

Your Purkal Journal

August 2026



*Together as one, we walk the path of learning,
growth, and endless hope.*

SPIC MACAY - Odissi Dance

'Dance is the hidden language of the soul' - Martha Graham



Continuing with its mission of bringing classical Indian arts to young audiences, SPIC MACAY brought eminent Odissi dancer Shri Pravat Kumar Swain to perform at our school on 20 August. A recipient of the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar, he is trained in the Gotipua style of Puri and at the Orissa Dance Academy. He was accompanied on stage by Rohit Kumar Pradhan on the mardal, Ratik Patra on vocals, Biswajit Pradhan on the flute, and Swagatika Sahoo as co-dancer.

Shri Swain opened by tracing Odissi's roots, teaching the students a bhajan, *Jagannatha Tume Parambramha*, line by line before they sang it together. He then walked them through the five parts of an Odissi dance recital: Mangalacharan (invocation to the deities), Batu (dedicated to Lord Shiva), Pallavi (pure movement without a story), Abhinaya (mythological tales told through expression), and Moksha (the closing piece of spiritual release).

He demonstrated how mountains, animals, and rippling water find their way into mudras and footwork, and he asked the student volunteers on stage to try the postures. Nikhil Raikwal (X B), a vocal student, said trying the mudras for the first time built his confidence and made this the most interactive session, with the artistes performing alongside them. The session closed with a piece on the flute and pakhawaj, the audience joining in to chant the Shanti Mantra, 'Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah,' a Sanskrit prayer for universal peace.

In the question and answer round that followed, Riyma Sharma (XI C), a classical dance student, asked Shri Swain why he had chosen classical dance as a man. He explained that he comes from a centuries old family of dancers hailing from a village where the Gotipua dance form originated. In this tradition, young boys dress as female dancers and offer praise to Lord Jagannath and Lord Krishna. This explanation provided students a glimpse into a lesser explored corner of India's classical dance heritage.

Independence Day

'Swaraj is my birthright, and I shall have it!' - Bal Gangadhar Tilak



PYDS Learning Academy marked the nation's 80th Independence Day, with former patron Col. Aparjeet S. Nakai as the Chief Guest and Ms Valentina DG as an esteemed guest. Col. Nakai, a 22 year Army veteran, entrepreneur and avid trekker, has travelled to over 30 countries. He has been associated with PYDS as a patron and donor since 2014. Ms Valentina, Italian by birth but Indian at heart, has sailed the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and made Uttarakhand her home nearly three decades ago.

Colonel Nakai hoisted the flag, followed by the National Anthem sung enthusiastically by all students and staff. The four houses led by school head girl Aashi Pundir (XII A) and head boy Lavindar Singh (XII C) presented a spirited march past. A synchronised PT display highlighted that the nation's strength relies on having healthy youth.

In their speeches, Nikita (IX B) in English and Maahi Thapa (IX B) in Hindi both made the point that the battlefield has changed, and patriotism today lies in honesty and the courage to stand up for one another. The subsequent performances by the choir and dance troupe, resplendent in the shades of the tricolour, brought the programme to a vibrant note.

Invited to address the gathering and conclude the celebration, Colonel Nakai set his prepared speech aside, saying the students had already covered his points. Instead, he emphasised that a school's greatness lies in eager learners and

dedicated staff rather than grand infrastructure, praising the PYDS's lasting commitment to these values.

Before leaving, everyone received ladoos, marking a sweet ending to a proud morning.

In a subsequent session with hostel students, Col Nakai explained how losing his father early taught him self-reliance and faith, and advised students to practice generosity, humility, and perseverance in their efforts.

Our thanks to the teachers and student participants whose efforts made the celebration so commendable, and whose spirit carried the day's message far beyond the ground.

Our special acknowledgement to Col Nakai for his words of inspiration and guidance.

Jai Hind, Jai Bharat!

Welham Sahitya Spriha Hindi Literary Festival

'There is no friend as loyal as a book' - Ernest Hemingway



On 22 and 23 of August, Welham Girls' School, Dehradun, hosted the tenth edition of Valley of Words. This festival, titled Welham Sahitya Spriha (वैल्हम साहित्य स्प्रीहा), was held in association with the Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of

Letters. It brought together 15 writers from across the country around the theme *Shabdon Se Aage, Vicharon Tak* (beyond words, towards ideas). Ten students of classes XI and XII travelled from PYDS to attend, accompanied by their Hindi teacher, Sunil Sir.

Thirteen sessions were held over two days, themed around the Valley of Words Book Awards. There was a poetry symposium, as well as panels on contemporary Hindi literature. Students heard writers speak on folk poetry, translation, gender and identity. Among the speakers, Kumari Rohini discussed the novel *Orbital*, and Navneet Neerav shared insights on his youth novel, *Naach*, which explores social stereotypes.

This was the first festival of its kind that PYDS students attended. It opened them up to diverse literary genres and contemporary themes, encouraging them reading, questioning, and writing differently.

Tender Roots

'Music is the divine way to tell beautiful, poetic things to the heart' - Pablo Casals



Tender Roots Academy of Performing Arts is a not-for-profit organisation, founded in 2014 to introduce the vast treasure of performing arts from India and the World to the younger generation. Collaborating with Tender Roots, PYDS was privileged to host the renowned sarod player Shri Pritam Ghosal on 28 August, accompanied by Shri Rohit Deo on tabla. A disciple of Ustad Amjad Ali Khan and a member of the Sufi ensemble Chaar Yaar, Shri Ghosal has performed extensively both nationally and internationally.

The hostel students were fortunate to witness the performance. It opened playfully with the duo performing 'Jingle Bells' as the younger audience sang merrily along, before moving into a melodious rendition of Raag Desh and Raag Yaman. To keep things interactive, Pritam invited the students to sing their favourite Pahadi song. Everyone broke enthusiastically into *Bedu Pako*, a popular Uttarakhand folk tune. Aakriti (VIII A) shared that this exposure helped her learn about traditional instruments like the Sarod, Rabab, and guitar, and how each produces its distinct sound.

We are grateful to Tender Roots for giving our students such enriching exposure to Indian classical music and culture.

Inter School Competitions

'The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet' - Aristotle



Robotic Competition

When education transcends textbooks and classrooms, learning becomes inventive, creative, and joyful. On 8 August, to showcase their innovative side, our students participated in YANTRAPRAGYA 2026, the Inter School Robotic Competition held at OASIS Academy, Dehradun.

The competition featured three categories: fastest line following car, robo soccer, and robo race. Nine students from PYDS took part, three students on each team. Preparation began two weeks in advance, with students building the robotic cars from scratch under the guidance of the Tinkering and AI Lab instructors. The car body was made of wood, with the school procuring items like the motor and tyres; students then assembled the components into working models using Arduino kits, wiring and their coding skills.

PYDS secured 1st position in the Robo Race Competition (Ranu X, Nitin VIII &

Lucky IX). The team also received a special mention at the awards ceremony for completing the entire course in just 33 seconds.

The robo soccer and line following car events proved tougher. Frequency interference from environmental changes caused model malfunctions during robo soccer, while an unexpected wooden track derailed the line-following run, leaving the team unable to finish either event.

Beyond the win, the competition was a lesson in teamwork; students stayed confident through a few mishaps, fought hard, and earned praise from the organisers.



Art Competition

Students displayed their creative talents at the Inter School Art Competition organised by Kasiga School, Dehradun. On 1 August, five students took part: Aditya Saini (X), Anshika Bisht and Neha Parmani (XI), and Tamanna and Vansh Gupta (XII).

The team split into two groups: the girls competed in Face Painting, which followed into a Fashion Show, while the boys took on Visual Paradox (Optical Illusion Art). Within the allotted time of 2½ hours, they produced colourful, vivid artwork that drew attention from attendees. The team was placed third overall; only the top two were formally felicitated.

Neha shared her experience: *"For the first time, we designed a costume and headgear on the spot, using waste cloth and other waste materials. This competition helped us experience the insight of the fashion industry and time management. We*

coordinated well with each other and interacted with students from other schools overall.”

The charged atmosphere left a lasting impression, inspiring the students to keep seeking out creative spaces.



Hindi Competition

Our Hindi Department's most anticipated annual event, the Aashubhashan aur Aashunibandh Lekhan (Speech and Essay Writing) Competition, was held on 7 August at The Indian Public School, Dehradun. Two Class XII students, Ambika Negi and Lavindar Singh, represented PYDS Learning Academy, joining participants from 32 schools across the country.

Ambika took part in the speech category, drawing on her strong elocution skills. Students were given four topics in advance, of which one was assigned at random on the day of the competition. Ambika spoke on 'कंप्यूटर शिक्षक का स्थान ले सकता है', delivering her speech within the four minute time limit.

For the essay category, Lavindar, a Humanities student showcasing his writing skills, wrote on 'आज के समय में गिरते मौलिक और नैतिक मूल्यों के अभाव से प्रभावित भारतीय संस्कृति को कैसे बचाएं?', completing 350 - 400 words within the hour allotted.

Neither student secured a position this year, but they took away valuable lessons. As Lavindar put it: *"Even though we didn't win this year, I was pleased to present whatever I had prepared for days. I also learnt that I need to work harder on my Hindi writing skills."*

Outdoor Learning: A Morning at the Zoo

'Curiosity is the wick in the candle of learning' - William Arthur Ward



As part of their outdoor learning programme, students of classes I, II and III visited Dehradun Zoo on the morning of 27 August. Before entering, teachers briefed them on the purpose of the visit and rules such as no feeding or disturbing the animals, and staying with the group.

Thereafter, they explored the zoo in mixed grade buddy pairs, with older children looking out for younger ones. The visit provided students an opportunity to observe

animals closely and compare what they saw with what they had studied in class. They noted that a catfish's whiskers resemble a cat's, observed fish breathing through their gills, and learned that the ostrich is the world's largest and fastest bird on land. They identified the differences between an alligator and a crocodile, and between a leopard, a cheetah, and a tiger, and observed a range of fish and snakes. At the snake enclosure, they read the do's and don'ts, and found it particularly interesting as they could connect these to real life: how people actually react when someone is bitten by a snake. In the cactus garden, they examined leaves that have adapted to store water.

One observation stood out: several students noticed that an alligator's open jaw resembles the 'greater than' and 'less than' signs they had learned in Maths class, a connection they made on their own. Students also recognised animals they had earlier only sketched in art class: a bear, a peacock. Two sights held their attention the longest: a bear pacing its enclosure, and a fish nudging pebbles across its tank.

The visit fed directly into classroom learning across subjects. In Environmental Studies, seeing wild animals in person gave students a clear sense of their actual size. They were also able to sort animals by habitat and diet: carnivore, herbivore, and omnivore. In Mathematics, they counted animals, compared them using more/less and big/small, and worked through simple story sums based on what they had counted. In English and Hindi, they used the vocabulary picked up from the signboards to frame simple sentences about the animals, identifying nouns, adjectives and verbs within them.

Back in class, students spoke about their favourite animals with confidence, answered questions, and recalled specific details from the visit. The visit and ensuing learning helped move several concepts - animal classification, comparison, and new vocabulary from the textbook into direct, retained experience.

Career Guidance

A Fair Full of Futures

'Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life' - Confucius



On 25 August, The Doon School organised its annual College Fair, bringing together 120 universities from India and abroad. Six of our class XII students - Atharv Chaudhary and Radhika Kothari from Science; Aditi Thapa and Karan Kumar from Commerce; and Lavindar Singh and Tamanna Singh from Humanities and Vishi ma'am, our Career Counsellor, attended this fair.

Moving between stalls, they learnt about admission processes, fee structures, hostel charges and scholarships at a range of universities from as far as the United States, Germany and Japan.

Karan came with a plan and said, *"I was confused about whether I would be able to find a job in my field of interest. I am interested in cinematography and filmmaking, and I had never found a college that met my requirements. After this event, I found both international and national colleges where I can pursue my education and get a job through campus placements."*

Radhika learned that a strong application is not about marks alone; it needs to include her extracurricular record as well.

For all of them, it helped narrow down a wide, among unclear range of choices to a shortlist they could realistically pursue.

The school's Career Counsellor took the opportunity to invite representatives from seven universities that could be attractive prospects for our students. She is now approaching them to explore admission and scholarship opportunities for 2027.

Workshop on Hospitality Management

'Success is where preparation and opportunity meet' - Bobby Unser



A career guidance workshop on hotel management was conducted for students of classes XI and XII on 12 of August by SAATHIYA, an organisation offering an Integrated Career Development Program (ICDP) in this field. The speaker engaged students by breaking down the four primary hotel departments, Food Production (Kitchen), Front Office, Food & Beverage Service, and Housekeeping, besides essential corporate functions like HR, Finance, Maintenance, and Security.

PYDS alumni trained by SAATHIYA and now in good placements were highlighted as inspiring role models. These include Sumati and Mahendi working in the Front Office at Hyatt Regency Dehradun, and Shivam Negi working as a chef at Renaissance Bengaluru.

Students acquired a clear map of the choices ahead and a sharper sense of the difference between a 'job' for immediate income and a long term 'career' built on continuous skill acquisition, domain specialisation, and professional growth. SAATHIYA's ICDP model puts this into practice: five months of intensive training followed by five years of continued support. It includes workplace handholding, scholarships for distance learning degrees such as a B.Sc. in Hotel Management or a B.A. in Travel and Tourism, and mentorship that support a trainee steadily towards a supervisory role.

The session left students with more than information; it gave them a framework to make an informed choice about their future, as well as the guidance to build a career in hospitality.

**We are proud of Ajeet Pundir
PYDS Batch 2019 - 20**

Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think.

- Albert Einstein



Ajeet Pundir, a 2019 - 20 alumnus, comes from a family of four living in Bharatwala, a small nearby village. Supported by PYDS through its On To Life (OTL) programme, he secured a 100% scholarship to pursue a B.Com (Hons) at Shoolini University. After completing his degree, he began his career as a Junior Research Analyst at Main Data Group, IT Park, Dehradun. Currently, he works as a Research Analyst with the same organisation, specialising in data analysis and data collection. Reflecting on his journey, Ajeet shares:

"I was a shy student when I joined PYDS in class IV, but school shaped my overall personality, and the confidence I carry today comes from those years. Scoring 100/100 in Economics in class XII remains my proudest achievement, and serving as House Captain of Gulmohar House for two consecutive years taught me leadership and confidence. I started my career as a Junior Research Analyst at Main Data Group and have since grown into a Research Analyst role, and my goal is to move into a managerial position over the next five years.

To my juniors: work hard, and make your parents, teachers, and PYDS proud. Whatever you're afraid of, just do it with confidence and the right intent. PYDS is where personality development truly begins, where students learn to build confidence, discover their potential, and grow into well rounded individuals, excelling both academically and in sports."

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As crisp late summer breezes and warm September sunlight welcome the golden days of early autumn, we thank our friends and patrons for standing by us through difficult times. Take care till we meet again.

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