



# The Kazhakootam Bulletin

A newsletter of the Old Boys Association, Sainik School | March 2026

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Kazhaks,  
**THIS EDITION OF** *The Kazhakootam Bulletin* arrives at a time when the Kazhak spirit is finding new and energising expressions. The past months have seen alumni reunite with a shared purpose in ways that gladden the heart.

The inaugural Kazhak Bike Ride to Ooty brought together 29 riders across batches for a journey through mountain roads and winding ghats, and more importantly, for the camaraderie that only Kazhaks can conjure around a campfire.

Hot on its heels came the Kazhak Book Club, which held its pilot session in March. Fifty members registered and 15 gathered in Thiruvananthapuram for an evening of discussion and reflection; the conversation has already spilled well beyond the pages of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

It is early days, but the appetite is clearly there. I also wish to place on record our gratitude to C.K. Thampy (116/1968) for generously sponsoring the venue for this inaugural evening.

A special mention must go to the "Careers SSKZM OBA" initiative, something I believe deserves far greater attention than it typically receives. What began as a modest job-sharing forum has grown, under the quiet and dedicated stewardship of Rajookrishnan (563/1974), into a living resource of over 400 members. It offers everything from career guidance and scholarship updates to insights on emerging fields and alumni transitions. Rajookrishnan brings over four decades of expertise as a

career researcher and counsellor to this effort. The Old Boys Association is deeply grateful for his commitment, which is freely given to the fraternity. I encourage every Kazhak who is not yet part of this platform to join without delay.

This edition also features news of batch reunions, alumni achievements, promotions, and new beginnings; each a reminder of how full and varied the lives of our fraternity members are. We remember with sorrow those who have left us, and extend our warmest wishes to those who have welcomed new life into their families.

Quietly underway alongside these visible initiatives is an effort that will serve generations of Kazhaks long after us — the digitisation of the complete run of *The Cadet*, our school's annual magazine. Significant progress has been made, but gaps remain. If you have an old copy tucked away somewhere, it may be exactly what the archive needs.

The Old Boys Association grows stronger with every Kazhak who steps forward — as a member, a volunteer, or simply as someone who shares news and stays connected. If you have not yet enrolled as a member, I warmly invite you to do so. If you are already a member, please consider lending your time and skills to make this association even more vibrant. There is always room for one more Kazhak at the table.

My sincere thanks go to B Pradeep Nair (1159/1982) and the editorial team for putting this edition together with their characteristic care and dedication.

Jai Hind!

K M Breeze Antony  
Roll No 1940/1989 Batch  
President, SSKZM OBA

# Mapping future for every Kazhak



**IN AN AGE** where information is abundant but reliable guidance is rare, the OBA has quietly built something remarkable: a living resource on careers and education for our entire alumni community.

From parents of school-going children to senior professionals contemplating their next move, "Careers SSKZM OBA" has become the digital heartbeat of professional growth for the fraternity. If you are not yet a part of it, you are missing out on one of the most vibrant chapters of our collective story.

## **MODEST BEGINNING**

It all began as a forum for sharing job leads. Within this rich network, the possibility of one Kazhak opening a door for another has always been a cherished hallmark of our bond. Starting with a small circle of 30, the platform has grown organically into a community of over 400 members. This evolution was shaped significantly by Rajookrishnan (563/1974), a career researcher and counsellor with over four decades of expertise. Under his stewardship, and supported by contributing Kazhaks who share information voluntarily, the platform has transcended being a mere job board to become a panoramic window into the world of work.

## **PORTFOLIO OF OPPORTUNITIES**

On any given day, the Careers SSKZM OBA feed offers a wealth of curated intelligence, including:

- **Employment:** Listings ranging from government apprenticeships and entry-level roles to senior leadership and post-retirement opportunities.
- **Academia:** Notifications for competitive school exams, medical/engineering entrances, civil services, and research fellowships.
- **Upskilling:** Updates on professional courses, scholarships, internships, and university admissions.
- **Trends:** Expert analysis on emerging technology, AI in the workplace, and national education policy shifts.
- **Well-being:** Thoughtful articles on student mental health and exam preparation strategies.

## **'RISING TIDE' PHILOSOPHY**

The true strength of this initiative lies in the "Kazhak way" — the belief that a rising tide lifts all boats. A single day's posts might simultaneously assist a parent researching options for a child and a retired officer seeking a meaningful new engagement.

Every member acts as a curator, spotting a notification in the morning paper or a corporate circular and passing it on to the brotherhood. "It is a testament to what this community can do when it chooses to give freely and generously to one another," says the OBA leadership.

## **JOIN THE MOVEMENT**

Rajookrishnan and the contributing team invite all alumni to engage with the platform. If you are already a member, we encourage you to view it not just as a stream of notifications, but as a daily gift from one Kazhak to another.

## Alumni literary contributions: Detours, drills, DNA

**FOUR ALUMNI PUBLISHED** books recently. *Five Uniforms — A Life Forged in Detours*, written by **Joshi Paul Veliyath (746/1977)** was released on March 6, 2026, at St. Mary's Forane Church, Koratty, under the chairmanship of Very Rev. Fr. Johnson Kakkattu.

The inaugural copy was received by Prof. Dr. Jojo Nalappat, Vice Chairman of the Church and Regional Director, Sreenarayanaguru Open University, Kollam.

"The book is a tribute to the values instilled in me at SSKZM, the discipline of the IAF, the complexities of the banking world, the challenges of leading KSFE, and the peace I find today in the soil of Koratty," says the author.

**Lt Cdr Ajay Jayakrishnan (Retd) (3599/2004, NDA 112 Course)**, has authored a book *Military Heroes to Corporate Managers*, which serves as an essential roadmap

for military personnel transitioning into the civilian workforce. It offers strategies to help veterans translate their unique skill sets into corporate success.

It's available on Amazon via this link: <https://amzn.in/d/cBZyk6e>

**Prabhasudhan S (3577/2004)** has recently published his book, *Greedy Primates: How Our Primitive Instincts Are Running — and Ruining — the Modern World*. The book explores how ancient human instincts continue to shape modern behaviour, drawing insights from evolutionary biology, psychology, and neuroscience.

**Lt Col Thomas Joseph (Retd) (1089/1981)** has written a book based on the life of his father and captain of M V *Kairali*, Mariadas Joseph. The ship disappeared in 1979. **(Details of the release of this book are on page 12.)**

# Wheels of Brotherhood

## Inaugural Kazhak Bike Ride to Ooty



**From mountain ghats to the Madras Regimental Centre, a memorable endurance and nostalgia trip**

**THE OLD BOYS'** Association scripted history with its first-ever bike ride to Ooty from 16 to 18 January 2026. Twenty-nine Kazhak riders from different batches converged on the Nilgiris in what became a truly memorable experience for our fraternity.

Led by Appumon Joseph K (2633/1996), three groups set out simultaneously from Bengaluru, Kochi, and Sultan Bathery on 16 January. The journey through scenic mountain roads and winding ghats was as memorable as the destination itself, with *chai* breaks and roadside meals becoming opportunities for bonding across batches.

### **MADRAS REGIMENTAL CENTRE**

The riders were hosted at the Ratan Tata Officers' Holiday Home, with Lt Col Premji Anand (2828/97) serving as the gracious host at Ooty. Lt Col Shelley K Das (Retd) (2689/96) assisted coordination as the EC representative. Together, the three Kazhaks ensured seamless execution of the meticulously planned itinerary.

The highlight was the visit to the legendary Madras Regimental Centre, where Brig Krishnendu Das, Commandant MRC, and his team extended exceptional hospitality. The Quarter Guard reception and tour left the riders deeply moved. Lt Gen V T Mathew (1569/1985), himself from the Madras Regiment, blessed the initiative, making the visit even more meaningful.

### **FUN AND REVELRY**

Lunch at the historic Wellington Gymkhana Club, established in 1873, added a touch of heritage and exclusivity to the experience. But it was the campfire evenings, with songs, dance, and stories flowing late into the night, that truly embodied the Kazhak spirit. Each batch's "claims to fame" at the social evening revealed how deeply we all cherish our school days.

This maiden ride proved that the Kazhak bond transcends time, distance, and age. It has set the template for more such initiatives that strengthen our brotherhood and create lasting memories.

# The written word and beyond

## The Kazhak Book Club



**THE KAZHAK BOOK** Club held its pilot event at Trivandrum Club on 14 March 2026. The idea was simple: bring together old boys who love books, and give them a reason to read together.

This comes on the heels of the Kazhak Trek and the Kazhak Bike Ride; initiatives that have opened up new spaces for old boys across generations to reconnect through shared adventure. The Book Club now takes that spirit into a different terrain — the world of ideas, imagination, and the written word.

### A DEMOCRATIC START

The journey began weeks before the event. A book was democratically selected by the group — Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* — and the reading began. What followed was something no one quite anticipated. The WhatsApp group came alive with observations, arguments, and reflections.

Deadlines, it turned out, were the best motivators — many joined because they wanted to be pushed into reading, and the club obliged. Over 50 members have since registered into the Kazhak Book Club — a testimony to the appetite that existed, waiting to be tapped.

### INAUGURAL SESSION

On 14 March 2026, 15 members gathered at the Trivandrum Club for the inaugural session. Distances and prior commitments kept a few away, but those who made it more than made up for it.

The evening opened with a warm welcome and introduction by the lead and the moderator, Aravindan S S (3895/2006) followed by a screening of *Fruitvale Station* — a film thematically resonant with the book,

and a thoughtful addition that set the mood for what was to follow. After a tea break, the discussion began — each member introducing themselves, sharing how they first entered the world of reading and writing, and where that journey had taken them.

What emerged was a wonderfully eclectic gathering — school principals, professors, defence officers, entrepreneurs, IT professionals, NGO activists, homemakers, and librarians — all bound by a common love for words and ideas. The discussion was rich, unhurried, and occasionally animated.

### CHARTING THE FUTURE

The group then turned to the future — charting the direction of the club, its rhythm, and its possibilities, including the potential to expand into film, music, painting, and other artistic forms under a common umbrella.

The evening ended with a sumptuous dinner, punctuated with music and good cheer.

The club is deeply grateful to C K Thampy (116/1968) who generously sponsored the venue, a gesture that gave the inaugural evening the setting it deserved.

The Kazhak Book Club is open to all old boys who share a love for the written word — and the unwritten conversations that follow. We warmly invite you to be part of this journey. (<https://forms.gle/FyTB9Jm1pa3KRCox6>)

The Kazhak Book Club has taken its first step. We hope it opens doors — not just to great books, but to wider and deeper associations between like-minded old boys across generations and geographies.

# Kazhaks ace Kochi half-marathon



Notably, the running contingent included one of the girl cadets of the batch, highlighting the inclusive spirit of the 2025 graduates.

## IMPRESSIVE TIMING

The race itself proved the enduring physical fitness of the group, with results that speak to their rigorous training at school. Every single runner completed the half-marathon in under three hours. While the timings were impressive, the group

**DEMONSTRATING THAT THE** spirit of discipline and camaraderie forged at school remains unbreakable, the 2025 batch of Kazhaks participated in the G-Tech Half-Marathon held at Infopark, Kochi, on 15 February 2026.

Organised by the Group of Technological Companies in Kerala, the event saw 12 members of the batch converge from across the State. Setting off from various boarding points, the Kazhaks reunited in Kochi for the event they had been waiting for months. The gathering was hosted at a batchmate's residence, serving as a base for a weekend of nostalgia and reconnection.

The participation was not limited to those hitting the track; the reunion was bolstered by other batchmates who travelled to Kochi simply to support their peers.

emphasised that discipline and the "bond of the uniform" were the true motivators.

## BEYOND THE FINISHING LINE

Following the early morning run, the group spent the afternoon exploring the vibrant sights of Kochi before returning to their respective homes, colleges, and institutes.

For these Kazhaks, such sporting events have become more than just a fitness goal; they are a vital excuse to stay connected.

With the Kochi event successfully held, the batch is already looking towards their next challenge. As one participant noted, "This is only the beginning. Our eyes are already on the next one."

# Olympian Sreejesh visits school

**IN A MOMENTOUS** event, our school on 21 February 2026 welcomed two-time Olympic medallist and Indian hockey legend, P R Sreejesh, to its campus.

The celebrated goalkeeper, instrumental in India's consecutive bronze medal wins at the Tokyo and Paris Olympics, spent the day engaging with cadets, faculty, and staff. The campus was charged with patriotic fervour as the sporting icon shared insights from his illustrious career.

Addressing the Assembly, Sreejesh drew a poignant parallel between the life of an athlete and that of a soldier. He noted that the rigorous discipline ingrained in the cadets serves as a foundation for national service, be it on the battlefield or displayed on the hockey turf.

The visit has left a lasting impression on the budding Kazhaks, reinforcing the school's ethos of excellence and dedication to the nation.

Lineesh Nadukkudi (2758/1998) was instrumental in coordinating this visit; and as follow-up, hockey infrastructure investments in the school will receive increased attention.



# 1998 Batch power: Gandhara Hockey Club takes the field



Left to Right: Ajay Krishnan (4315/2010), Arjun Narayanan (4421/2011), Achudanand (3644/2004), Robert S (3481/2004), Lineesh N (2758/1998), Sukumar Hariharan (3603/2004), Anshad A A (4409/2011), Arun S (3550/2004).

The club is the brainchild and efforts of Lineesh Nadukkudi (2758/1998). A former member of the school's South Zone Championship-winning team, Lineesh continues to fly the Kazhak flag high.

Currently based in Qatar, where he competes in the Qatar Hockey Federation League for LIONS Hockey Club, Lineesh recently returned to Kerala to represent Ernakulam district in the Kerala Masters Tournament on 14 February.

Gandhara recently made a resounding statement on the national stage by clinching a prestigious title in Wardha, Maharashtra. It proves that the "winning

translates into formidable competitive excellence at a national level.

## SECURING THE FUTURE

Crucially, Gandhara is ensuring that the current crop of school students isn't left behind. The club recently facilitated the registration of SSKZM with the Trivandrum Hockey Association. This allows our cadets to compete in official tournaments. This year, exam schedules narrowly prevented our Sub-Junior teams from playing in the recent district championships, a pathway to representing the Trivandrum team at the state level.

As Gandhara Hockey Club continues its journey, it remains committed to mentoring the next generation, ensuring that every promising young player has a jersey, a team, and a clear shot at glory.

**THE OBA REUNION** in 2025 will be remembered for many things, but perhaps its most enduring legacy is the historic revival of hockey matches between the school team and the alumni.

After several years of hiatus, more than 40 members coordinated via WhatsApp to organise practice sessions at the school and GV Raja.

That match on Old Boys Day reignited a dormant passion, resulting in the formation of the Gandhara Hockey Club.

## VISION BEYOND SCHOOL GATES

While deeply rooted in the spirit of the 1998 batch, the club has quickly "spread its wings" far beyond a local project. Officially registered with Kerala Hockey through the Trivandrum Hockey Association, Gandhara was founded to address the lack of competitive match experience available in the state.

The club's impact is built upon three strategic pillars:

- **Talent Incubation:** Providing young athletes with the platform and tournament exposure needed to reach the next level.
- **Grassroots Development:** Organising intensive coaching camps, including upcoming summer sessions this April in collaboration with Ernakulam and Malappuram Hockey.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Working closely with Kerala Hockey to ensure the sport thrives across all age demographics.





## 67ers' annual reunion: A maritime journey to Ezhimala

**THE 1967 BATCH** continued their cherished tradition of annual reunions with a vibrant family get-together in Kannur. From 7 to 10 February, 18 batchmates and their spouses gathered at the Krishna Beach Resort for three nights of nostalgia and connection.

A significant highlight of this year's gathering was a visit to the prestigious Indian Naval Academy at Ezhimala. The group was warmly received by a fellow Kazhak, Capt. Murali Krishna (3363/2002), who graciously hosted the alumni and provided an insightful tour of the sprawling

campus. During the tour, the 67ers had the pleasure of meeting two instructors who are proud former students of our school; and nine cadets currently undergoing training at the Academy, carrying forward the Kazhak spirit.

It was a heartening experience for the senior batch to interact with the younger generation of officers and cadets, witnessing firsthand how the values of our alma mater continue to flourish at one of Asia's premier naval training institutes.



## 2K10 Legends Reunite in Wayanad

**THE CLASS OF 2010 (2K10 Legends)** marked a significant milestone in December 2025 as they reunited after 15 years. Held from 19 to 21 December 2025 at Vythiri in Wayanad, the gathering served as a powerful testament to the enduring bond of the Kazhak fraternity.

The reunion brought together 55 alumni from across various regions, along with their families.

The classmates spent hours sharing life updates and

revisiting stories from their school days. The inclusion of families added a special dimension to the event, ensuring that the wider Kazhak family remains connected across generations.

The reunion concluded on a high note of celebration and shared history.

As the batch departed the hills of Wayanad, they left with a reaffirmed commitment to the brotherhood that began in the corridors of Kazhakootam 15 years ago.



## Golden jubilee: Kazhaks of '76 relive the glory in Munnar

**IN A HEART-WARMING** celebration of a journey that began over half a century ago, the Kazhaks of the 1976 batch gathered at The Leaf Munnar Resort from 11 to 14 February 2026 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of their passing out from the school.

Thirty-eight alumni, accompanied by their families, converged in the misty hills of Munnar to honour the bond forged at the school's campus in 1969. The four-day event was a poignant blend of military tradition, nostalgia, and spirited camaraderie.

The reunion kicked off with a crisp march past. Donning their uniforms once more, the veteran Kazhaks saluted and marched with the same precision and pride that defined their youth at SSKZM.

Reflecting the school's diverse heritage, the school anthem was rendered with gusto every day in Malayalam, Hindi, and English, serving as a powerful reminder of the batch's shared roots.

The energy remained high throughout the meet with skits, dances, and a lively talent show. Spirited inter-house competitions saw the ladies often outsmarting the gents, much to the amusement of the gathering.

Beyond the formal events, the reunion was defined by morning walks, shared stories over fine food and beverages, and quiet moments of reflection to honour the memory of departed batchmates.

As the celebrations coincided with Valentine's Day, the Kazhaks surprised the ladies with a graceful display of romance, proving that the old soldiers still have a few tricks up their sleeves.

To mark this historic milestone, the batch released an e-book, a curated collection of life stories, anecdotes, and rare photographs documenting their 57-year journey from young cadets to seasoned veterans.

"Fifty years on, we are still Kazhak '76 — greyer perhaps, but as united as ever."

The event concluded with the familiar, rousing sentiment that defines every alumnus of the institution: Once Kazhak – Always Kazhak!

## Online meet with teacher-couple

**ON CHRISTMAS DAY** 2025, a heartwarming virtual gathering brought together generations of Kazhaks for a very special occasion. Organised by Vijay Paul (1769/1987), a Google Meet was held to facilitate a Christmas exchange between old students and the school's first teacher-couple, Mr N G Thomas and Mrs Mary Thomas. There was an enthusiastic turnout of alumni from around the world. For many, it was a rare opportunity to reconnect with the educators who played

a foundational role in the history of Sainik School Kazhakootam.

Mr and Mrs Thomas expressed their immense joy at seeing their former students. They fondly recollected their years at the school, highlighting the special sense of family and belonging that defined the early days at SSKZM; and also how the bond between teachers and students has remained unbroken.

The session concluded with a warm exchange of Christmas blessings, leaving everyone with a sense of nostalgia and gratitude.



## Cadets once, brothers forever: '78-79 Buddies' Munnar GTG

**THE COUNTDOWN BEGAN** months ago with daily WhatsApp reminders and "Nostalgia Reloaded" photos. As many as 78 participants representing 43 families cleared their calendars for the much-anticipated "78-79 Buddies GTG". Held from 20 to 23 February 2026, the gathering at KTDC Tea County, Munnar, proved that the Kazhak bond only strengthens with time.

The alumni gathered in Ernakulam and boarded buses. The journey was enlivened by the soundtrack of vintage cadet mess classics like *Speedy Gonzalez* and *Lemon Tree*. Upon reaching the misty hills of Munnar, the next 48 hours were dedicated to "Us Time", carefully planned to bridge the decades since school.

### TALENT AND TRADITIONS

The evenings were alive with homegrown entertainment. The buddies and their spouses took to the stage for choreographed dances and soulful solos. A highlight was a meticulously scripted Ottamthullal, which featured good-natured, barbed digs at various batchmates. The merriment continued with a mock "battle of wits", a spoof on KBC, where participants in martial attire faced a volley of questions regarding "colourful" occurrences from their school days. The nights culminated around a bonfire, where party games and beverages ensured that the fun and laughter went

on uninterrupted. The itinerary also included a visit to 'Srishti', a charitable trust dedicated to the upliftment of persons with disabilities within Munnar's plantation community. The visit was a proud moment for the batch, as the venture is driven by the spouse of a fellow Kazhak.

For the return journey, the group split into two scenic routes: One was the 'Gap', a popular local tourist touchpoint showcasing Munnar's natural beauty; and the other was the Kochi Water Metro for a trip to Fort Kochi to explore the world-renowned Kochi Muziris Biennale art exhibition.

### STRENGTH OF THE SPOUSES

While the Old Boys provided the history, the success of the event rested squarely on the shoulders of their spouses.

From coordination and emceeing to photography and conduct of the various games, their contribution and independent camaraderie have been the secret ingredient allowing the batch to pull off successful back-to-back annual mega-reunions.

As the gathering concluded, the farewell embraces lingered longer than usual, a silent "Hasta La Vista" until the next rendezvous. With the spirit of brotherhood reaffirmed, the countdown for the 2027 GTG has already begun.



## 2006 Batch meets in Goa

**AROUND 20 MEMBERS** of the 2006 Batch gathered in Goa from 14 to 16 February 2026 for a reunion. Old boys from Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Kozhikode, Bengaluru, and Delhi attended. Uma, daughter of Mr N G Babu (Chemistry) and Ms Sandhya (Malayalam), the lone old girl of the batch, joined the get-together.

Lt Cdr Vishnu K V took charge of organising the stay and charting out the programme, which included a visit to the Naval Aviation Museum — where he himself serves as officer-in-charge — alongside other local attractions.



Pune reunion at 15 Maratha LI Officers' Mess hosted by the CO, Col Jithin Thomas (3681/2005) on 28 Dec 2025.



The OBA Chennai reunion (photo on the left) was organised by Col Sudeep Gangadharan, CO, 16 Madras Regiment, at Pallavaram on 11 January 2026. Alumni from the 1960s to the recent times attended. It was nostalgic, filled with shared memories, and laughter-filled conversations. The day was made extra special with the presence of the revered SVS Sir.

## APPOINTMENTS & PROMOTIONS

### Public Health Foundation of India faculty

**Jacob Eapen (142/1968)** has been appointed as an International Adjunct Faculty by the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI).

It marks a significant milestone, as he is the first person from Kerala to hold this position within the organisation.

A world-renowned paediatrician, Eapen has provided vital healthcare to over 60,000 Indo-Chinese refugees in the Philippines under the UNHCR.

For 20 years, he served on the board of the Washington Hospital Healthcare System in California, having been elected as Board President for a sixth time.

He also holds the rare distinction of being the first Indian to win a general election in Northern California during his tenure at Alameda County Health Services.

An alumnus of Thiruvananthapuram Medical College, his journey includes training at CMC Vellore, CMC Ludhiana, UC Berkeley, and an MD from Stanford University.

Eapen's professional credentials extend to serving as a

health adviser to the Government of Kerala and holding memberships on the boards of the California Hospital Association and the UC Berkeley School of Public Health. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he was at the forefront of efforts to expand ICU capacity and lead large-scale vaccination drives.

His lifetime of service has been recognised with numerous honours, including Asianet's Best Doctor Award, the Ellis Island Medal, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from Sainik School. Eapen's international recognition, which continues to elevate the Kazhak name on the global stage.

### IGCAR Director

**Sreekumar G Pillai (1526/1984)** assumed charge as the Director of the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Kalpakkam, on 1 January 2026.

He is the first Malayali to head this prestigious institution. With an illustrious career spanning over 35 years in India's nuclear establishment, he brings unparalleled expertise in spent fuel reprocessing, radioactive waste management, and back-end fuel cycle operations.

## APPOINTMENTS & PROMOTIONS

### South Indian Bank Part-time Chairman

**Jose Joseph Kattoor (1003/1980)** has been appointed as the Part-time Chairman of South Indian Bank for a three-year term, effective from 23 March 2026.

He will lead the Board of Directors and provide strategic oversight to one of South India's most prominent banking institutions.

Kattoor has over 30 years of experience with the RBI, where he retired as Executive Director in June 2023. He also served as an Independent Director on the bank's board from July 2024.

### Head of Dept at SGPGI, Lucknow

**Able Lawrence (1907/1989)** took over as the Head of Department of Clinical Immunology and Rheumatology at the Sanjay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGI), Lucknow, in October 2025. It's of particular significance as this department is the founding centre for the speciality of Clinical Immunology and Rheumatology in the country.

It remains the premier choice for aspiring doctors nationwide.

### Assistant Director, EY

**Shyam S (3274/2001)**, who works at EY Trivandrum, was recently promoted from Assistant Director 1 to Assistant Director 2.

### Handball team coach

**Binoy D S (2430/1993)** was the Chief Coach of Indian Men Handball Team for the Asian Championship at Kuwait from 15 to 29 Jan 2026.

### New Jersey-India Commissioner

**Krishna Kishore (1351/1983)** was a guest at the inauguration of the Governor of New Jersey Mikie Sherril. Kishore and wife Vidya were appointed by the State of New Jersey to the New Jersey-India Commission and they serve as commissioners along with a select group of Indian Americans.

### Empanelled for promotion

Following alumni empaneled for promotion to the rank of Colonel:

- Lt Col Liju R (3888/06)
- Lt Col Gerry George John (3688/05)
- Lt Col Jilu Jacob (3552/04)
- Lt Col Renjith K R (3611/04)

## AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

### REPUBLIC DAY AWARDS

The following are the proud winners of the 77th Republic Day Awards:

#### Vishisht Seva Medal

- Maj Gen Rajesh Bhanu (1930/1989)
- Brig Ranjith John (2177/1991)

#### President's Medal for Meritorious Service

- IGP Seju P Kuruvilla (2948/1998)
- DySP Jose M M (1887/1988)
- District Fire Officer Jogy A S (2696/1996)

#### Shaurya Chakra

- Lt Cdr K Dilna, wife of Lt Cdr Dhanesh Kumar M (4270/2007)

### SPECIAL JURY MENTION

**Aravindan S S (3895/2006)** has won a Special Jury Mention at the 16th Panchajanyam International Film Festival, Palakkad, held from 30 January to 5 February 2026 for his debut short film KYC.

### ARMY CHIEF'S AWARD

**Principal Col Dhirendra Kumar** was conferred with the Army Chief's award on the occasion of Army Day for his excellent guidance and dynamic leadership, helping Sainik School, Kazhakootam, achieve commendable heights.

Col Dhirendra Kumar has been serving as the Principal

of Kazhakootam Sainik School since August 25, 2021.

He is a recipient of the commendations from the Vice Chief of Army Staff in 2012, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief in 2017, and Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief in 2025.

### PRIDE OF NID AHMEDABAD AWARD

**Jinan K B (693/1976)** was named the Joint Recipient of the prestigious "Pride of NID Ahmedabad Award" for the year 2025–26. The award, which comprises a trophy and a citation, was conferred during the 45th Convocation Ceremony at the National Institute of Design, Gandhinagar Campus, on 22 January 2026.

This honour recognises alumni who have made significant contributions to society and industry through professional service in design. The award acknowledges Jinan's professional excellence, compassionate human-centred design approach, and exemplary leadership.

### BASKETBALL BRONZE MEDAL

**Capt Louis George Meparth (Retd) (642/1972)** was part of the team which won Bronze in 5x5 Basketball, 65+ age group, in the World Masters Games 2026 in Abu Dhabi.

## STORK

- Bivin V (4685/2013) blessed with a boy in March 2026
- Vishnu B Nair (4179/2009) blessed with a girl in February 2026

# Preserving the past: *The Cadet* digital archive

## The OBA is digitising every edition of the school magazine

**EVERY EDITION OF** *The Cadet* — the annual magazine of Sainik School Kazhakootam — is a time capsule. Its pages hold the first published writings of cadets who went on to distinguish themselves in the armed forces and in virtually every field that shapes national life. To lose these records would be to lose something irreplaceable.

The Old Boys Association is currently digitising the complete run of *The Cadet* for posterity. While 16 editions were already available and 28 more have been freshly scanned — including three improved versions of existing copies — 24 editions remain entirely missing.

### THE MISSING EDITIONS

The years still unaccounted for are: 1963, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1978, 1981, 1982, 1985, 1986, 2014, 2015, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025.

If your batch year appears above, you may possess exactly what the archive needs. You can help by sharing a

digital copy, sending high-resolution scans, or lending the original for professional scanning and safe return.

### DIGITAL REPOSITORY

*The Cadet* archive is part of a larger, ongoing effort to build a comprehensive digital repository of Kazhakootam heritage. The OBA welcomes photographs, documents, magazines, programmes, and other records that capture moments in the school's life — be it a prize-day agenda, an old campus photograph, a sports meet result, or a letter from a former Principal. If it belongs to the story of Kazhakootam, it belongs in this archive.

Contributors are requested to include a brief note of context: what the item is, the year it originates from, and the individuals or events it depicts. Please write to [office.sskzmoba@gmail.com](mailto:office.sskzmoba@gmail.com).

Every edition recovered and every photograph shared brings us closer to an archive that future generations of Kazhaks can explore and call their own.

## Book on M V *Kairali* released



*The Master Mariner*, published by Azhimukham Books, was released in August 2025. The book, by **Lt Col Thomas Joseph (Retd) (1089/1981)**, is based on the life of his father and captain of M V *Kairali*, Mariadas Joseph. The ship, with a crew of 49 and 20,000 tonnes of iron ore, mysteriously disappeared in July 1979.

The book was released by Prem C Nair Sir, our former English teacher, and director Jude Anthony Joseph at Ernakulam. Confluence Media founder, writer, and journalist, alumnus Josy Joseph (2136/1991) introduced the book. Confluence Media has announced a movie based on the book. Director Jude Anthony Joseph said the film will be made in a way that does justice to history, the people on the ship, and their families.

### OBITUARY

- Aby Mathew (827/1977) on 9 March 2026
- Wg Cdr C Madhavan Nair (169/1966) on 5 March 2026
- Shaji V P (1046/1980) on 20 February 2026
- Sampath Kumar (507/1970) on 1 January 2026

### SHARE YOUR MILESTONES

- Given the wide range of alumni activities, there may be inadvertent omissions in this publication.
- Please share details of alumni-related information, like weddings, childbirth, higher educational qualifications, new job appointments, change of organisation, transfer or relocation, promotions, retirement, awards or medals, participation in major sports events, sports championship wins, group activities, alumni meetups, and other notable events.
- Such updates may be emailed to: [office.sskzmoba@gmail.com](mailto:office.sskzmoba@gmail.com)
- For easy identification, please mention in the subject line: '**For The Kazhakootam Bulletin**'.