

PERSPECTIVE

The Student Newsletter

Jan-Feb 2016

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The Perspective Team [left to right]: Jahnavi Mehta, Tanisha Deshpande, Ishita Bagri, Lorraine Rodrigues [teacher]

From the editor's desk

New year, new experiences, new memories. From Sports Day to RIMUN, the new year 2016 has been all about trying new things and forging new memories.

Speaking of making memories, our Grade 8 and 9 students went on their annual class trip Aurangabad and Jamnagar. Read on to find out about their adventures through prose and poetry that is guaranteed to bring a smile to your face. The adventure and excitement continues through to Sports Day, one of the year's most awaited events. This time, we give you a different perspective: one of our writers describes the unmatched exhaustion and exhilaration that comes with organizing such a massive, adrenalin-filled event.

Then, sit back, relax and get transported to the village where the 9th graders discovered the true meaning of hard labour. Finally, travel to Rome with us to throw coins into fountains, make wishes, and eat lots of pizza.

'A journey is measured in memories, not miles.' This issue is bursting with such memories, and we hope you enjoy them as much as the people who experienced them did.

SPORTS DAY: NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Student Council member Jahnavi Mehta gives us an insider's perspective on one of the year's most popular events

Which is the one day in the school year when house spirit is at it's fullest, when students get to scream as loudly as they want to, paint their faces, wave around a countless number of posters, express themselves in any way they can? That's right, I'm talking about Sports Day.

Right now, I am cranky and irritable. In the two weeks leading up to Sports Day, I've come to school at 7 A.M. every single day, either for March Past practice or a field event, and sleeping late after making sure every participant knows that they had to be there at the next day's event. I have no idea how well the Panthers March Past Squad marched. We are currently coming third, with 83 points. AND I AM HUNGRY.

All at once, I snap out of my mood as Hari Sir blows his whistle, starting the U-12 Boys 200 meters race. There are screams of 'Go Panthers!' as a Panther House athlete, Amit Reuben, crosses the line in second place, and all of a sudden I am on my feet, smiling and clapping.

My mood steadily improves as we win more and more races, and it warms my heart to see how passionate these younger children are. There isn't a race during which I don't hold my breath, praying for Panthers to place.



I am on Finish Line Duty for most of the day, and so I watch every race closely, watching for who crosses the finish line first, second and third. It's draining, but there's nothing like being a Student Council member during Sports Day: the excitement, the nerves and the adrenaline - it's unmatched.

But throughout the day, there's one thing chewing away at the back of my mind: What happened during March Past? It's one of the events the rest of the Panthers Council and I have worked hardest for, and it's the event I want to win the most.

And when the time comes for the March Past results, I resolve that if we do not win, I will not cry, because we all know how hard we worked for it, and no award can justify that.

Even so, as Cawas Sir unfold the paper and lifts the mic to his mouth, I can't stop hoping, wishing, praying. And we didn't come fourth. The knot in my stomach loosens a little. We don't come third. Now I'm smiling. We don't come second.

It's silent for half a second, then there's an explosion. Of sound, colour, blue everywhere, it's a total blur, I don't know whether I'm laughing or crying.

As we hold the March Past shield on the podium, still laughing in our disbelief, I realize what it's like to be feel invincible. It's moments like these that I will never be able to erase, feelings like these I will never be able to describe, days like this I'll never forget.

THE INDO-FRENCH EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

An interview with visiting French students at DAIS

How was your stay?

It's been great; we're so glad we got to experience Mumbai's culture. We met some great people, heard some great music, and ate some great food.

What did you like best about Mumbai, and why?

"The people were welcoming, and friendly. I thought that the bond between people in the city was amazing, the words aunty, uncle being used for everyone and not just close family is just so sweet!"

* "I liked Dhobi Ghat: the laundry area in the squatter settlements we visited was definitely my favorite sightseeing experience." * "The music. Definitely."

Tell us about your stay with your host family

"They were so welcoming and kind. They fed us well, and made sure we had a great time. It was very interesting to experience the joint family culture and the diversity in Indian religion."

"My host's mother taught me how to bargain at local stores. I'm grateful for that because it's such a cool skill."

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The winning Panthers team: All smiles after a hard earned victory

"I loved my host family - they were really fun to be around, and I got to experience a whole new lifestyle because of them. My host's little sister called me *didi* which was the cutest thing."

How is Mumbai different from your home?

"The culture in France is more independent while people here are more united and festive. The Bollywood vibes of the music and cinema are something Paris lacks. Hindi seems like a fascinating language, but when spoken fast it sounds extremely complicated." * "Also, in Paris we aren't used to drivers and domestic help; we use the subways or walk. One more thing: In Mumbai, everyone has a classy way of shaking their heads sideways to say yes - very different from the unexciting French nod!"

How was your experience in the village?

"It was fun to interact with the locals. We weren't too good at brickmaking but it was still an interesting experience! Looking at the conditions of the villagers made us learn to appreciate what we have, and not take things for granted."

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What did you think of Indian food?

"Loved it" * "The variety in potato dishes was crazy" * "I loved the simple dishes that weren't spicy, like idli, dosa and poha." * "The desserts were the best part of Indian meals - they were absolutely delicious."

What did you think of Indian clothes?

"We thought they were colorful, vibrant and unique. Everyone had such pretty saris!"

Would you like to come back, and why?

"We got to experience daily life here through this trip, but we want to come back to explore more touristy places like Delhi and Agra."

- As told to Anjali Savansukha

POSTCARDS FROM PARIS

This March, 15 students from DAIS went to Paris for an exchange trip, from the 2nd to the 11th of March. Here are some highlights from their stay..



Living with French students and exploring the romantic and beautiful City of Love from a local perspective was a beautiful experience. The weather was cold and pleasant, and their days long and busy, exploring both famous and not-so-heard of tourist spots. Students participated in a treasure hunt in the gardens of the majestic Versailles Palace, and saw the Mona Lisa, up close, in the Louvre museum.

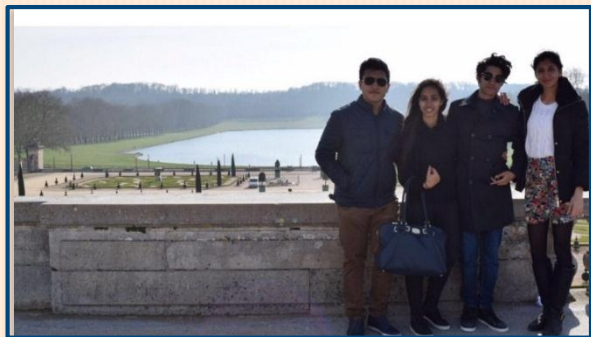
Unforgettable moments:

From cruising down the River Seine and taking a breath of local French air, to attending Parisian plays, to being dazzled by the Eiffel Tower at any time of the day and night; they were all enjoyable moments. Shopping at Gallery la Fayette and going to the French local market also gave an insight into local culture. There they were treated to Moroccan food and famous French cheese!

A day in the life of a French student:

Their average day began early in the morning, similar to a school day in Mumbai. Once they reached school, they were informed of all the activities and sights they would explore that day. Some DAIS students attended classes like psychology. Since it was an international school, students from all nationalities studied there, and it was an opportunity for our children there to learn about all the different cultures.

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French culture overlapped in many ways with Indian culture, but there were a few fundamental differences - like the lack of house-help. Doing your own work, making your own bed and walking to school every morning was things they were not used to but enjoyed doing (only for a short period of time, though!).

On forging friendships:

The Indian students felt like a part of the family they lived with - they involved them in the housework, yet treated them specially by taking them out to eat and shop wherever they wished. The French students were also teenagers living in this globalized world, and a shared taste in music and clothes helped them connect on common ground, and helped the growth of some strong friendships.

A shared taste in music and clothes proved to be common ground and helped the growth of strong friendships.

Since the students' first language of communication differed, the language barrier proved to be a problem, though the DAIS students were currently studying the language, so it was a good opportunity for them to practice in the local French context!

French students were a lot more relaxed about life than Indians. Punctuality was primary, yet their outlook on education was balanced - academics went in-hand with extra-curricular activities and a thriving social life. Before an exam, they would meet up with friends. They enjoyed life and having fun was a priority, rather than getting good grades; quite contrary to a traditional Indian mindset.

There was no uniform in school either. French society is extremely open to the LGBTs and community; they were warm and welcoming in all aspects.

Overall, it was an enriching experience for the students in a social and educational manner. Making new friends, learning about the French culture and living with someone they had never met before was part and parcel of the exchange trip experience.

Most of all, they learnt independence: doing your own housework, keeping track of your money and belongings and living far away from the comfort of familiar people. The city of love and light drew them in, made them fall in love with it and make some unforgettable memories.

GRADE 8: CLASS TRIP TO AURANGABAD



"Friends come and go like the waves in an ocean, but the true ones stay like an octopus on your face." I can assure you that I have never had the privilege of having an octopus reside on my face! But I can say without a doubt, that on my class trip to Aurangabad, I made some friends who will be my buddies for the rest of my life.

We went to Aurangabad on a flight – it was extremely enjoyable, as we all caused a lot of havoc on the plane. At 11 pm that night, our teacher told us that it was time to sleep - a perfect time to disobey him! As soon as he left, we stealthily snuck into the other room and played games on our phones all night. I can never forget laughing as we watched a Hindi version of Jackie Chan's "Drunken Master".

The Ajanta and Ellora caves were awe inspiring! The ancient wall paintings of the Ajanta caves were stunning, but the intricate stone carvings of the Ellora caves were even better. We saw a water mill and studied the sewage systems of the Mughals living in Aurangabad, and visited the Daulatabad fort and BibikaMaqbara - the replica of the Taj Mahal.

Aurangabad was a pleasant and appealing place and visiting it with my friends made this trip a memory that I will hold close to me for the rest of my life.



GRADE 9 B: VILLAGE TRIP TO KUMBHARGARH

“Just one more brick” was the chant that flowed through our heads as our weary arms began giving way and the bright burning sun drained us of the energy we had obtained from Parle-G. Saturday morning, 9 am saw us making a 50 metre long human chain, passing bricks like they were gossip, in a remote village far from the luxuries of home.

At Kumbhargarh, the 13 of us - 3 core members and 2. teachers - were surrounded by mud, cute dogs and piles of bricks that had to be carried to a designated spot and cemented together to build a house. We had three primary tasks to do: make bricks, carry the bricks, and cement them together - basically we were building a house from the ground level up.

Making the bricks was a task that required a mixture of physical strength and skill, to operate the brick making machine, slide the wet brick off the machine and set it down intact, on the ground to dry. We made a total of 152 bricks, the most any group has ever made!

Carrying the bricks was simple enough, but grew exhausting as we had to toil up and down a slope, in the harsh sun; transporting all these hundreds of bricks turned our arms to jelly. Cementing the house was a job only for people with skill, precision and care. It might have seemed like just another job for us, but this was going to be a place of shelter for people for many, many years.

When we left the workplace, our fingernails were caked in mud, we were covered in grime and our hair was full of dust, yet our faces were full of smiles, and hearts full of joy. It had been an exhausting four hours of continuous working in the sun, but had served such a good cause that the joy of giving overshadowed the hours of toil.

We were the reason people would have a home to live in, and even though our contribution had been extremely small, it was not in the least bit insignificant. On our way back, we sat and reflected; the way every drop in the ocean counts, every brick in a building counts and every working hand counts.

- Ishita Bagri



GRADE 9B: CLASS TRIP TO JAMNAGAR

Boisterous buses
and a herd of teens
trampling about -
this is what Jamnagar had to
endure.

Sports and selfies
everyday, plus a couple of
X-rays.

Inside jokes and squad photos,
looking at all the seafood we
couldn't eat at Narara Bet
(Or did we eat it?)

Jammin' in Jamnagar
to the tunes of DJ Shuki-V,
cold feet and sweaty hands
before the dance.

But thankfully no one set themselves on fire.

Early morning walks
and late night talks.

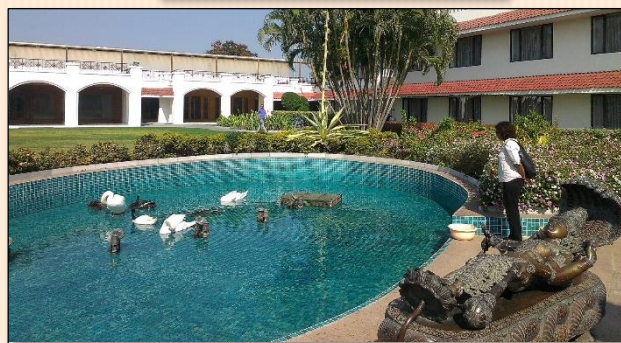
Just do that do that
do that do that

Paani wala dance
while playing Uno on the wet grass.

Eating (or not) paneer every
single day,
and gulping down Coca-Cola
like it was Pepsi.

The flight back home
and fights over gum
like it was gold.

Those 5 days became
the memories of a lifetime.



GRADE 9 C: CLASS TRIP TO JAMNAGAR

We'll look back,
Years from now,
Decades from today.

We'll remember

Not the walls

Of the worlds

We've built around

Ourselves,

Not the words we spoke,

Not the clothes we wore,

Not the things that let us down.

The sunglasses will slip from our fingers,
Just like the wind outside our bus windows.

Wind that caressed time, willed it

To pass us by

And pull us slowly,

Out of paradise.

The songs will be forgotten,

But the rhythm

Of our laughter,

Will be laced into our heart beats.

And we will hold faded pictures

In aging hands,

We will clasp clear memories,

In aging brains,

We will remember the

People we loved,

The hands that held us,

The time we had,

And suddenly,

In our aging bodies,

Our hearts will be

Young

Again. - Akanksha Sinha

