

## 75th Republic Day Celebrations

**Bandra, Mumbai, 26th January, 2024 :** On the 26th of January, 2024, India celebrated 75 years of being a republic. The grand Republic Day celebrations were held at the scenic Bandra Bandstand, Mumbai. After 8 glorious years of the Republic Day parade, the Bandra Inter-School Republic Day (B.I.R.D) committee decided to have a bigger and better parade in 2024 after a gap of 2 years, and so ideas, principals of the city's schools, civic authorities, the armed forces and meticulous planning converged to honour our wonderful nation, appreciate her Armed Forces and jointly celebrate 75 years since the Republic of India came into existence from 26th January, 1950 onwards.

The theme for this year was “ Rekindling patriotism”. The general approach was aimed at encouraging students to unite and take an avid interest in the development of our motherland by lighting the fire of patriotism in their hearts. Vice Admiral Rajaram Swaminathan AVSM, NM who is the director of General Naval Projects of India unfurled the tricolour and took the significant salute. At precisely 7am, the Indian tricolour unfurled in all her splendour. The national anthem was played, with every Indian present standing at attention with pride. Two minutes of silence was observed with the sombre “Last Post” being played to pay homage to the sacrifices of the brave martyrs of the armed forces who laid their lives for our protection. A short felicitation ceremony commenced with Mr. Peter D'souza, the director of B.I.R.D giving a speech encouraging every student and member of the audience to wholeheartedly partake in the festivities of the national day in order to celebrate the laborious occupations of our courageous soldiers. Fr. Jude Fernandes, Principal of St. Mary's High School (S.S.C) and convenor of B.I.R.D advised every child to gain an insight into the difficult lives of the soldiers by interacting with them and thereby, receiving inspiration from their arduous endeavours for our protection and safety. The wives of many army personnel were honoured with handmade shawls for their singlehanded support that contributed to their husband's professional lives for the purpose of serving the nation. After that, the parade began. The articulate emcees guided the audience on the significance of the day and introduced them to the schools. 21 schools participated with 1200 students marching in the parade. Every educational institution came forth and showcased

their love for the nation by synchronising the steps to the beats of the band. The smart uniforms and the choreographed march-pasts of the students were a thrilling sight to behold. In an impressive finale, the Assam regiment marched in full nationalist fervour. The student teachers of St. Xavier's Institute of Education were invited to be a part of the majestic celebration by Fr. Norbert, Principal of Holy Cross High School, Kurla and alumni of the college. They were given the duties of assisting the schools in carrying out their tasks, handing out refreshments etc while also learning about the manner in which national festivals are celebrated at the school level.

After the parade, a cultural program was presented before the Chief Guest and general audience. National songs were danced on by different groups in order to exhibit the cultural prowess of our diverse country. A stall was set up to motivate young students to become "Agniveers". Simultaneously, the defence forces displayed their arms and ammunition in order to spread information to the civilians about the functioning of the Army, Navy and Air Force. The Assam regiment made the onlookers speechless with their knowledge of the variety of modern equipment that they displayed. The MARCOS officers of the INS Abhimanyu, stationed at Mumbai informed the students about the advanced technological means they employed to keep us safe. Their weapons, drones and vehicles were enough to arouse a patriotic essence in each person. The subcommander soldiers were adorned in full protective gear. They were so popular that civilians of all ages wanted to get captured with them ! The student teachers were also given the duty to assist the crowd to interact with the armed personnel.



The spectacular event concluded with an INS helicopter patrolling the skies. The charismatic pilot unfurled the Indian flag from the cockpit and waved enthusiastically to the enthralled viewers. Students and teachers were given snack boxes courtesy of the Taj Lands End team. Truly, the B.I.R.D organisation made amazing arrangements that resulted in every citizen present there feeling the pride attached to our motherland resonate in our hearts and motivated each one to contribute back to her by gaining inspiration from the magnificent efforts of our splendid armed forces.

The student teachers express their gratitude to the Principal of St.Xavier's Institute of Education, Dr. Andrea Coutinho for the opportunity to be a part of a magnificent national event. Heartfelt thanks is also expressed to Dr. Bijoy Thomas under whose able guidance the student teachers were able to successfully partake in the Republic Day celebrations. It was a delightful learning experience that allowed the student teachers of F.Y.B.Ed (2023-25) to feel the pulse of the nation while also striving to deliver justice to their vocations as future educators !



- By student teacher, Ms. Jaclyn Rocha  
(Roll.no 40, F.Y.B.Ed 2023-25)