

Sandesh

The Modernites' Newsletter
February 2022



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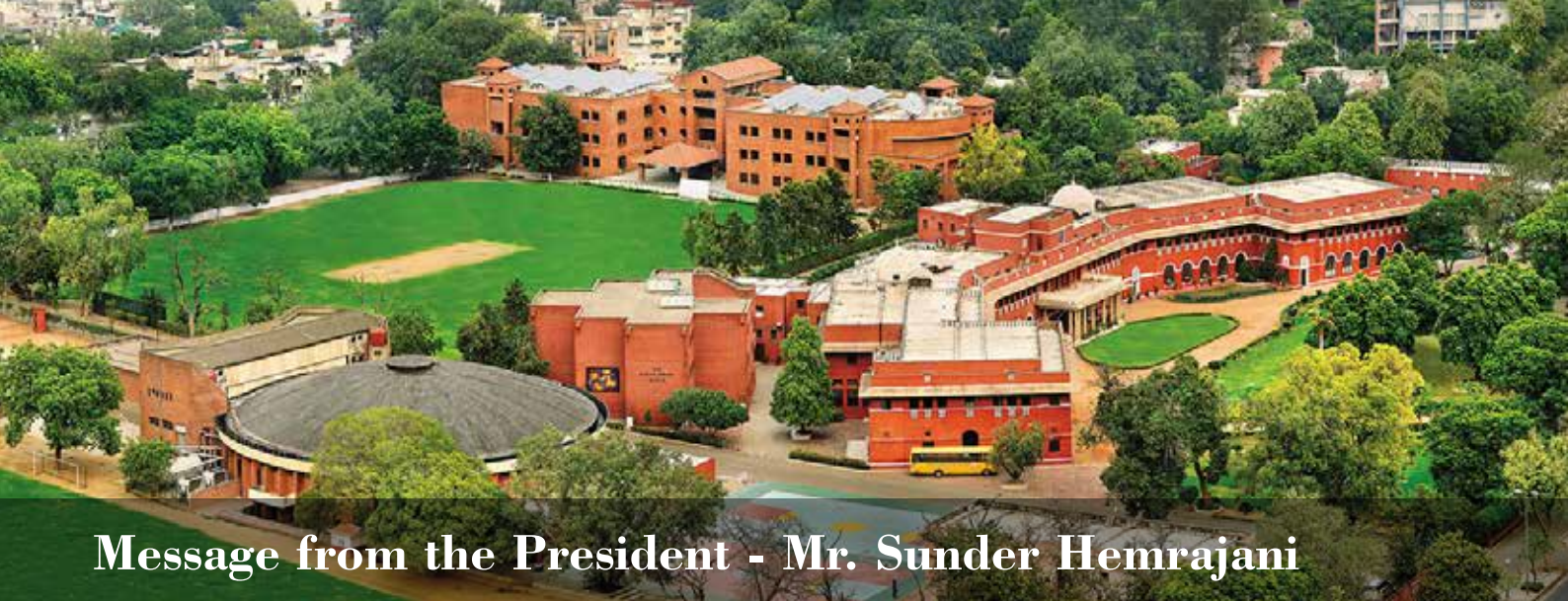
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Message from the President - Mr. Sunder Hemrajani

MSOSA - Towards a Higher Purpose

Dear Modernites,



At the outset, I would like to wish you and your families a happy and healthy 2022. The year that has gone by was difficult in many respects. However, it gave us an opportunity to reflect on the journey that MSOSA has undertaken over many decades and the role it must perform to support our community in the years ahead.

MSOSA – the Intent

The Modern School Old Students Association (MSOSA) was set up in 1957 with the intent to promote bonding within the old students' community and with the students of our alma-mater. I must share that under the aegis of MSOSA, the first play 'Kanjoos' staged in 1960 witnessed participation from school students apart from Modernites. Emanating this spirit, the first 25 years were devoted to cultural activities to promote the social interaction within these communities.

Extension to Philanthropy – The Modernites Trust

In 1983, as our community grew bigger, a group of senior Modernites established 'The Modernites Trust' as a philanthropic arm to reach out to the underprivileged sections of society. The purpose was to get involved in charitable activities, especially education for the students (refer to the column by the Modernites Trust Chairman - Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul). This was a defining moment. Since then, most philanthropic activities are undertaken in partnership with the Trust.

Expansion Phase

Over time, MSOSA committed itself to both – cultural and social initiatives. To promote its objectives, MSOSA expanded its range of activities to sports, inter school debates, etc. While there was continuity provided by the Annual Play, the bonding within Modernites was strengthened through Senior Modernites Dinner and Golden Jubilee

and Silver Jubilee Reunions, which brought Modernites of different generations back to the school. The Annual Ball catered to the needs of younger generation of Modernites. At the same time, the Trust expanded its domain to reach out to the retired Modern School teachers through its programs to address their needs.

The Covid Challenge

The pandemic resulted in an unprecedented challenge to MSOSA since its inception. It disrupted the annual calendar of activities due to various restrictions imposed by the regulatory bodies. The Association moved quickly to adapt to the changed scenario, largely operating in a hybrid format. Several physical activities had to be postponed or cancelled. Yet, the online format helped us innovate and create new opportunities. We leveraged the format to expand the reach and connect with Modernites around the world. During this period, our online events including the Zoom Dhamaka and the Theatre Festival Programs were huge successes. As the situation improved, a few physical events were also organized. This required a lot of last-minute decisions and restructuring.

Empathy at the Core

Reorganizing the activities was the easy part. The pandemic affected all the school communities represented by Modernites, teachers (serving and retired) and school students. It posed various challenges - medical, social, psychological, and financial. The school community lost over 80 Modernites and many teachers and students lost their loved ones. Amidst this distressful time, MSOSA organized an online Prayer Meeting to pray for the departed souls and bring closure to the distraught families. It was important to empathize with all who were affected. MSOSA volunteers called up the retired teachers to check on their wellbeing. Funds were raised from the Modernites community in partnership with the Modernites Trust to provide relief to the teachers and the students, to support them in this difficult time. This is an ongoing activity.

Towards A Higher Purpose

MSOSA collected over INR 25 lakhs for the '**Gurupranam**' program. The recently launched '**Dare to Dream**' initiative for Modernites who need financial support to pursue higher education, has also received positive response. Associations like ours need to be driven by a higher purpose and should step up to support our community in difficult times. I am grateful to the Modernites family for their unstinted support.

“ The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members

– Coretta Scott King



Message from the Chairman, Modernites Trust – Hon'ble Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul

The Modernites Trust: Giving Back to our Community



The Modernites Trust owes its existence to the vision of eminent and senior Modernites, who were part of MSOSA, to support philanthropic and charitable activities. MSOSA, along with other donors, created a corpus to fund the commendable initiative of educating children in Modern School, who came from economically weaker sections of society. This was during the time when there were no Government schemes, as present today.

Over a period of time, the list of activities was expanded to include contributions for national causes such as the Kargil War Relief in 1999, the Gujarat Earthquake Relief in 2001 and the Tsunami Relief in 2004.

The footprints of the Modernites Trust's activities have gone beyond educating a certain number of students at the school, who are meritorious, but need economic support. The Scholarship initiative has at present, 35 students from S-1 to S-7, who are given financial assistance not only towards fees and uniforms throughout their school education, but also additional support in the form of tuitions and laptops. The COVID times posed a challenge and technology upgradation to assist the students became a necessity.

One area of expansion has been the 'Dare to Dream' initiative whereby meritorious Modernite scholars are given an opportunity to dream beyond school education for pursuing studies through colleges and universities, including in the fields of engineering, medicine, aviation and so on. This noble initiative has helped young and talented students realize their potential and achieve great success. The most satisfying feature is that some of these very scholars who have excelled, have come back to support the Trust.

The Modern School has always taken pride in the commitment of its teaching faculty. The 'Gurudakshina' programme is a step towards recognizing the contributions of our retired teachers. These esteemed teachers are honored, and a purse is given in recognition of their contributions. We have had over 55 beneficiaries under this programme. Holding the hands of these teachers who held our hands in the years gone by does not end with this purse, as volunteers from MSOSA stay in touch with them to offer any other assistance that they may need. Modernites who are Doctors, Chartered Accountants, Lawyers, etc. have volunteered to give assistance pro bono to these teachers. COVID times have required an online process of 'Gurupranam' initiative, with an enhanced assistance of medical support.

We have been through a difficult two years and there does not seem to be an end, at least as yet. Families have lost their near and dear ones, including some students and in such times, support to them has become a matter of necessity. We have come across progenies of retired teachers who passed away during these difficult times, who are also in need of support. These are initiatives necessary to meet causes, which are arising in these times.

The aforesaid has required an expansion of activities of the Trust and varied approaches to sub-serving the objective with which it was originally set up – scholarship funds, promotion of education, literature, art, promoting research in Indology and Indian cultural studies and dissemination of knowledge in various fields, among others. The funds donated are required to be kept in safe investment, which is a limitation on the returns that are possible. These returns have decreased over time as expenses have increased. A modified approach to the Trust's activities has been that scholars are adopted by donors, which may collectively be a batch of Modernites or individuals who would continue to fund the students, instead of donating a corpus on account of the limitation of income that the corpus can generate.

We have confidence that the Modernites fraternity spread all over the world would keep on assisting in furthering the avowed objective of this Trust to provide education to the needy and for them to dream further, apart from taking care of our Gurus who contributed in making us what we are.

“ As the purse is emptied, the heart is filled.

– Victor Hugo

Making a Difference

Dare to Dream

A Joint Initiative by MSOSA and the Modernites Trust

Objective

The aim is to fundamentally change the lives of the beneficiaries

- The program is designed to ensure that meritorious Modernite scholars are given an opportunity to dream beyond school education for pursuing studies through colleges and universities, including in the fields of engineering, medicine and aviation, among others.
- This noble initiative has helped young and talented students realize their potential and achieve great success. The most satisfying feature is that some of these very scholars who have excelled, have come back to support the Trust.

How to Make a Contribution:

Domestic donors can send the donations through

- Cheques in favor of 'The Modernites Trust' and courier the same to The Modernites Trust c/o Modern School, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi-110001.
- Direct bank transfers can be made to 'The Modernites Trust' savings bank account number 30886170822 with State Bank of India (IFC Code: SBIN0011781).

The donor should send an email to the Trust with their full donor information- name, address, PAN and remittance advice. The contributions are eligible for deduction under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act.

Foreign donors including foreign citizens/foreign passport holders, there is a separate designated bank account of the Trust. To obtain the bank details and other remittance requirements, foreign donors may kindly get in touch with the Modernites Trust at contact@modernitetrust.com with a copy to Manu Narang at manu1967@gmail.com

For Details Contact

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Treasurer, MSOSA

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Gauri Rastogi
(Batch of 2013)
Senior Software Developer, Amazon

“The Trust has been really supportive throughout my journey in School and during my undergraduate years as well. The Trust funded my engineering college education as well. I am extremely indebted to MSOSA and the Trust for being a rock-solid pillar in my life.

Varun Khurana
(Batch of 2019)

B.Tech in Computer Science & Engineering (CSE), Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, (IIIT-Delhi)



“I am proud to have been a student of an institution as prestigious as Modern School Barakhamba Road, which has given me unparalleled opportunities, exposure and memories that are to be cherished for a lifetime. I express my heartfelt gratitude to MSOSA and the Modernites Trust for the generous and unwavering support. The Trust has continued to partially sponsor my higher education studies, to help me accomplish my dreams.



Mohammad Kamran
(Batch of 2018)

B.Sc. Aeronautics (Dual Degree Programme) in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering from Jamia Millia Islamia in collaboration with Pawan Hans Limited.

“I never would have imagined pursuing this professional course, but MSOSA and the Modernites Trust has helped me live my dream. The Modernites Trust never let my financial problem become a barrier in my education and career. The Trust provided aid even after school for all the three years of my course. The members of the Trust always showed their support since the beginning and even during the hard times of COVID – 19. I am very grateful to all of them and remember all the members of the Modernites Trust in my prayers.

MSOSA Events

Natak Mandli Theatre Festival

With the pandemic leading to worldwide lockdowns, MSOSA attempted to digitise theatre and the legacy of theatre like never before. For the first time, the play was made accessible to all Modernites across the globe - leading to a large number of Modernites seeing the play for the first time. The much anticipated theatre week witnessed Modernite families come together and watch the rib-tickling productions together! The festival included 4 one-act plays adapted and directed by Ms. Sohaila Kapur (Class of 1971), featuring 16 Modernite actors and countless crew members. Further, MSOSA collaborated with NewsX for a documentary titled- 'MSOSA Natak Mandli: Celebrating Our Legacy (1960-2021)'. The documentary was a first time effort to chronicle the evolution and history of Natak Mandali with first hand accounts from all those who have associated with it over several past decades.

The theatre festival was dedicated to Mr. Ashok Dhawan (Class of 1958), a veteran actor, architect and an integral part of the MSOSA Natak Mandli, who passed away just a few days before the play due to COVID. He had been part of the MSOSA plays right from 1960 to 2021. Mr. Dhawan was key in conceptualising the Theatre Festival and the documentary made in collaboration with NewsX.

The following plays were performed during the festival

19th August : MSOSA Natak Mandli -
Celebrating the Legacy (1960-2021)
- **Total Syappa!**

20th August
- **Supressed Desires**

An E-brochure was released on the first day of the festival and it was shared worldwide on all MSOSA social media platforms & also via email to all Modernites.

We have crossed over 10k views on YouTube and Facebook already.

21st August
- **Gossip Nama**

22nd August
- **Jaisa tum Kaho**



MSOSA Excellence Awards & Conclave

On 13th November MSOSA celebrated Modernite Achievers by organising the Modernites Excellence Awards & Conclave. Seventeen Modernites were felicitated for their exemplary work and for reaching the pinnacle of success in their respective fields. Out of these 17, four achievers were awarded posthumously. The hybrid version of the event received great response as it was live telecasted across YouTube and Facebook, connecting Modernites across the globe.

During the event, MSOSA & the Modernites Trust honoured retired teachers, who had selflessly served the institution and shaped lives of many students, by conferring them with the Gurudakshina Award. Further, this year the selection committee headed by Hon'ble Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, added two illustrious Modernites- Dr. Syeda Saiyidain Hameed & Mr. Gopalkrishna Gandhi- to the Wall of Fame. The conclave this year- 'World in Turmoil Crisis in Leadership'- witnessed the sharing of ideas by an illustrious panel including, Prof. Harshpal Singh Sachdev, Prof. Rajeev Bhargava, Ms. Sunita Narain & Mr. Rishabh Gulati and moderated by Hon'ble Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul. The discussion focused on how the pandemic has been a learning curve for organisations and for the Government, highlighting the importance of flexibility and empathy in leadership. The conclave also shed light on the impact of the pandemic on global economy, trade and the economics of the 'new normal'.

The evening was brought to a warm ending as the awardees and MSOSA team made new memories while sharing older ones over high tea and laughter that warmed the nippy evening.



Annual Modernites Golf for Charity

The Annual Golf Tournament, organised on 18th November 2021 at the DLF Golf Course, was welcomed with great zeal and enthusiasm by the golfing alumni. 120 golfers teed off for one of the most sought after tournaments in all of Delhi NCR. The course with its minutely detailed and manicured landscape along with the appealing flora and fauna was a delight to visit and play at. Post noon, the golfers joined their friends and family for the awards ceremony and a splendid lunch buffet. A competitive, yet pleasurable game followed by an intimate lunch with friends, making new memories whilst reliving old ones was just the perfect day for all the Modernite golfers.



Reunion Lunch for the Golden Jubilee Batches of 1970 and 1971

MSOSA organised a reunion lunch on the front lawns of Modern School, Barakhamba Road on 12th December 2021 for the Golden Jubilee Batches of 1970 and 1971. This was an important event in the MSOSA calendar, since a reunion was being organised after nearly two years, due to the ongoing pandemic. The event was well-appreciated by the senior batches, as they enthusiastically participated relived old memories.

A Live band playing classic songs added a retro charm, while a trip to the classrooms and old boarding house rooms, conducted by MSOSA team members revived a lot of memories of the years gone by.

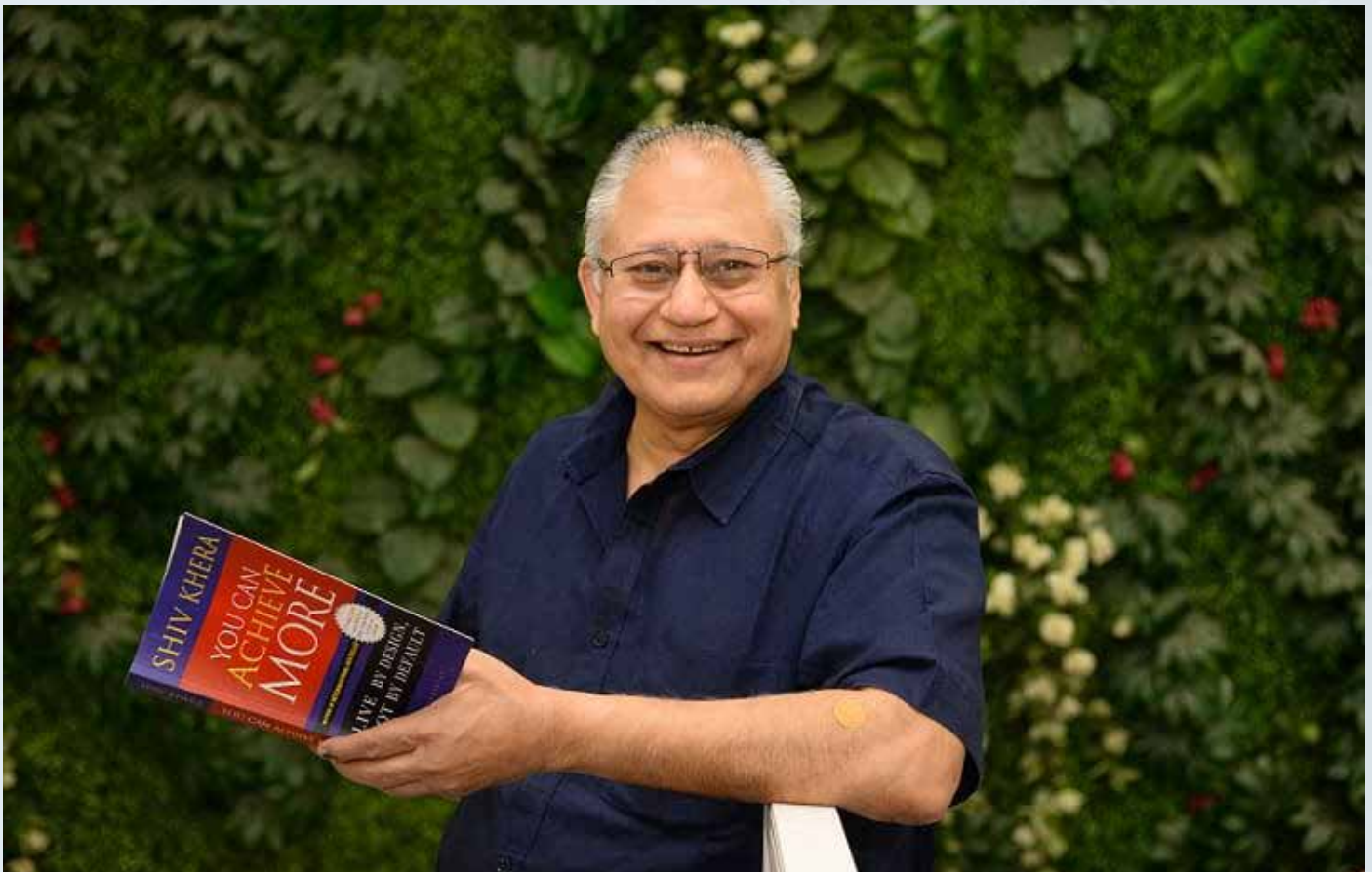
The Golden Jubilee Lunch was a heartwarming tribute to the 1970 & 1971 batches- wherein over 100 Modernites relived the golden days of school!



Leadership Lecture Series with Mr. Shiv Khera- Turning Setbacks into Comebacks

“Too many crackpots keep waiting for a jackpot”- this one line formed the ethos of a fun, interactive and insightful leadership lecture by Mr. Shiv Khera. During the session, held virtually on 27th November 2021, Mr. Khera outlined the habits and actions that differentiate winners from the average. He spoke about the importance of people, persuasion and prioritisation in accomplishing one’s goals. Further, he shed light on how winners put in the extra effort even when it’s uncomfortable – forming the path between perseverance, excellence and success.

The interactive session witnessed participation of over 250 Modernites as it was live streamed across the globe. The session ended with a series of questions posed by the audience and with some extremely interesting examples & insights from Mr. Khera



Kudos!

Modernite Achievers

(Hony) Brig. Dr. Arvind Lal (Class of 1965)

Featured on the cover of Forbes India magazine, December 2021 issue, titled 'Test of Time'

Justice Mukul Mudgal (Class of 1966 & Past President MSOSA)

Elected as the Chairman to FIFA Governance, Audit & Compliance Committee; representing India, he secured 125 votes polled amongst 206 countries

Mr. Ajay Mathur (Class of 1971)

Won the 2021 'The Artist Forum' (New York) International Song Competition in Indie/Singer Songwriter category

Mr. Amitabh Kant, IAS, CEO, Niti Aayog (Class of 1973)

Featured on the cover of Entrepreneur magazine, November 2021 issue, titled 'Most Daring CEOs of 2021'

Mr. Ajay Bhargava (Class of 1990)

Received the 'Dispute Resolution Lawyer of the Year' award at the Asian Legal Business India Law Awards 2021

Mr. Bharat Sachdeva (Class of 2001)

Appointed fitness trainer for the Indian boxing team for Tokyo Olympics, 2021

Mr. Sharad Kumar (Class of 2010)

- Won Bronze Medal in the T-42 high jump event at Tokyo Paralympics 2021

- Awarded Arjuna Award 2021 by the Government of India for outstanding performance in sports and games

Ms. Avika Saraf (Class of 2011)

Chosen as the Vice President of Community Development & Partnership to organise joint events for IMPACT INVESTING between Harvard and MIT

Ms. Pallavi Seth (Class of 2012)

Performed exclusively for Monaco Tourism & HT Brunch at the Salle Garnier Opera House, Monaco in 2021

Mr. Divij Mehra (Class of 2020)

Appointed Vice Captain of the Delhi's under-19 boys Cricket Team 2021

Dr. Vivek Nangia (Class of 1987)

Led the pulmonology team that successfully conducted North India's first Dual Lung Transplant at Max Hospital, Saket in January 2022



Celebrating Births

- **Aakash Kohli (2005) & wife Kanika were blessed with baby boy Aariv on 26th May 2020**
- **Upkar Singh Kohli (1999) & wife Neerja were blessed with baby boy Jai in July 2021**
- **Prikshit Katyal (2003) & wife Samridhi were blessed with baby girl Bhavisha on 23rd July 2021**
- **Arpit Gupta (2003) & wife Shikha were blessed with baby girl Vanya on 3rd August 2021**
- **Supriya (Juneja) Singhla (2003) & husband Aditya were blessed with baby boy Shaurya on 15th August 2021**
- **Lakshay Vij (2005) & wife Ayesha were blessed with baby boy Ayaan on 4th September 2021**
- **Abdallah Zafar (2003) & wife Nuzhat were blessed with baby girl Aliza on 21st September 2021**
- **Kshitijz Sanghi (1999) & wife Shikha were blessed with baby boy Adyant on 29th September 2021**
- **Siddhartha Gupta (2003) & wife Ratika were blessed with baby boy Suryh on 4th October 2021**
- **Inayat Singh Sistani (2003) & wife Imrat were blessed with a baby boy on 7th November 2021**
- **Tanya (Joshi) Nijhawan (2001) & husband Vikram were blessed with baby boy Veer on 15th November 2021**
- **Ankit Paul (2003) & wife Richa were blessed with baby girl Radhya on 17th November 2021**
- **Nandini (Singhal) Dawar (2009) & husband Kartikeya were blessed with baby boy Arhan on 20th November 2021**
- **Ashir Kohli (2007) & wife Neha were blessed with baby boy Sahir on 23rd November 2021**
- **Aditi (Dalmia) Rungta (2007) & husband Ankit were blessed with baby boy Yahnik in November 2021**
- **Sanjoli (Chauhan) Gabrani (2008) & husband Aditya were blessed with baby boy Aarvir on 29th November 2021**
- **Batchmates Ayussh Aggarwall (2011) & wife Anissha Aggarwall (2011) were blessed with a baby boy on 28th December 2021**



Celebrating Marriages

- **Tanya Joshi (2001)** married **Vikram Nijhawan** on 15th February 2020
- **Sagarika Kapoor (2010)** married **Nikhil Mehendiratta** on 28th June 2021
- **Ishaan Kapoor (2006)** married **Pallavi Kalra** on 31st July 2021
- **Ashwin Sinha (2010)** married **Radhhika Keedia** on 9th September 2021
- **Rahul Sharma (1993)** married **Kiran** on 10th October 2021
- **Kanika Joshi (2011)** married **Mehul Sharma** on 22nd October 2021
- **Shaleen Seth (2008)** married fellow modernite **Rabbani Bedi (2010)** on 29th October 2021
- **Sarah Miglani (2014)** married **Sarthak Gaur** on 28th November 2021
- **Kshitij Godha has (1999)** married fellow modernite **Juhi Garg (2002)** on 28th November 2021
- **Ram Juneja (2009)** married fellow modernite **Anahita Gupta (2011)** on 29th November 2021
- **Shruti Munjal (2009)** married **Rupin Khandpura** on 9th December 2021
- **Sid Shrivastava (2011)** married **Aakriti Monga** on 9th December 2021
- **Radhika Singh (1996)** married **Aroop Kumar Banerjee** 9th December 2021
- **Salonee Dhingra(2009)** married **Shiv Nanda** on 10th December 2021
- **Shivam Goel (2011)** married **Ramya Kutty** on 13th December 2021
- **Arunima Malik (2010)** married **Udit Arora** on 26th December 2021



We grieve the demise of

- **Mr Ratan Chand Backliwal (1955)** passed away in July 2021
- **Mr Sushil K. Anand (1958)** passed away in July 2021
- **Mr Raman Mahajan (1965)** passed away on 10th August 2021
- **Ms Priyanka (Gupta) Barathi (1996)** passed away on 15th August 2021
- **Mr Vishal Behl (1985)** passed away on 20th September 2021
- **Mr Deepak Puri (1957)** passed away on 2nd October 2021
- **Mr Jagdish Prasad Aggarwal (1950)** passed away on 20th October 2021
- **Mr Sunil Sud (1977)** passed away on 26th October 2021
- **Mr Arvinder Singh (1983)** passed away on 1st November 2021
- **Ms Sonya Nanda (2011)** passed away on 13th December 2021
- **Ms Inayat Dev (2021)** passed away on 13th December 2021
- **Mr Anup Kothari (1957)** passed away on 20th December 2021
- **Mr Rohit Kapur (1991)** passed away on 23rd December 2021
- **Mr Virender Katyal (1965)** passed away on 8th January 2022



Mrs. Satya Uberoi
English Teacher, Modern
School Barakhamba Road
(1965-1988)



**Mr. Bhagwati Charan
Sharma**
Dance & Art Teacher,
Raghubir Singh Junior
Modern School (1961-1988)



Ms. Vandana Dhawan
Head of Department -
Chemistry, Modern School,
Barakhamba Road



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