



**"Greater energy and greater passion is more extraordinary than greater genius."
— Lt. General Arjun Ray, (Retd.), PVSM, VSM**

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Dear Friends,

**International-Mindedness
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International-mindedness is a most misunderstood concept in most international schools. The idea has been further confused by several local schools calling themselves either *international* or *global*. International-mindedness has very little to do with food, flags, festivals, infrastructure, curriculum, lifestyle, wealth of parents, or speaking English with an American accent. Even a CBSE school can be internationally-minded.

In its simplest form, international-mindedness has two key elements, both at their opposite ends. The first is in arriving at a consensus on **common threats in making the world sustainable**, irrespective of the differences and contradictions there may be in culture, religion. In other words, international-mindedness focuses on what the global community is agreed upon. Differences are kept aside. For example, everybody would agree that global warming, depletion of the planets resources, religious intolerance, poverty, human rights, women's empowerment and illiteracy, are serious threats to all countries, irrespective of the individual economic systems and political and religious beliefs nations may have.

An internationally-minded school will be expected to sensitise students to these threats, apprise them on what price humanity will have to pay if they are ignored, and what joint strategies will work in overcoming them. In the words of the famous English poet, John Donne, international-mindedness is a reminder to each and every nation that, "*No Man's an island.*" We are interdependent, bound together with a common destiny.



At the other end of the spectrum is **localism**, the knowledge and experience of one's culture, traditions, history, signature strengths and even weaknesses. Our culture gives us a reference point and a measuring yardstick to evaluate and respect other cultures. Local knowledge makes us feel proud of where we come from. Only those who are proud of their culture will be proud of themselves, a precondition to unlock one's potential.

What is, therefore, required is **environmental awareness** and not environmental apathy. Our cultural strengths are also survival skills for humanity. India, for example, is a living embodiment in a heterogenous and inclusive society, an example of unity in diversity, secularism and respect for all faiths, democratic ideals, non-violence in settling disputes, and encouraging intellectual dissent. This explains why India is the birthplace of the world's four great religions.

An internationally-minded school is expected to provide experiential knowledge of the indigenous culture, because localism is a prerequisite for being a world citizen. Above all, it gives us identity and a sense of belongingness.

With warm regards,

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