

## **TALATI's SCOUT GROUP**

### **PROGRESS REPORT – APRIL 2020 TO DECEMBER 2020**

**All Studies and No Play Make Jack a dull boy.** – A famous saying which we think should apply to every Scout of 8th East Bombay Talati's Scout Group.

**Global Lockdown due to COVID began in March 2020**, thereby constraining us from holding physical Sunday Scouts meetings at Scout Hut. During Lockdown, without much warning, we had to embark on remote meeting experiment to ever take place, out of compulsion. Isolation and distancing had become the norm for future. The pandemic has transformed the centuries-old, come-to-the-scout-hut teaching model to one driven by technology, using online strategies.

We all know that **COVID-19 has resulted in schools shut all across the world**. Remote teaching became the way of life and we had to see that we did not thrust on the children, the load, during our Sunday meetings, which they did for five to six days in a week for their e-school. As a result, **scouting activities changed dramatically**, with the distinctive rise of e-learning, and e-activities, whereby teaching & games were undertaken remotely and on digital platforms.

*It would be nearly impossible to run a remote organisation without some sort of internal messaging & communication system in place.* So we created one by collecting data from parents (like contact numbers, emails, type of devices, type of connectivity etc.) and setting up various communication Groups for Scouts / Cubs and their parents with Rovers/Scouters. As a result, **we now have an established communication system** (using tools like Whatsapp, Google Meet, MS Meeting, Shared Drives etc.) & with help of the latest generation of our Scouters and Rovers, **we conduct the Sunday meetings and competitions.**

**We started remote Sunday Cubs & Scouts meetings right from April 2020**, tweaking things down the line, as we learnt many things with experience (like delaying start time, more fun activities and less sessions, including non-scouty teachings etc.) . **We tried & created opportunities for children to play, learn and relax.** We also requested parents to encourage their children to participate in such distance sessions which they willingly did. Most of the children now attend without much of parent supervision and they have adapted very well to the new method.

We had to make our Sunday meetings effective, as kids (especially cubs) got easily distracted, and bored easily or were too un-eager to do e-learning especially on Sundays. **I sincerely thank our Cub & Scout Masters and the new generation Rovers** for their sincerity, efforts and dedication, and willingness of parents, without which things would not have been possible.

We begin the Sunday meetings with Scout Prayer song & Flag song and end with National Anthem common for Cubs & Scouts. Then we split Cubs and Scouts in different groups. **The Cub meetings** comprise of 2-3 short activities and most of the learning is through games and interactions. The Cubs have had a variety of sessions on a mix of regular Scout/Non-scout activities such as Scavenger Hunt, Kim's game, Queen of Sheeba, orientation of locality using Google Maps. Also, we include exploring the online resources of puzzles, quizzes, art & handicraft resources that they can enjoy.

**The Scouts meetings** include Scouty Knowledge Sessions (for Pravesh, Pratham, and Dwitya) games (like Quizzes, Base games, Queen of Sheba, Housie etc.) & various competitions (like knots, Signalling, First-Aid & other non-Scouty ones too). Not only learning sessions are conducted but also Test passing is done remotely, even on week days, whenever the Scout/Scouter are available. This encourages test passing by Scouts.

We also created our **Talati's Scout Group website** ([talatis.org](http://talatis.org)) which is being effectively used to store documents pertaining to various Scouts Tests, our Gallery of pictures, forms to collect various data from Scouts & parents etc etc.

**On Friday 10th July 2020, we celebrated the 99th Group Birthday of the Talati's Scout group, and 34th Group Birthday of the Talati's Guide Group** by a couple of Scouters and Guiders doing a small traditional ceremony at the Scout Hut with a Flag break & Homage to founder.

**On Sunday 12th July 2020, we had a Virtual Group Birthday celebrations** (first of its kind), wherein we projected a small clippings of the Homage ceremony, followed by Entertainment Video of Scouts/Guides and then the Annual Progress Report & much awaited Annual Prize announcements of 2019-20, presented by the Guides and Scouts Group Leaders .

**The Talati's Scout Group has entered its 100th year** and we had plans to have a grand celebration. Unfortunately it was not possible. However to celebrate the centenary year, we have conducted a few games and competitions for parents of the Cubs & Scouts as well as for Ex-Scouts of the Talati's Group. This will continue during the coming months.

Since we have not been to a camp for almost over a year, **the Scouters decided to hold a Remote Virtual Camp for Scouts on 26th and 27th Dec 2020 for Scouts only**. The days were split into 2 sessions daily for around 3+ hours. We had an average of around 20+ Scouts participating at any Session of the day based on their availability.

**The Camp included activities (just like those performed in a normal Outdoor Camp)** like Uniform and layout inspection, Flag Break with Prayer & Flag song, Fun Base Games, Projects, Quizzes, Debate, Competitions (like Signalling, Cooking, First Aid, Compass, Knots, "I Challenge" etc.) .

Unfortunately due to time limitation, we could not hold the Entertainment Competition which is now postponed to a further date.

**I sincerely thank the Active Scouters and Rovers, for undertaking and conducting this Camp, which required days and days of advance planning.** As we step into 2021, **we will be striving to make the meetings of Cubs and Scouts more and more constructive and interesting** so that the Scouts willingly participate and enjoy the same. We will be loading some pictures and Videos of the Remote Camp Activities on our web-site in due course.

Before ending this report, I would like to inform you all that **Scouter Zuzer Rangwala & Scouter Carlshen Wadia** had undergone Scout Masters Training Course and had earned their Scouters warrant last year and are actively participating in scouting activities currently. Hence I am proud to announce that both **have now been designated as Asst. Scout Masters of Talati's Scout Group.** Similarly, **Scouter Adnan Suterwala is now designated as the Asst. Cub Master,** as he has also done the course and earned the Scouters warrant last year as well as is very active with Cubs Activities.

The above three scouters, along with Senior Scouters, will also now be a part of the **Scouter's Council** which overlooks the overall Activities of the Talati's Scout Group.

Further the following Active Rovers are now designated as **Scout Instructors:**

- **Rover Pashangh Lavangia**
- **Rover Taher Lokhandwala**
- **Rover Burhanuddin Fatehi**
- **Rover Azeez Kadri**

These young enthusiastic Scouters and Rovers will also be managing meetings, training & guiding the Scouts.

I end this report, **once again thanking our ever available Senior Scouters, Active Scouters & Rovers and some other Scouters/Rovers** who do occasionally contribute on request, for their participation in running the Scout Group during these tough times of Covid.

Thank you

**Rohinton Patel (Group Leader)**