



Your Purkal Journal July 2026



***If I were a single drop of rain, I would choose to fall
where the light meets the dark and scatter into a
rainbow.***

Welcoming the Monsoon: Harela Plantation Drive

"When we plant trees, we plant these seeds of peace and hope"

- Wangari Maathai



Harela or 'Day of Green', an important folk festival in Uttarakhand, celebrates the rainy season, farming and nature. It is a tradition born from the deep reverence held by hill people for the natural world. At PYDS, we strive to imbue our students with these very values from their earliest years.

Continuing the practice of celebrating this day with a plantation drive on campus, our youngest members, the Class I students, were taken to the area near the laundry room, where they were divided into four teams. Guided by the school gardener, the little ones planted four saplings: two periwinkles, a jasmine, and a jungle geranium. They watered and manured the young plants with great enthusiasm, learning their first lessons in nurturing life.

Even the manure used in the drive is prepared on campus. Biodegradable waste from the school kitchen is collected and composted in a pit, turning into nutrient rich food for the soil. Thus, the cycle of care comes full circle: PYDS feeding its children and its children feeding the earth.

In the years to come, these tender saplings, planted by the tenderest of hands,

will rise into a spread of emerald leaves and fragrant blooms, the jasmine perfuming the monsoon air, the geranium blazing crimson against the green, a living testament to little hands that learned, early, to give back to the earth.

Parents' Orientation on Mental Health & Parent - Teacher Meeting

"At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents" - Jane D. Hull



On July 4th, the school conducted a parents' orientation on mental health for Classes I to VI in the auditorium from 8:30 to 10:00 AM. Led by the school counsellor, the session focused on addressing academic struggles stemming from poor habits at home rather than a lack of learning ability. Framing education as a collaborative effort, she emphasised that academic success hinges on a child's emotional, mental, and physical wellbeing. Parents were guided to build independence through simple bedtime routines, ensuring 9 to 11 hours of sleep, with a strict screen - free bedtime by 8:30 or 9:00 PM, to serve healthy, homecooked food, and to replace generic questions with emotionally meaningful ones, such as asking for a daily highlight. The speaker advised against comparing children to others, exposing them to early screen time that drives anxiety and aggression, or harshly labelling learning difficulties. Instead, parents were encouraged to reach out for school counselling

support. To ensure consistency between home and school, the importance of building self reliance and maintaining daily hygiene habits, such as bathing regularly, wearing a clean uniform, and carrying a handkerchief, was emphasised. Following the orientation, the first Parent - Teacher Meeting (PTM) of the 2026 - 27 academic session was held after the completion of Unit Tests I, which ran from June 22 to 26. At the meeting, parents were encouraged to give equal attention to their child's behaviour, manners, and social habits alongside exam performance, since all of these together shape a child's overall growth and development. They were also reminded that even a single day's absence creates a gap in academic sessions, so superfluous taking of leave must be avoided.

The interactions were warm and productive, with most parents expressing satisfaction with the school and its facilities. One exchange captured the morning's theme: the teacher of Divyansh Bhandari, a Class I student, noted that while he participates willingly in school activities and behaves well in the dining hall, he is often distracted in class and tend to rush through his work. His parents shared that hearing different languages at home and excessive use of mobile phones confuse him, leading to frustration and anger, presenting for everyone a real life example of the session's message on limiting screen exposure and keeping home routines steady.

The day closed with a shared understanding that raising a happy, disciplined, and confident learner is an ongoing collaborative effort, one that begins at home and is strengthened in the classroom.

Health Talk by Dr Rohit Srivastava

"Tokeepthebodyingoodhealthisaduty" - Buddha



Good health is the foundation on which every child builds their dreams. Dr Rohit Srivastava, a principal consultant and paediatrician with over 23 years of experience, conducted an interactive health awareness session for our students of Classes II to VI and Navjeevan 8 on 31st July.

He carefully explained the importance of hygiene, hydration and healthy eating in preventing everyday illnesses to students. He went on to explain the benefits of simple everyday habits like washing hands with soap for 20 seconds, covering their mouth while coughing, and drinking clean, filtered water, and was pleased to see students eagerly engaging with questions throughout the talk. He taught students the importance of adequate hydration, a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables, and timely deworming and the manner in which these could prevent common problems like stomach infections and low appetite. Dr Srivastava lovingly reminded students to avoid junk food and eat homemade meals, reiterating the popular saying that an apple a day keeps the doctor away.

The session then moved into an animated question and answer round, where children shared their own health concerns, from leg pain and headaches to coughs and tooth pain, and Dr Srivastava patiently addressed each one with practical, personalised advice. He gently nudged students to notice their own habits, whether it was screen time affecting headaches or milk at night causing tummy troubles, and encouraged them to consult a doctor rather than self medicate whenever symptoms persisted.

The session concluded with a vote of thanks by the school Principal who asked

students to carry forward the day's lessons on hygiene, nutrition, and hydration into their everyday lives.

Inter School Competitions

"The important thing is not to win, but to take part" - Pierre de Coubertin



Chess Competition

Ashutosh Singh (XII A), Vansh Gupta (XII A), Anuj (X B), and Himani (X A), represented our school at an Inter School Chess Competition held at The Doon School on July 24. Competing against 48 young players from 11 schools across Dehradun and Mussoorie, the PYDS team gained its first experience of an external indoor sports competition. Across six rounds of rapid chess format (15 min + 5 sec), the team secured one win in the fourth round and one draw in the fifth. This was the first time our students participated in an external indoor games competition.

This was the first time our students participated in an external indoor games competition. Although the team was not among the winners, the tournament proved to be a valuable experience in strategic thinking and game technique. Beyond strategy, it instilled in them the discipline, camaraderie, and fair play that define chess, lessons that will stand them in good stead in future competitions.



English Debate Competition

Lavindar Singh (XII C), Alakh Thapli (X B), and Tanishka Thapli (X A) participated in the 4th 'Chintan Pravah' Inter School English Debate Competition held at the Shigally Hill International Academy on July 25. The competition followed a 'for and against' format, with topics assigned on the spot via a chit system.

Speaking on the topic "If AI had been used, the Middle East conflict would have been solved," our students got practice in oratory skills, structured arguments, and critical rebuttals, building their ability to think on their feet and present a case with conviction. All three received participation certificates, and Alakh earned positive recognition from the judges for his dynamic stage presence.



Poem Recitation Competition

Thirteen students from Classes I to V represented PYDS at "Time to Rhyme," an Inter School Poem Recitation Competition held on July 25 at OASIS School, alongside young poets from 15 prominent schools across Dehradun. Performances were organised around three themes: Inspirational for Classes I - II, Famous Personalities for Classes III - IV, and Social Awareness for Class V, with students presenting both solo and group recitations.

For most of our students, this marked their debut on an external stage. Although the school did not win, the experience helped them develop confidence, sharpen their expression, and grow more comfortable in performing before an audience.

Inter House Hindi & Social Studies Competition

"Progress in one's own language is the root of all progress" - Bharatendu

Harishchandra



To refine their soft skills such as communication, critical thinking, and problem solving, and to give students a space to share, argue, and defend their viewpoints, an Inter House Hindi/Social Studies Competition was organised on July 4.

With Hindi as the medium, and patriotism and social themes at its heart, the contest ran in four sections as below:

Students of Classes I to III recited patriotic poems such as 'Jhansi Ki Rani', 'Pushp Ki Abhilasha' and 'Bharat' with remarkable confidence.

Classes IV, V, and Navjeevan participated in a declamation contest where students dressed in costumes reflecting their topics, such as Education Ministers, and spoke on 'My Country, My Responsibility.'

Classes VI to VIII competed in essay writing, while Classes IX to XII debated the Indian electoral system, nuclear power and capital punishment.

The results came down to the wire; Gulmohar (Blue) House won with Kachnar (Red) House by just one point.

The day instilled students with stronger voices, sharper minds and a keener view of the world around them.

School of Entrepreneurship Programme

"These secrets of getting ahead is getting started" - Mark Twain



"What do you want to do after school?" It sounds simple, but for many students it is the hardest question they have faced. To aid our students of Classes XI and XII in finding answers, PYDS collaborated with Udhyam to run the School of Entrepreneurship, a three month programme aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills of young people.

The programme commenced on 6th April with a panel of professionals, each of whom addressed the "what next" question in their own way.

Mr Raju Lal retired as a senior partner after 37 years at Ernst & Young, a global professional services network headquartered in London, England. Having failed the CA entrance three times, he told students it is never too late to make a shift, and to always seek a mentor who would provide timely guidance and counsel. "Money is a by product," he said. "Becoming a better person is the goal."

Mr Jeevan Dangwal dropped out of his village school in Class IX owing to the family's difficult conditions. He began his career by washing dishes at an adventure camp. Over time, he astutely learnt the ropes of this business and went on to set up his own adventure camp near his village. Not one to rest on his success, he then incubated Ghasyari Homestays, which has grown into a village women led, community owned rural tourism initiative in Sunkiya village near Mukteshwar, Uttarakhand.

He explained that while entrepreneurship demands tackling significant odds and risks, creating employment for 15 - 20 people in your own village is a reward no employment can match. Students engaged actively throughout; Priya (XII A) stood out for questioning on the role of women in his Ghasyari Programme, exactly the kind of critical thinking the programme hopes to build.

Ms Swara Jayaram, a freelancer, addressed both the freedom and the financial unpredictability that come with freelancing.

Mr Hemant Ghildiyal, the final speaker who went from employee to entrepreneur, challenged students to ask themselves three questions: Do you need freedom? Can you take risks? Can you think long term?

To put those very questions to the test, the programme then transitioned from inspiration to hands on execution. Twelve PYDS teams of five each pitched before the Udhyam panel on 6th May. Six teams - Naturich, NightBites, Solochef, Rooted Platter, Dhan Kothar, and Shot Sense advanced to a 45 day mentorship phase to transform their ideas into market ready products and services. Each team received a ₹3,000 grant from Udhyam, along with a ₹500 team contribution covered by the school on the students' behalf, to enable them to tangibly progress their entrepreneurial idea.

The programme concluded on 13th July at the Moravian Institute, Dehradun, with three participating schools, including PYDS. Six PYDS teams presented their final ideas and products to an independent jury, who evaluated them on clarity and effective presentation.

Team Naturich of Class XII C (Rishika Dhiman, Shivani Mandal, Tanisha Thakur, Sneha Kumari, and Tamanna Singh), mentored by our teachers, secured first place along with a cash prize of ₹10,000. Their 'Waste to Wealth' idea converts household kitchen waste like eggshells, tea leaves, and banana peels into a nutrient rich organic fertilizer, providing an effective solution to fight soil degradation caused by chemical fertilizers.

Taking second place and receiving a prize of ₹5,000, Team NightBites of XII B (Ambika Negi, Karan Kumar, Khushi Thapli, Pratibha Thapa, and Rohit Chauhan) initially had to resell leftover restaurant food to students, until field surveys revealed that with commercial gas so expensive, restaurants waste nothing. Guided by their mentor, Col. Abhishek Mamgain, they pivoted to buying surplus meals from local tiffin services and homemakers, collecting and quality checking these, then delivering them the same night at subsidised rates to single dwellers and PG residents nearby. The entire operation was run through two WhatsApp groups, with the evening's menu broadcast daily and orders closing at a fixed cut-off. Their three day pilot onboarded two food providers, served four engineers, and earned a profit. Post board examinations, the winning teams will move on to an optional next phase to turn their ideas into complete, market ready business plans.

Beyond the prizes, students left with something far more precious: first hand experience that ideas can fail, surveys sting, plans change, and the ultimate skill is what you do next.

We look to our young minds to build on their learnings in the years ahead.

Outdoor Learning: Bird Watching and Nature Walk

"In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks"

- John Muir



On the morning of July 16th, 49 students of Class VI set out for a bird watching and nature walk at Purkal village. The group departed at 8:30 AM, eager to spend the morning immersed in the natural world around them. Designed as an experiential learning activity, the walk aimed to sharpen the students' skills of observation, enquiry, and scientific thinking by taking learning beyond the classroom. Along with four teachers, the group was guided by Sachin Bhaiya, a PYDS alumnus whose familiarity with local trails and birdlife added special depth to the experience.

As the students made their way through the village, the trail came alive with discovery. With guidance, students were able to identify a total of 28 birds, identifying varieties such as the Himalayan bulbul, red vented bulbul, jungle babbler, red rumped swallow, brown headed barbet, and sunbirds. Fluttering alongside them were butterflies such as the common Mormon, common tiger, and cabbage white. Particularly fascinating was the touch-me-not (*Mimosa pudica*), whose leaves fold shut at the slightest touch, a lesson in plant defence mechanisms.

What made the walk truly enriching was how naturally it wove together learning across subjects. Science came alive through bird identification, food chains, and adaptation; Mathematics found its place in counting species, estimating distances, and organising data into tables and graphs; English was practised through descriptive and report writing; Social Science surfaced in discussions on human environment interaction; and Art found expression in nature inspired sketching. During a presentation held in the auditorium on August 10th, students spoke about their observations and reflected on how everything in nature is connected. The experience left them with a deeper appreciation of local biodiversity, a clearer understanding of ecological relationships, as well as a genuine respect for the role

every creature plays in the environment, and a growing sense of responsibility toward protecting it.

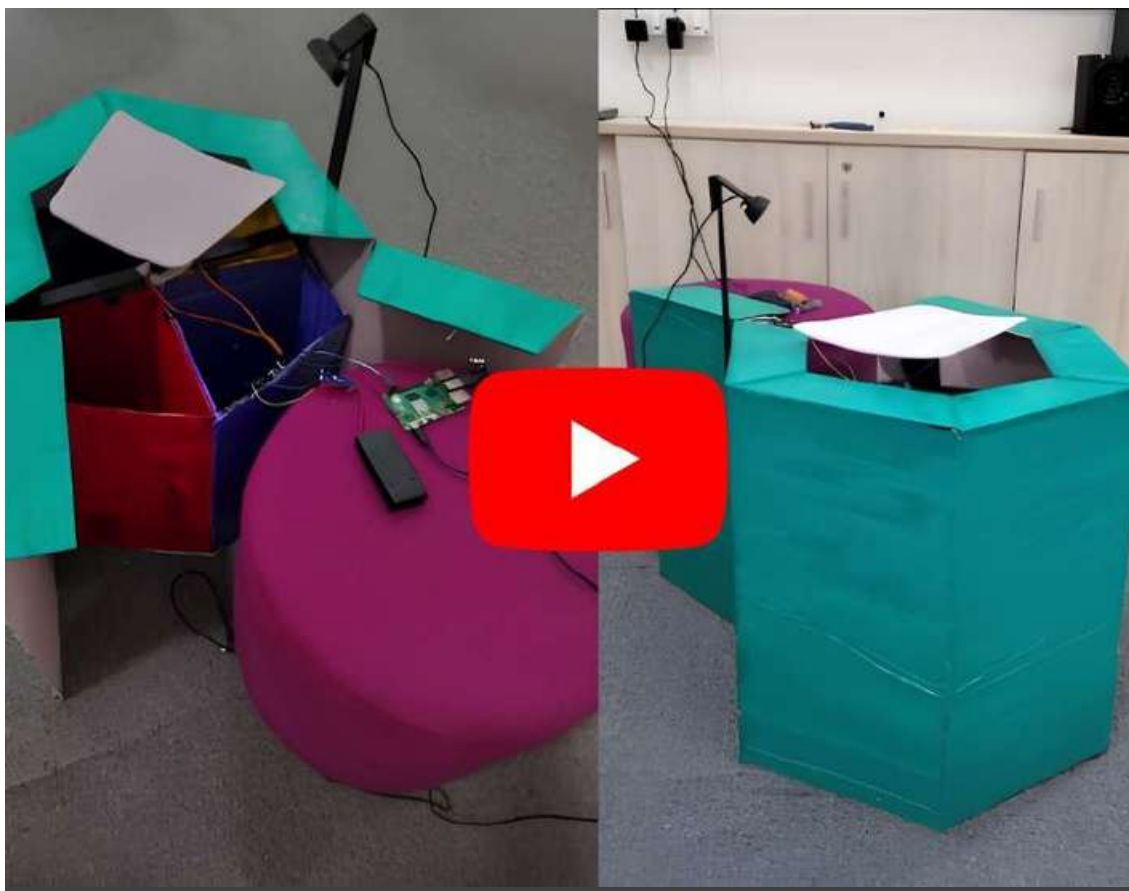
tGELF (The Global Education & Leadership Foundation) Illumina Climate Action Challenge

"We won't have a society if we destroy the environment" - Margaret Mead



The tGELF Climate Action Challenge, in partnership with Illumina, a global leader in genomics, is a national competition that aims to enhance education on climate change and its impact on the planet and communities. It encourages students to build prototype based solutions to real world sustainability challenges using STEM and biotechnology, promoting innovation, critical thinking, and the green economy. Students could work on any of the Sustainable Development Goals to create a prototype that benefits the community or improves its economy and livelihood. A team of five students from Class XI, Gunjan, Tanisha, Komal, Manav and Daksh Kukreti, developed the 'I - Bin', a smart AI - powered dustbin designed for hospitals. Using an image recognition camera, the system identifies the type of waste and automatically directs it into the correct compartment, segregating biodegradable, recyclable, and landfill materials as well as sharp objects. This reduces the health risks faced by sanitation workers who otherwise handle hazardous waste manually. The prototype was built in the school's Tinkering lab.

The project was selected for the National Finals, held online on 3rd July. 11 schools from across the country competed, and the PYDS team secured 3rd position. Our hearty congratulations to the participating students, and a big acknowledgement to the teachers and tinkering mentors for their steadfast guidance and encouragement. It was a commendable collaborative effort.



We are proud of Priyanka Purwal (PYDS batch 2012 - 13)

*Invest time in learning a skill purely for yourself; it is the ultimate gift of
independence, fulfilment, and happiness.*



Priyanka Purwal, a 2012 - 13 alumna, belongs to a family of five who live in Tehri Garhwal, a hill district in Uttarakhand. Her mother is a homemaker, and her father, now retired, used to run a grocery store. She joined PYDS in Class VI and later pursued a Bachelor's degree in Commerce from IGNOU alongside a cosmetology course at VLCC, Dehradun. She began her professional career as a makeup artist in 2015. Today, she is a Dehradun based freelance makeup artist and hairstylist, with credits in feature films and TV commercials for brands like Pulsar, Ford, JW Marriott, Dabur, and Warner Music, while simultaneously running her own academy. Reflecting on her journey, Priyanka shares:

"When I joined PYDS in Class VI, I was a shy student. School taught me discipline, resilience, and self awareness and one lesson that has stayed with me: to seek is to

speaking. Winning the essay writing competition remains my proudest school achievement, and the Rajasthan trip built my independence, confidence, and problem solving skills. I still share a remarkably close bond with my batchmates.

My first job as a makeup artist taught me punctuality and public relations. Today, my work takes me across India, and in the next five years I see myself opening multiple branches of my academy. To me, makeup isn't merely about adding layers to your face; it is an extension of self-care, a celebration of how you honour yourself from the inside out.

To my juniors: investing time in learning a skill purely for yourself is the ultimate gift of fulfilment and happiness. Along with exam scores, the hobbies you throw yourself into today are often where you discover your true strengths.

PYDS doesn't focus on academics alone; it pays individual attention to every child and takes complete care of every student, from health and nutrition to emotional well-being. To me, PYDS is much more than a school; it feels like a family and a lifelong friend."

Donate to spread smiles!



"As we progress through the year, we are ever so grateful to our donors and well wishers for believing in our students and motivating them."

Purkal Youth Development Society
Purkal Village
PO: Bhagwantpur
Dehradun, 248009
INDIA