 2<sup>nd</sup>: Kashvi Phukan (IX) 3<sup>rd</sup>: Gyanushree Khound (IX)

**Group B**

1<sup>st</sup>: Saniya Kashti (VII) 2<sup>nd</sup>: Bhargabi Mahanta (VIII) 3<sup>rd</sup>: Asmi Gayan (VIII)

**Group C**

1<sup>st</sup>: Aditi Kalita (VI) 2<sup>nd</sup>: Shalini Sharma (VI) 3<sup>rd</sup>: Parnavi Deka (VI)

**Hindi**

Recitation Competition

**Class IV**

1<sup>st</sup>: Pranab Kumar 2<sup>nd</sup>: Dhairya Sharan 3<sup>rd</sup>: Tejas Kashyap

**Class V**

1<sup>st</sup>: Ashmita Baruah 2<sup>nd</sup>: Sabira Karim, Abhinab Bharti 3<sup>rd</sup>: Niharika Bhuyan

**QUIZ****Group A**

1<sup>st</sup>: Padmanav Baruah, Abhigyan Duarah, Krishanu Kashyap  
 2<sup>nd</sup>: Monjoy Choudhury, Kingsukh Roy, Mayukh Saikia

## Group B

1<sup>st</sup>: Jantiga House: Lawrence Sharma, Banshika Das, Jayashree Hazarika

2<sup>nd</sup>: Nameri House: Aryan Sarma, Tonmoy Kalita, Ayush Tiwari

## Group C

1<sup>st</sup>: Manas House: Barnil Mahanta, Tejas Kashyap, Ishtikhar Parveen

2<sup>nd</sup>: Nameri House: Ashmita De, Aadrit Kaushik, Meemansha Yadav

# Querencia



*'The teacher who is indeed wise does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom but rather leads you to the threshold of your mind.'*  
**-Kahlil Gibran**

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of September, 2017, Querencia, A Teachers' Day Celebration

began with a speech by our Cultural Secretary, expressing the significance of teachers in our life and extending our heartfelt gratitude towards them. Thus, began the morning show with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp by our Founder and Managing Trustee, Nellie Ma'am. The hosts, Sparsh Rajneesh and Sayantan Chaudhury, kept the teachers entertained and carried the show forward smoothly and brought it to a neat end before the Interval. Even with the departure of the Juniors, the excitement hadn't diminished a bit. The crowd, now only composed of teachers and class 11's and 12's, elated at the sight of the arrival of the hosts. The Evening show begun, with the delightful musical performances by various bands of class 11 and 10. This was followed by a dynamic

dance performance by Rishiraj of class 11 and Dhruv of Class 9, that left everyone amazed. The interval between performances was filled with enjoyable and "funny" jokes, by Padmanav Baruah and Upasana Patgiri, along with a small magic show. After the fabulous dance performance, came the lucky draw for the teachers, which was won respectively by Shabnam Ma'am and Tita Sir. With the end of lucky draw, arrived the beginning, for the class 12 performances. For their final teachers' day celebration, the class 12 delivered marvelous performances comprising of both dance and music, with some saying that it was "the perfect last gift" to thank all the teachers for guiding them throughout their journey in school. For the finale, the cabinet performance, the cabinet sung two songs and with the song "Another Brick in the wall," Teachers' Day celebration 2017 came to a memorable end.



# Founder's Day

This Founder's Day, which marked Maria's Public School's twenty ninth year, was celebrated in the school along with the birthday of the Founder and the Managing Trustee, Mrs Nellie Ma'am.

The day started off with performances from the juniors after which, Mrs Nellie Ma'am delivered a riveting speech to address the students. After the cake cutting ceremony and a marvellous



performance by the school band, the much awaited panel discussion began. The panel discussion was based on steps the school should take in order to ensure safety of the students. For

this discussion, three parents were invited to share their views, along with four teachers and three students. The panel discussion served its purpose well and the day ended with a positive note.



## Marians as Global Citizens



Once again, Marians have proved what differentiates them from the rest by living upto the words of its profound vision- "Learning Beyond Classroom." Our school participated in the 11th edition of Doon School Model United Nations Conference held at the beautiful campus of Doon,

Chandbagh in the month of August this year. The delegation comprised of Sparsh C. Rajneesh, Swapnil Datta, Snehasish Kumar Sharma Thakur, Harshali Kemprai, Yugaprata Sharma and myself, Antarul Haque of class 11 and Nayantara Chaliha, our teacher. We genuinely feel that we were, indeed, privileged to get the golden chance of being in the Marian delegation for the DSMUN. The DSMUN was truly an experience to be cherished forever, opening doors of new knowledge, skills, confidence and other things that we had learnt and acquired from the three days of continuous debate and deliberations at one of the esteemed school conferences of our country.

-Antarul Haque XI A, Humanities.



# Pwaa for the Marians, Once again!

On the 25th of June, 2017, the students of Maria's Public School embarked on their journey to the Global Round of the World Scholar's Cup. Founded by Daniel Berdichevsky, the highest scorer in the Academic Decathlon competition from 1994 to 2008, the World Scholar's Cup is an international team academic program with over fifty countries participating in it. This year, the Global Round had been held in Hanoi, Vietnam with over 3000 students participating from all around the world.

Being the first and only school to ever send a delegation from the North East of India, Maria's Public School stood out and gained recognition in this global platform by earning 7 gold medals and 13 silver medals. Accompanied by Nellie Ma'am and escorted by Jabeen Ma'am and Anjan Sir, the delegation experienced a series of tough competitions. From having to speak publicly and being made to interact with students through various tasks, the students have brushed their skills in more than just one field. From debating to penning down their opinions, the students were challenged in imaginative ways, making the competition joyous at the same time.

Amogha Sharma, X B

## SC3X Report

I was one of the lucky students who got the chance to be the part of Sc3, the best conservation camp, along with Mriganka Borah, Raina Ahmed, Ishani Saxena and Aryan Kota which was held in the USA. The event, Sc3 emphasized on transforming students into upcoming environmental leaders and conservation superheroes. The camp was the most suitable place where students could come so close to nature and learn about it. On the first day of the most exciting week, students were introduced to Open Space Technology(OST). In this technique students had to answer a question-"How will you translate your dreams into actions to solve a conservation challenge in your school or community?" with the caption, 'A goal without a plan is just a dream'. The involvement of students in this particular technique helped them to manifest their ideas of conservation. Based on the ideas that the students came up with, 8 OST mini circles were formed. In these mini circles the students had to cross pollinate to find a group of their interest. Each OST mini circle had to prepare something keeping in mind their topic and present it in front of all the participants of the event. This helped the students to collaborate with each other and unmask their extraordinary ideas. The next day all the students as well as the faculties, mentors, coordinators, etc, got to experience a river trip down the Potomac River. Our guide Mr. Dudash told us about the significance of the Potomac River. This river contributed its water for

-Pratishruti Barman and Mriganko Borah

domestic uses in many parts of the US. So it is very essential to conserve the waters of river Potomac.



For me this was the most portentous day of the entire event.

Besides these we also attended workshops on preparation of our Action Plan for the year 2017, so that we could follow up even after the event got over. Great environmental leaders like Rob Watson, Pete Dominick, a media personality, Ian Cheney, a documentary filmmaker, etc, interacted with us and made us realize that even small steps can create a big impact if they are multiplied by thousand. This entire week students groomed themselves into great leaders taking environmental problems seriously. Learning and fun went hand in hand during this week and it eventuated to be the best week of my life.

# Scouts and Guides 4th Skill Training Camp, 2017

The 4th Skill Training Camp started from 3rd July 2017 in Guwahati Public School, Botahghuli, where Scouts and Guides from Maria's Public School were trained for Rajya Puraskar test held on 21st July. On the first day accompanied by the Scouts and Guides teachers Moromi ma'am and Biswajit Sir, the trainees were excited as they headed towards Guwahati Public School. They cleaned the allotted rooms and joined tables to form beds. Then they assembled on the ground for the flag hoisting ceremony. A camp fire was held in the evening, and participants danced and sang songs. Although there were different participating schools, there was a feeling of unity. Next morning, trainees were called for the BP6 exercise (BP- Baden Powell, founder of scouts and guides). (Patrol of 8-10 students) The teacher in-charge, Mrs. Anna Rai, inspected uniforms, checked rooms and allotted marks accordingly. In the theory sessions, the uses and importance of maps, compasses, the different types of knots, etc. were taught. On the third day, the trainees were introduced to the LOC (leader of camp) Mr. Okram Delip Singh from Manipur. A friendly and enthusiastic person, he taught them many action songs. After lunch, various games were played with enjoyment. A quick test (STA) was held individually, in which questions were asked about the national flag, scout and guide flag, scout and guide prayer song, flag song etc. At the camp fire opening, students were asked about the significance of the four directions (North, South, East and West). On the 4th and last day of the camp, the participants worked harder and gave

their best. Trainees were keen to learn something new and worthwhile. All doubts were cleared in the subsequent question and answer session. The trainees were taught many action songs. There was an exhibition of waste materials turned into useful things. A grand camp fire was held in which MR. RANAJIT BOSU; the State Organizing Commissioner was present as the Chief guest. It began with dance, music, riddles and lots more. There was a feeling of anticipation, as the Chief Guest was to declare the best school award. MARIA'S PUBLIC SCHOOL was declared as the best school and proudly received the trophy. They received the first prize for the best out of waste exhibition. The event ended with a speech by the Principal of GUWAHATI PUBLIC SCHOOL. Next day, after the all faith prayer, an inspection was done by the teachers, ensuring all the rooms were tidied up. After the flag hoisting, the trainees had a left handshake with the masters and the scouts. Hard work and dedication is necessary to achieve one's goals. Though the camp involved a lot of hard work, the trainees were happy to learn something new each day. It should be mentioned that the constant guidance and support of the teachers and other guardians throughout the camp contributed to the achievement of the awards by the Marians.

-Prity Devi, VIII

## ACHIEVEMENTS

Sahil Dey of Class V, Maria's Public School received the Best Player award in the Under-17 category at the recently held CBSE Far East Zone Cluster Chess Championship at Guwahati. The little chess master played brilliantly to achieve the title. Maria's Public School won the overall second position in the Under-17 category at the championship.

### Nayanjyoti Das, a rising star

Nayanjyoti, a student of Class V received a certificate and an award in Mathura in 2017 at the International Multi Lingual



Play Dance and Music contest at 5th Mohan's Rang Mahotsav while bagging the second position in dance. He was also adjudged as the Best Child Actor in the event. Earlier, Nayanjyoti received a certificate in the 4th Indian classical dance festival for youth held in Visakhapatnam in 2016. He also took part in the All India Multi-Lingual Drama Competition in Cuttak, Orissa in 2016 and was able to create ripples in the field.

## Marian win prizes in taekwondo meet

Ayush Choudhury of Class VII has bagged a gold medal and a silver medal in the Cadet individual and Cadet Pair respectively in the 34th Taekwondo Championship, 2017 (7th Poomsae Sub-junior, Junior, Senior and 4th Cadet Poomsae Taekwondo Championship) organized by Tinsukia District Taekwondo Association held from July 27 to July 30, 2017. Varistha Kashyap of Class VII B won a silver medal in the Cadet Girls Under 41 kg in the same competition. Atrayee Choudhury of Class III D bagged a bronze medal in the Sub-Junior category in the Under 20 kg in the event.



## Afsheen for Chess National Championship

Afsheen Afsha Zaman, Class 2 has been selected to participate in the Under-7 National Chess Championship to be held at Vijaywada, Andhra Pradesh to be held from September 3-13, 2017.



## Sahil in U-10 Indian team

Sahil Dey of Class V, Maria's Public School has been included in the Indian team which will participate in the World Cadets Chess Championship (U- 10) to be held at Pocos de Coldas, Brazil from August 23, 2017. Sahil was selected for the Indian team based on his performances in the national U-9 Chess Championship last year.

## CHECKMATE

Sahil Dey and Afsheen Zaman, the chess wizards of Maria's Public School have clinched gold medals at the All Assam Inter District Under 7 & 11(Boys and Girls) Chess Championships held from March 29 to April 2, 2017 at South Point School Indoor Stadium, Guwahati. While Sahil Dey bagged the 1st place in the under 11 category, Afsheen emerged champion in the under 7 category. Another budding chess talent Nihaf became the first runner-up in the under 7 category. The tournament was organised by Guwahati Chess Association on behalf of All Assam Chess Association. It is worth mentioning that Sahil is world No.7 in his age category.

STANDARD	AWARDEE	AWARD
IX A	Harshit Raj Alamyman	Best Baller (IIT cricket tournament A-division )
IX A	Shashanka Kalita	Man of the Match, Riverhina Premiere League, 2017
IX A	Adhip Mohanta	Silver medal, Sanskriti the Gurukul, 100m Freestyle Relay
IX B	Arunab Gohain	-4th position, Jatyabidyalya Inter School Chess competition

IX B	Kristi Kaushik	Gold Medal, Fine Arts Competition Guwahati
IX C	Shruti Malakar	1st prize, Biswajyoti Art Competition
IX C	Arohan Bhardwaj	9th position, Open North-East 2017 Chess Championship
IX C	Arohan Bhardwaj	45th position, DCA Under 16, Chess

## Students bring laurels in Taekwondo meet-

The following players won various medals in the 2nd Kamrup Metro District Taekwondo Championship, held on 27th and 28th May, 2017 at DTRP Indoor Stadium, R G Baruah Sports Complex, Guwahati.

STANDARD	AWARDEE	AWARD
III - D	NISHITA PATGIRI	(KYORUGI) FIGHT, GOLD
III - D	DWITIMAN KASHYAP	(KYORUGI) FIGHT, SILVER
IV - B	DEPTONIL SAHARIA	(KYORUGI) FIGHT, BRONZE
VI - E	BARNIL MAHANTA	(KYORUGI) FIGHT, BRONZE
VI - D	SATANGSHU TALUKDAR	(KYORUGI) FIGHT, BRONZE
VII - A	AYUSH CHOUDHURY	(KYORUGI) FIGHT, BRONZE
VII - A	AYUSH CHOUDHURY	(POOMSAE) FIGHT, GOLD
VII - B	VARISTHA KASHYAP	(KYORUGI) FIGHT, GOLD

## The 6th Raktabh Dutta Choudhury Memorial North East School Chess Championship 2017 at Jatiya Vidyalay in July

Sahil Dey (5 A) Champion in Queen group,  
Nishad Islam Hazarika 5 C 3rd Pawn group,  
Keertan Kalita 1 C 16th Pawn group,  
Arohyan Bharadwaj 9C 5th Queen group,  
Arunav Gohain 9 B 4th Queen group,  
Bavishnu Bordoloi 4th Knight Group  
Team Award - 2nd Best School Trophy

## National Level Skating Competition

Abhijay Sharma 5C 2 silver medals



## Global Round of the World Scholar's Cup, Hanoi 2017

AWARDEE	AWARD	CATEGORY
Leeza Bhanu	GOLD	Writing Champion's Category, Top Scholar in the Marian Delegation
Pragyan Chakravarty	GOLD	Writing Champion's Category Team Collaborative Writing
Bhavna Borah	GOLD	Team Collaborative Writing
Chandabharghav Kashyaap	GOLD	Team Collaborative Writing
Jessica Kheiya	GOLD	Scholar's Challenge Category-Arts
Archit Singla	GOLD	Da Vinci Scholar's Category
Jessica Kheiya	SILVER	Team Collaborative Writing
Nehal Surana	SILVER	Team Collaborative Writing
Leeza Bhanu	SILVER	Team Collaborative Writing Debate Champion's category
Bhavna Borah	SILVER	Writing Champion's Category
Harshita Bhagabati	SILVER	Da Vinci Scholar's Category
Amogha Sharma	SILVER	Writing Champion's Category
Ruchika Saikia	SILVER	Da Vinci Scholar's Category
Diksha Langthasa	SILVER	Da Vinci Scholar's Category
Naina Sharma	SILVER	Writing Champion's Category
Priyam Parashar	SILVER	Da Vinci Scholar's Category
Mahima Hazarika	SILVER	Da Vinci Scholar's Category

**Special Mention:** Anjan Sir - Distinguished Service as a debate Adjudicator

Jabeen S. Pathal: Distinguished Service as a Debate Adjudicator,  
Distinguished Leadership as a Team Coordinator

## Three Cheers for Maria's

### Ten-on-Ten

Ana Barua	Perna Das
Angshool Deka	Pratiksha Bora
Anoushka Mukherjee	Raginee Das
Anoushka Paul	Satabdi Bhuyan
Atlanta Sarma	Shibarshisha Baruah
Bishmita Goswami	Shreyashi Roy Medhi

H. Dushan Singh	Snehasish Kumar Sharma Thakur
Himashree Devi	Sugandha Bora
Hitesh Modi	Swapneel Biswas
Jupitara Bordoloi	Tanim S. Mozumder
Kajree Gautom	Tasmiah Azad
Lahar Garg	Upasana Patgiri
Niharika Borah	

## Leaving a Legacy Behind; Class XII Students Shine....

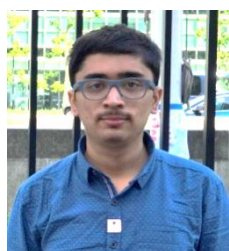
**Humanities:** Arundhati Chowdhury (97%) Tridisha Thakuria (97%)

**Science:** Mrigonayani Baruah (95%)

**Commerce:** Anuj Boruah (93%)

# Alumni Writes

*(So, we mailed Akashneel Sharma, the former head boy of our school to send us a few words and he was much pleased to do so.)*



Probably the one thing that you will always dream of when you are in school is of the day when you will finally join college and start a brand new life. The glitz and glamour of college life and the relative freedom it provides seldom fails to capture anyone's imagination. Well, I was no different either. But now that I am finally here, in the 2nd year of my college, nostalgia is making me sick. Having studied in the institution for more than 14 years, Maria's had become much more than a school for me; it is a place which I still consider home. From the day I refused to let go off my mother's 'dupatta' to the day I finally passed out, it was an eventful journey that transformed my life and my perceptions. I really consider myself fortunate to be taught by one of the best faculty in the city. I will never be able to thank our Founder and Managing Trustee, Nellie Ma'am; Principal, Alpana Ma'am and Vice Principal, Anjan Sir for their constant support and encouragement. Leaving aside the quality education that I had received, the personal bonding that I developed with my teachers is probably something which not even the best institutions of the country could have provided me with. To all my fellow Marians, who happen to come across this article, consider yourself fortunate to be a part of the Marian fraternity. You will never get the same kind of opportunity, exposure or the environment anywhere else in the city. There is something about this place that makes it distinct from any other educational institution.

Maria's will always remain an integral part of my life and I will always remain indebted to it for everything the school has done for me; and for moulding me into the person that I am today. More than anything else, it will always give me an immense pride to let my Marian identity take precedence over all other forms of my educational identity.

Akashneel Sarma, Former Head Boy, Batch of 2105-2016 B.A (Hons) History, St Stephens College- 2016-2019

# TEACHER WRITES

It was indeed a great and memorable experience. I learnt a lot and also am very happy to share with everyone my learning experiences. I found the environment very congenial to express one's views and thoughts (both for students, as well as faculty members). There was freedom to explore and do research work to achieve a particular target. Emphasis was given on leadership role. There was team-work followed by proper coordination. Everyone was clear with their objectives and responsibilities which I thought needs to be sensitised more amongst our own fellow-men. We need to save our planet and keep it pollution free. We should also learn to respect the existence of the living world and nurture the greenery. We should respect each other's feelings, we should respect the existence of the person we communicate with and should be a good listener and observer. What I found very relevant was that, "It is the action, not the fruit of the action that is important". Also, "All truths pass through three stages." • First- it is ridiculed • Second- it is violently opposed • Third- It is acceptable as being "self" I would also like to emphasise upon "conservation"-What might it stand for? Could it be explained so? C- Caring O- Optimistic N- Necessary S- Systematic E- Emphatic R- Retrospect V- Valuable A- Adorable T- Thoughtful I- Implement O- Organise N- Nurture "Nature has emotions", so love, respect and nurture it. Last but not the least- "Successful people begin with two beliefs, the future can be better and I can do it."

By Sushmita Chakraborty, Faculty, Maria's Public School.

# PARENTS WRITE

*We thank all the parents who took their time out to share with us, their journey with Maria's Public School*

"When I first sent my son to a new school, I was a little fearful and confused that how he would adjust with the new environment, how he would cope up with such competition. But as time has gone past, my worries have slowly diminished for teachers are so friendly and caring. I've seen my little one becoming more serious about his studies, actively participating in co-curricular activities. The school has nurtured him well beyond my expectations and given him the platform and freedom to do his best." - **Liza Hazarika**

"My child is in the tenth standard and has been amazingly taken care of, by the teachers. They have helped him to be an honest person as well as a studious boy. The school has given him a platform to showcase his extra-curricular talents on programs such as MUNs and the World Scholar's Cup. It has also given him a stage to show his musical abilities and act in shows." -**Sanghamitra Goswami**

"I still remember the day my child joined school, with a look apprehension on her face. In her initial years, we were told that my daughter did not show interest in group endeavours and remained withdrawn. But in her later years in high school, due to encouragement by a few teachers, she started opening up and has come out of her shell. Now, she is confident about what she wants to do and has clarity in her thinking." -**Randeep Sharma**

"Our journey with Maria's began about twenty years ago, when we enrolled our elder daughter in preparatory. Since then, the school has never failed to live up to our expectations, in almost every aspect of schooling and bringing out the best in our children. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the school for the support, care, assistance and guidance given to both our daughters that have helped their calibre, capabilities and talents to greatly grow."- **Bhairab K. Bora and Rumi Bora.**

# The Idea of India of De'mock'racy

May 1, 2017 (Guwahati): *A mob allegedly lynched two men in Nagaon district of Assam, after they were suspected to be cattle thieves. June 22, 2017 (Ballabgarh): Junaid Khan was stabbed to death on a Mathura-bound train by a mob which allegedly hurled communal slurs against them. The boys were on their way back after doing Eid shopping in Delhi. July, 2017(Basirhat, West Bengal): "Several dozen houses and shops of Hindus were vandalised and gutted, about two dozen people suffered injuries due to the clashes between the agitators."* Hindustan Times.

The 'Shastras', the 'Upanishads', and other forms of literary and philosophical works of ancient India are rich sources of skepticism, i.e. questioning the relevance of the orthodox religious beliefs. Then by what transformation or moral cause, have we reached a stage where religious beliefs can compel people, although indirectly, to lynch people of other faith? How has inter-faith intolerance surfaced in the 'largest democracy' known historically to be the safe haven for numerous faith including



Buddhism, Jainism, Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and Islam? How have we let the constrained and narrow minded ideology of Hindutva (literally 'quality of Hinduism') become a substitute for 'Indianness' overshadowing the broad spectrum of Hinduism and what it actually means? These few, of the lot of unanswered questions, come as the conclusion from the fact that most of the lynching has been aimed at minorities (especially Muslims and Dalits). But the disturbing fact is how often such mobs survive punishment for such immoral acts. But to assess their functionality and prevalence, it is important to know what brought about this violent outburst. Many argue that the 'regulation of livestock market' rule notified by the central government, banning cattle slaughter, was the green signal for them for conducting extrajudicial killings. But has the government also been lenient and indifferent in this regard and bringing justice to the bereaved? This article shall not be the judge of that, but the existence of a profoundly Hindutvawadi government at the centre, and impunity for such inhumane acts, does point towards the ever present debate of communal politics. But as there is an extremist right wing, there is also its adversary: the extremist left. Both have showcased their intolerance through vehement acts towards the other, triggered by the intolerance of one over the other, over the past and unfortunately also the present. But the question is, has the extremities of the left and the right subdued the voice of the liberal mass like you and me? Have we failed to put forth our arguments assertively and vigorously enough? The solution to this nettling question should constitute a vital part of the idea of India, discussed next.

Once J.R.D Tata said, "I don't want India to be a superpower; I want it to be a happy country." These simple words do, to a great extent, bring out the idea of India, or what it should be based upon. "The idea of India is against the intense consciousness of the separateness of one's own people from others" stated by Tagore also is another fundamental characteristic. That being stated, has brought the Hindutva movement into a confrontation with the idea of India itself, because of its efforts to encourage and exploit separateness. So such a diverse nation, having a multi-cultural, multi-lingual past and present and a great history of religious acceptance, cannot be seen through the narrow minded lens of the Hindutva ideologue or any extremist and Chauvinist ideologue. Coming back to the role of the liberal mass, it is imperative to understand that its voice can be subdued only, when we allow it. Solidarity, against pitying communities against one another and for communal harmony, against 'cow-vigilantism' and mob violence, against corruption, and the demand for more transparency in the legal and political matters, autonomy of intellectual work, and to garner the pluralist



approach for the multitude of cultures, languages, communities and faiths, that India is endowed with. To conclude, the idea of India involves pluralism, and having said that it would be only to contradict ourselves to say there is no place for fanatics and sectarians (having beliefs not based on evidence) in India. It is but us, who need to understand the vanity in their approach and dump it altogether.

- Krishanu Kashyup X - C.

## Star Dust

The stars fascinated Ella. Whenever she looked up to the night sky at the bright twinkling stars, although it wasn't so bright always, Ella felt contentment fill her heart. She felt safe under the lit night sky, and she could watch it for the rest of the eternity. Ella had dark black eyes that her friends often said resembled the sky during nights. That night too, Ella gazed up at the sky and heaved a long sigh. She was tired from the day's work, her back ached and there was an excruciating pain at the back of her neck. Still, as she sat down upon the mildly wet grass and glanced up into the darkness, the usual contentment returned. And she felt good, even though she knew it was only but for a moment. The stars twinkled as Ella slowly laid herself on the ground. She didn't care that it was wet and that her favorite brown dress, already tattered was getting caked with the wet mud. Ella sighed. She worked in a cloth manufacturing factory. It wasn't as if she liked her work; they had just celebrated her fourteenth birthday (apparently birthday was the day she had first arrived in the factory) a few days ago, with cakes and chip packets, the other workers who she claimed to be her friend, had stolen from a nearby shop. Ella had been working here since her parents had suddenly left her at the front gates all alone to starve. She had been trying to understand why they had done so, and why she had to work in that stinky place, but she had no other alternative. Ella remembered the first day she was there, Masons Manufacturers Inc. She was a kid, barely nine years. At first, she thought it was just some temporary home and her parents would come for her one day. But they never came. For three years, Ella had waited for their arrival and had wondered if they'd ever come. One day, Ella was so frustrated that she jumped out of the window of her demolished room, and had attempted to run away. But her legs weren't strong, and the manufacturers had found her when she was just halfway through. They had beaten her up that night, and after that day Ella had never dared to leave the premises ever. Ella heard footsteps behind her and jerked up. "Who's there?" She asked, turning around. A deep male voice called back, "It's just me, Ella." A smile crept up her face and she lay back on the ground. "What are you doing here, Brian?" She asked, her eyes fixed on the stars. Brian was probably the only friend she had with whom she could be open about her feelings. Even though she was young, and barely experienced, she had been through so many hardships that sometimes, Ella wanted to give it up all. She missed her mother and father, but with time, she had even forgotten how they looked like. When she missed her home, Brian would be there to listen to her and wipe her tears away when she cried. He was sixteen, and was in the factory for a much longer time than her and understand her feelings. Brian had bronze hair and eyes that looked like melted chocolate. And she liked him a lot. "I knew you'd be here," he said and sat down beside her. Brian and Ella shared the same fascination for star-gazing, and she was so glad that she could relate to someone in this hellhole of a place. "Why? Were you looking for me?" He chuckled. "I just wanted to make sure you weren't jumping off the building, you know." Ella laughed but rolled her eyes, "I'm fourteen, Brian. You, of all people, would know I would never do that." At least not now, she mentally thought. There were times she wanted to, but she knew she wasn't so courageous. Times were hard back in those days, and it wasn't fine now either but she was just glad. Brian slid forward and lay down beside Ella. They both just lay there, watching as the stars moved and twinkled. None of them knew what they were thinking, or what they wanted at that moment. But they both knew that they loved each other's company. Brian was the first to speak, "Ella." She nodded, not tearing her gaze, "What?" "I

never understood why you adored the stars so much," he said, his head on top of his crossed arms. Ella let out a small laugh, "I don't know. It reminds me of the good things." "Memories?" "I believe I don't have any of that, you know, Brian." Ella shrugged. There weren't really any good memories to remember. All she could remember about her past was how her parents had abandoned her that peaceful night and how she had been living a nightmare ever since. She continued, "I just feel calm and happy. It is as if the stars are telling me that there's a good life for me somewhere." She turned her head to face Brian and asked, "You haven't told me why you love the stars as much as me." Brian puckered his lips up. He said, "They're just beautiful." "Oh come on, that cannot be the only reason you have." "And they remind me of my mother." He silently added.

Ella felt bad for him. She had known about the death of his mother but she had also known how strong he had emerged. Brian was probably the bravest person she'd met, even though he'd been slapped and beaten with a stick for disobeying the Masters (as they called themselves). She had heard Brian cry to himself at nights when everything was silent. But Brian was strong, he fought back. And somehow, he made her stronger.

"You know they are going to search for us after a few minutes. It's almost eleven." Brian broke off the silence. Ella sighed, "I know." "Ella," Brian called out her name again, "if, and only if, you ever get out of here," he paused to take a glance at her, "what would you want to be or do?" Ella thought for a long time. Although there was almost no possibility of her leaving this place, she still loved to hope. She watched the stars twinkle and wondered if they ever thought of changing their positions, or if they ever communicated amongst each other. Then she slowly said, "I'd want to live, Brian." Brian almost lost a breath. Ella was only fourteen, but being in that place had surely crafted her into someone matured. "Live?" He asked, surprised. "If I ever leave this place, I'd want to live. I'd want to do everything a normal fourteen year old would do, you know; dance, attend parties, have fun with friends, and laugh along with my family. I'd want to do it all." And maybe, just maybe, if Ella ever got leave or was successful in escaping, she'd be successful in doing all those things she wished too. She'd be able to live to her dreams. But right then, the sirens went out and she knew she'd have to snap out of her dreams. The sirens signaled that workers, mainly children, were missing from their respective beds. Which usually meant Ella and Brian. Brian sat upright and pulled Ella up. "I guess that's our cue to run." Ella laughed but when the sirens got louder, it soon faded away. She and Brian stood up, brushed their bottoms and broke into a run toward their respective rooms. As the night wind brushed against their faces, Ella wished they led a better life. And maybe, one day they will. One day, she might live a life where she would be happy with two little kids who didn't have to live the same fate as hers. And when she'd look up at the stars then, she would remember about her hellish days and about Brian and she wouldn't cry. She'd be truly happy. The sirens got even louder. Brian held her hand tight and they ran, the wind hard against their faces, the stars twinkling ever so brightly as if showering their blessings upon them.

- Kajree Gautom

XI - A, Humanities.

# Irfan's Motherland

*'Two people cannot hate each other if they both love God.'  
Then why does hatred linger in heart of the people of the same nation?  
Aren't we supposed to belong to the one race called 'Human'?*

There was a small happy family of a father, Mr. Iqbal and his 5-year-old son, Irfan, in a town called Ashapur, India. The father worked as a civil servant in a government office. Everything for the family was going well and they were in the pink of their health.

One day, the father returned home early and started playing with his son. Seeing this, the surprised son asked him the reason for his early arrival from his workplace, which was quite unusual as he knew that his father was a hardworking fellow and he sometimes even worked extra hours. Iqbal then replied with utmost pride and a wide grin on his face that he got a promotion and a bonus for his work in a recent project. "That is something to celebrate, Dad. Let us have a feast," exclaimed his son all excited and happy.

After the feast, they were watching T.V together when the father got a call. After ending the call, he telephoned his younger brother in a hushed but calm tone. After the conversation, he said, "Irfan, your uncle is going to take you to his home now. Go there and be happy always. Study hard and be a good person in life."

"Dad, why should I go and why are you telling me all these things now?" his son replied quite uninterested. Just then there was a hard banging on the door. "Son, be a good boy, and always remember, I love you a lot and I will always be there for you."

Iqbal said almost choking in his words. "Dad I love you too, but..."

"Son, give me a hug and run to the back door, your uncle is waiting right there."

Irfan didn't know what got into his dad. He was in tears, a man who according to him is the boldest person on earth. Confused, he embraced his father hard and ran to the back door where his uncle, Imran was waiting for him. They went off. By now, there was a lot of shouting and hammering on the door. Mr. Iqbal unbolted the gate. The next day's newspaper had the headline 'Man killed, suspected for consuming beef.' The news read as follows- A young lad, identified as Mr. Iqbal of Ashapur town was killed by a mob of vigilantes who got to know from a source that he had consumed beef, which was later confirmed to be chicken. The officials from his workplace said that Mr. Iqbal was very hardworking, dedicated and passionate towards his work. He recently carried out a development project for his town for which he was rewarded with a promotion to a higher post. He was a man who always looked for the betterment of the people and worked for the progress of the society. The people of the country mourn his death."

Irfan was too small to understand everything. When he asked his uncle to take him to his father, Imran took him to Iqbal's graveyard. Irfan looked questioningly at his uncle and said, "This is where long ago we put our ailing mother when my father said that she has gone for a vacation to the God's home. Did my father also go for the vacation, without me? He didn't tell me. By the way, when is he returning?" His uncle tried to put up a brave face and said, "He won't be returning soon, Irfan."

Irfan did his studies well, knowing that his father was watching him from somewhere. Though he missed him very much, he didn't lose hope in getting back his dad, as his father once said, "Son, you are very lucky to have been born here in India. It is the best and the safest place you'd ever find in the whole world. Love this nation more than anything else and it will love you right back. Work for this country and open your heart for its people and trusts me they will be there for you always". His son knows that his father had always loved India and hence he believes that India and its people will help him get back to his father from where he is now.

He always goes to his dad's grave, silently sit there in his play time hoping his father would show up and he can have fun with him again. Irfan is still waiting for his father to return from his holiday, soon.

-Atrika Burgohain, IX C



# To this Fate

Ding! Dong!

My eyes followed the street clock all along.

Midnight, finally it indicated. But for naught was I excited.

A birthday present, I've wished for, with all my might.

But all I get is extra work hours into the night.

Labouring from dawn till dusk,

Swishing dirty inns to separating grains from husk,

Serving fussy ladies to spying on snobby kids with fat wallets

Busy, as I am cleaning stench-filled toilets.

In the end.

With a few pence in hand,

I return to the shack I call home.

Thankful, once again, that on the streets, I don't have to roam.

Placing the cold sandwich on the bed,

I whisper to myself, "Happy birthday, Ted!"

Hurriedly, I gobble up the food,

Which tasted as good as it could.

With a heavy heart, I lull myself into a deep slumber,

For, come morning, I'll venture into the forest in search of timber.

A reason is all I wanted,

Why to this fate, I am betrothed?

-Tasnim Mozumder Class IX E.

## Stone Walls Do Not A Prison make

'Stone walls do not a prison make,'

They are like glass - they might break;

Feelings like hatred, remorse

Prison walls are made of those.

Can a wall that's made of stone-

A wall that's built by man alone

Keep the freedom, the will to live

That to Man, God did give?

An iron chain, a tightened rope,

Cannot hold back a surge of hope.

All these loosen and give way

To a heart that's good and brave.

Hatred makes a cell strong,

That's unbeaten and lasts long.

Which stops the flow of love, goodwill

And makes a man feel more hatred still.

So away with all self-made walls

From anger, hatred, such feelings all.

For it is a truth to give and take

Stone walls do not a prison make.'

-Zahra Shaikh

IX - C.

## She has seen it all!

She has walked all alone through the dark night,

When the thunderous skies were menacing her.

For a long time she hasn't seen anything bright,

All she had were those odds by her.

Now, she has come a long way,

And has finally found her way into the brightness.

She has absorbed all through her way

And now she is trimmed and eloquent but with her usual tenderness.

She was all alone while facing everything

But was brave to encounter anything.

-Ana Barua, XI Science