



The Shepherd's Monthly Newsletter *Voice*



GOOD SHEPHERD INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Good Shepherd Knowledge Village

M. Palada Post, Ootacamund - 643 004, The Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, India

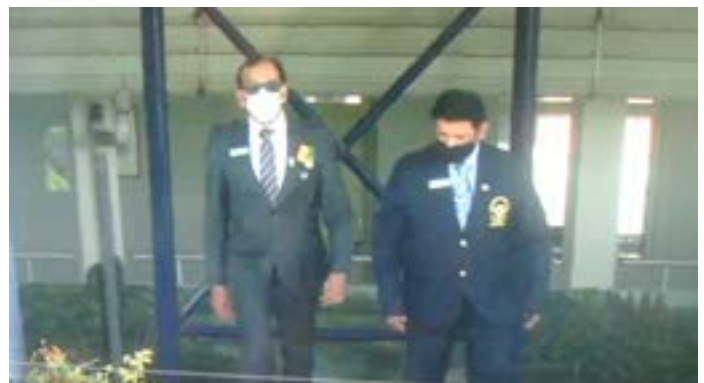
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Virtual Celebrations of the 72nd Republic Day



Ms Kanupriya Vinkle Chawla, IB-1A, as the emcee of the event



The chief guest, Mr KV Muraleedharan, Head of the Physical Education Department, seen along with Mr Dominic Jude Hurst, Director of Activities

India was ruled by the British for over 200 years and became independent from the rule of the British Raj following the Indian independence movement. It was on 26 January 1950 that India became a newly formed Republic. India was declared as a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic. Since 1950, Republic Day has been celebrated every year in India on 26 January to honour the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect thus making India one of the biggest democracies in the world. The Indian Republic Day is celebrated with great fervour throughout the country every year.

GSIS celebrated the **72nd Republic Day** of India on Tuesday, 26 January 2021 in all its solemnity and grandeur. Due to the restrictions in view of the COVID-19 pandemic and the related safety protocol in place, the school celebrated the event virtually. The event started off with the flag hoisting ceremony. The ceremony of hoisting the national flag was held in the morning. The chief guest, **Mr K V Muraleedharan**, Head of the Physical Education Department, unfurled the national flag, which was followed by the singing of India's National Anthem by the Indian music choir. **Ms Aadhiyashri Puvikumar**, 6A, offered the prayer. Students of the Indian music choir sang a patriotic song, 'Chhodo Kal Ki Baatein', written by Prem Dhawan and originally sung by Mukesh. **Ms Laisha Gulia**, 10A, delivered a speech, which was followed by the performance of a patriotic dance by the girls. **Master Athreykrishna Parla**, FM-2C and **Master Pranav Trehon**, IB-2D, also delivered their speeches. **Ms Sayesha Ghosh**, 8A, sang the patriotic song, 'Ae Watan.' **Ms Mangalam Karuppiah**, ISC-1A presented the welcome note. The chief guest, Mr K V Muraleedharan, then addressed the staff and students. He said that this is an occasion to remember **Dr B R Ambedkar** - the chief architect of the Indian Constitution, the brave freedom fighters, the fearless soldiers and the daring civilians who laid down their lives for our nation. **Master Daiwik Locherla Satisha**, IB-1D, expressed gratitude to the chief guest, Director of Activities, IT department and students for making the event a memorable success.



Mr K V Muralidharan hoisting the national tricolour



Prayer by Ms Aadhiyashri Puvikumar, 6A



The Indian music choir singing the patriotic song, 'Chhodo Kal Ki Baatein'



Ms Laisha Gulia, 10A, delivering the Republic Day speech



Patriotic dance by the girls



Speech by Master Athreykrishna Parla, FM-2C

The day marks the true spirit of a shackle-free India that began with the inception of our constitution. The students took pride in glorifying and celebrating the spirit of unity in diversity. **Ms Kanupriya Vinkle Chawla**, IB-1A, as the emcee of the event, monitored the agenda, made the online presentations and introduced the speakers.



Ms Sayesha Ghosh, 8A, singing the patriotic song, 'Ae Watan'



Master Pranav Trehon, IB-2D, speaking on the occasion



Welcome note by Ms Mangalam Karuppiah, ISC-1A



Independence Day address by Mr K V Muraliedharan



Expression of Gratitude by Master Daiwik Locherla Satisha, IB-1D



Students singing the school anthem

"A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people."

- Mahatma Gandhi

A Formal Onboarding Programme held at GSIS



The Senior Vice President, Mrs Elsamma Thomas addressing the members of staff



The President of GSIS, Mr Jacob Thomas addressing the school community



The Principal, Mrs Sheila Alexander delivering her message



The Director of Counselling, Mrs Anila Ann Mathew speaking on the topic, 'Learn to shine bright'

An **Orientation Programme** was held at GSIS for members of staff on Monday, 18 January 2021. The management devised a plan of action for onboarding members of staff - both old and new - and to discuss more about their work, the school's norms, expectations, procedures and policies.

The programme started with a welcome note delivered by the Senior Vice President, **Mrs Elsamma Thomas**. She mentioned that **Mr Jacob Thomas** stands like a big tower to give support and strength to all of us. The President of GSIS, Mr Jacob Thomas said that the school has done a commendable job with online classes and much more work has to be done. He concluded his address with a reference to the memorable words of **General Eric Shinseki**, former U.S. Army Chief of Staff - "If you don't like change, you're going to like irrelevance even less." In her address, the Principal, **Mrs Sheila Alexander** conveyed the message that the primary concern of the school is the health, safety and learning of our students. The Director of Counselling, **Mrs Anila Ann Mathew** then addressed the staff on the topic, 'Learn to shine bright.' The Head of Online Teaching and Learning, **Mrs Manjushree Muraleedharan** talked on 'Hope for the new era.' Next was the turn of the Teacher Librarian, **Mrs Sakhvir Mathew** to talk about 'Building Connections and Collaboration.' The new Resident Medical Officer, **Dr J Alban Michael** also addressed the staff on the Standard Operating Procedures to be followed in the light of the current COVID-19 pandemic. This was followed by an open forum during which the President, the Principal and the RMO answered the questions raised by the members of staff. The programme ended with the concluding remarks by the Director of Activities, **Mr Dominic Jude Hurst**.

The coordinator of High School, **Mr Kalyan Ram** acted as the emcee and introduced the speakers to the members of staff. The programme helped the teachers to reduce their occupational stress, integrate with the school, its culture, take charge of situations and achieve control over their environment.



The Resident Medical Officer, Dr J Alban Michael addressing the staff



The open forum in progress

Virtual School Assembly



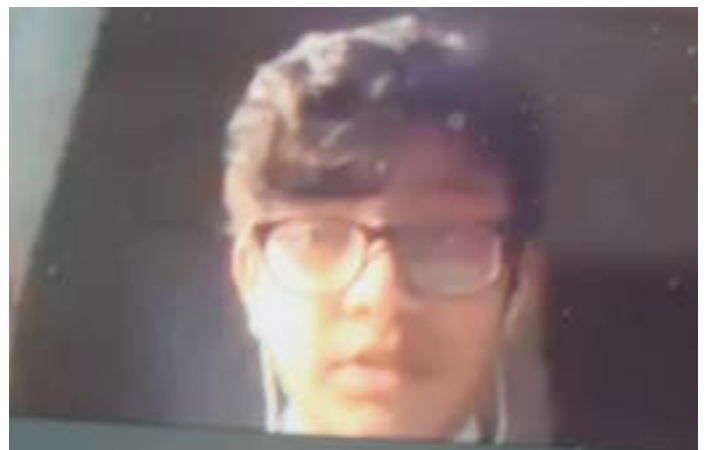
Master Devya Robin Goenka, IB-2A, leading the school in prayer



The school choir singing the school song



The school prayer by Master Ganeev Singh Saluja, 4A



News reading by Master Devanand Karthikeyan, FM-4C

A virtual **School Assembly** was held at GSIS on Monday, 18 January 2021, to kick-start teaching-learning activities of the second term. The government of Tamil Nadu has given permission to start classes in schools for students of Grades 10 and 12 from 19 January 2021.

Master Devya Robin Goenka, IB-2A, offered the prayer. The school virtual choir sang the school song, 'Hail Good Shepherd, Our Alma Mater ...' and the school prayer song, 'The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want...'. **Master Ganeev Singh Saluja**, 4A, said the school prayer. **Master Devanand Karthikeyan**, FM-4C, read out the top news of the day. **Ms Ravina Jaywant Patil**, IB-1B, delivered the assembly speech. She said that the pressure on school leaders working in



Ms Ravina Jaywant Patil, IB-1B, addressing the student body



Address by the Senior Vice President, Mrs Elsamma Thomas



Address by the President, Mr Jacob Thomas



Address by the Principal, Mrs Sheila Alexander



Students singing the school anthem



Ms Angelinaashita Ashish Rajwadi, 9A, as the emcee for the event

these demanding and chaotic circumstances is relentless. The Co-Founder & Senior Vice President, **Mrs Elsamma Thomas**, welcomed all the staff and students to the school. She said that every day offers an opportunity for us to learn and teach something new. The President of GSIS, **Mr Jacob Thomas**, said that the past year has not only been one of many challenges and hardships but also one of uncertainty and doubts for our teachers. *"I am first and foremost grateful to our teachers and staff for their outstanding efforts in adapting to the demands that we each faced and the many changes we have to make along the way,"* he added. The Principal, **Mrs Sheila Alexander**, advised the students to do ordinary things exceptionally well. *"Excellence is a habit and it starts with extraordinary attitude including simple and sometimes usually neglected things,"* she said. The assembly ended with the rendition of the school anthem, 'We sing your praise with grateful hearts,...'.

Blessing and Inauguration of the New School Buildings in the Palada Campus



The New Infirmary block in the Palada Campus



Inauguration of the New Infirmary block started with a prayer



The President, Mr Jacob Thomas and the Senior Vice President, Mrs Elsamma Thomas during the blessing



The new Resident Medical Officer, Dr J Alban Michael, reading from the Bible

As part of the expansion project, construction of the new buildings in the Palada Campus has been in progress. This project included construction of indoor sports halls, a medical center, boarding houses for boys, dining hall, staff residence, a gymnasium, an amphitheatre and an auditorium. During the past one year, the spread of the novel coronavirus disrupted the supply of equipment, materials, manpower and adversely impacted our ongoing construction project. With the easing of the COVID-19 related restrictions, the school was able to complete the construction of several buildings and the rest of the work is expected to be completed shortly.

The **New Infirmary** and **Boys' Dormitory blocks** were blessed by **Rev Fr A Adaikalam Amirtharaj**, Priest-in-Charge, Annai Velankanni Church, Muthurai, on Thursday, 21 January 2021. The President, **Mr Jacob Thomas**, the Senior Vice President, **Mrs Elsamma Thomas**, the Principal, **Mrs Sheila Alexander**, the new Resident Medical Officers - **Dr J Alban Michael** and **Dr Surabhi Chetia** - and Members of the Academic Council were present. The function began with words of welcome from the Director of Activities, **Mr Dominic Jude Hurst**, followed by the blessing of the recently built school buildings. Furthermore, during the ceremony, the priest sprinkled holy water and the participants sang Christian hymns.

We hope and pray that GSIS will continue to flourish for many more years, serve as an excellent temple of learning, give the light of knowledge to many generations and thereby fulfill the real purpose of education.

"Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly."

- Langston Hughes

GSIS reopened for students of classes 9, 10, 11 & 12



Students in the Dilkush Hall during study time



Students in the examination hall



Students engaged in morning workout

Schools in Tamil Nadu have remained shut since the first national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic that was announced on 24 March 2020. The number of COVID-19 cases in Tamil Nadu has significantly decreased and after a gap of nearly 10 months, school campuses in Tamil Nadu have finally thrown open their doors to a section of its senior students.

The Tamil Nadu government has been holding meetings with school heads in every district to brief them. With growing concerns surrounding the future course of action for students of Classes 10 and 12, who will have to take their board examinations in March 2021, the state government once again proposed the reopening of schools for these students. Based on positive feedback from parents and schools, the Tamil Nadu government has passed official orders to open schools to a section of students of the senior classes. The government also issued SOPs, a detailed set of guidelines and specified a host of safety measures to be followed for reopening schools. The Tamil Nadu Government has permitted schools to reopen across state for class 10th and 12th students from 19 January 2021. Hostels are also allowed to start operating. Schools across Tamil Nadu are allowed to reopen for students of classes 9 and 11 from 8 February 2021. Schools are permitted to work six days a week.

Health clearance is a mandatory requirement for attending classes. Students and staff have to compulsorily undergo RT-PCR tests in a reputed diagnostic laboratory and produce negative COVID-19 report to be allowed back on campus. They also have to undergo another RT-PCR test after a quarantine of 14 days in the campus. Anyone showing any symptoms of COVID - 19 are tested again, if necessary, to leave no space for doubt and confusion. GSIS received consent forms from the parents who are willing to send their children back to school. A safe and hygienic space is ensured in the campus in adherence to COVID-19 norms. GSIS continue implementing the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for COVID-19 safety protocols. Students and members of staff are advised to maintain social distancing during lunch breaks, other short breaks in between classes, and not to crowd in corridors, dormitories, washrooms and dining halls. Apart from physical distancing norms, students and staff members must wear masks at all times, sanitise their hands and use thermal scanners. The hostel premises, dining hall and the campus are sanitised and disinfected every day. The school has suspended assemblies or mass gatherings. Counsellors ensure that students get the right guidance and psychological support.

Students of classes 9, 10, 11 & 12 started attending physical classroom sessions following safety protocols. Students are of the opinion that they are able to catch up with lessons more properly during the traditional face-to-face classes in school. They are also able to ask questions freely and understand better. Fifteen students of GSIS appeared for the IGCSE board examinations that were held on the 11th and 18th of February 2021.

Virtual Investiture Ceremony held at GSIS

"Leaders are made, they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price which all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile."

- Vince Lombardi



The school choir singing the school song



The school choir singing the school prayer song



School prayer by Master Devya Robin Goenka



The oath-taking ceremony in progress



Address by Ms Mangalam Karuppiah



Address by Master Daiwik Locherla Satisha

The school gives opportunities to students for taking up leadership positions that deliver sole and collective responsibilities. The new prefects are representatives of the student body and they were selected based on a selection process. They embody the best in student qualities that the school has to offer.

The school introduced the new batch of the **Prefects' Council** dedicated to leading the student body to new heights of excellence in sports, co-curricular, cultural and academic events. A virtual **Investiture Ceremony of the new Prefects' Council (2021 – 2022)** was held on Saturday, 13 February 2021, at GSIS. The ceremony commenced with a rendition of



The President of GSIS, Mr Jacob Thomas, delivering the welcome address



Address by the senior journalist, Mr Rajdeep Dilip Sardesai



Expression of Gratitude by the Co-Founder & Senior Vice President, Mrs Elsamma Thomas



The school choir singing the school anthem

the school song and the school prayer song by the school choir. The Head Boy, **Master Devya Robin Goenka**, offered the school prayer. It was a moment of pride when the **Principal, Mrs Sheila Alexander**, invested responsibilities, administered the oath to the newly invested office bearers – the Captains, the Vice Captains and the Prefects of all the four Houses and requested them to honour the pledge they have taken. Donning the mantle of accountability, they pledged to bestow their duties to the best of their abilities and keep the banner of the school fluttering high. The formal ceremony was a solemn occasion during which the authority and symbols of leadership were conferred on the student leaders. In her address, the new Head Girl, **Ms Mangalam Karuppiah**, said that in this year they will make their best effort to make the right choices than the easy ones. She also quoted the famous words of **Henry Ford**: *"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."* She thanked the teachers and the management profusely for giving them this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. In his address, the new Head Boy, **Master Daiwik Locherla Satisha** reminded that what we do today decide our tomorrow.

Mr Rajdeep Dilip Sardesai, Consulting Editor and lead news anchor of India Today Group, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The President of GSIS, **Mr Jacob Thomas**, introduced the chief guest to the audience and delivered the welcome address. He said that the conviction of Mr Sardesai for journalism and his passion for cricket are a source of inspiration to all. In his address, Mr Sardesai said that the heart of being Indian is the notion of us as people, as citizens. *"The strength of this country is when each and every one of you work unitedly amidst all your diversity. That is what makes India unique, our unity in diversity,"* he added. The words spoken by him were highly motivational to the new prefects. His passionate and eloquent speech kept the spectators spellbound and instigated them to work with zeal and zest. The Co-Founder & Senior Vice President, **Mrs Elsamma Thomas**, in her expression of gratitude, thanked the audience for their august presence. Among the audience present were the President, the Principal, the Coordinators, the staff, the students, the ever-supporting parents and guardians. The ceremony concluded with the rendition of the school anthem. It was also a learning experience for the other students who have understood the procedures of the formal swearing-in ceremony. It was indeed a splendid Investiture Ceremony! The event was streamed online.

Our young student leaders were trained to don the mantle of leadership and discharge their responsibilities entrusted upon them by the school. The leadership activities instill higher levels of self-confidence and self-esteem in students, helping them to develop their skills of leadership. The opportunity can thereby change the students into benevolent and transformational leaders. We are sure that the new student prefects will set an example for their fellow students and the entire school.

“If your actions create a legacy that inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, then, you are an excellent leader.”

- Dolly Parton

IGCSE Board Examinations, March 2021 session



Students in the Examination Hall

The International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE – Grade 10) examinations for March 2021 session were conducted at GSIS. Fifteen students of GSIS appeared for the examinations during this session as mentioned below:

Date / Day	Subject	Syllabus & component codes
11 February 2021 Thursday	Hindi as a Second Language [Reading and Writing]	0549 / 01
18 February 2021 Thursday	Hindi as a Second Language [Listening]	0549 / 02

The examinations were conducted in strict adherence to COVID-19 protocol and as per the government guidelines.

New Staff Recreation Centre

The **Staff Recreation Centre** was inaugurated at GSIS by its President, **Mr Jacob Thomas** and Senior Vice President, **Mrs Elsamma Thomas**, on Friday, 19 February 2021. The new facility will provide a much-needed recreational space and fitness centre for staff. The Recreation Centre is an idea conceived of and implemented by President, Mr Jacob Thomas. Thank You, Sir.



The President, Mr Jacob Thomas and the Senior Vice President, Mrs Elsamma Thomas, inaugurating the Staff Recreation Centre at GSIS



The President, Mr Jacob Thomas speaks to members of staff



The Principal, Mrs Sheila Alexander, addressing the members of staff



Amenities provided at the Staff Recreation Centre



Carrom Board



Facility to play billiards

The goal is to relieve stress and promote relaxation in the workplace. The amenities support the school's commitment as we progress towards an exciting future of sport, fitness and wellness. Indoor space is provided to play carrom, chess, air hockey, table soccer, snooker, billiards and dartboard game. More facilities will be added. The school is committed to maximising the opportunities provided to staff to play sport, keep fit and have fun whilst working in the school. The school's commitment to provide these amenities is an exciting milestone to ensure the wellbeing of the staff. The new recreation and wellness facility will cater to the present and future needs of our community.