

## Āhār Kranti: Lifestyle and Nutrition in Students

As part of the Āhār Kranti initiative, an inspiring lecture on Lifestyle and Nutrition in Students was jointly conducted for the Ramdandees of Bhonsala Military School (BMS) and Bhonsala Sainik School (BSS). The guest speaker was the highly accomplished Dr Abhijit Munshi, a man of extraordinary academic depth and versatility, with degrees spanning Ayurveda, Clinical Research, Sanskrit Philosophy, Engineering, and Healthcare Administration. He was accompanied by Mrs Manisha Ghare, Coordinator of VIBHA (Vijnana Bharati), who added her own practical perspectives on food and modern lifestyle habits.

The session was not just a talk on health, but a holistic journey that wove together spirituality, science, and everyday practices - leaving cadets with lessons they could apply immediately in their lives.

### Food as Divinity: The Bhojan Mantra

Dr. Munshi began with the profound idea that food itself is divine. He recited the Bhojan Mantra: “Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh; Aham, Idam, Sarvam Brahma.”

He explained how each part of the mantra relates to the act of eating:

- Brahma represents creation, reminding us that food is the very first creation that sustains life.
- Vishnu stands for preservation, as food preserves our health, vitality, and balance.
- Mahesh (Shiva) symbolizes transformation, for food once consumed transforms into thought, energy, and action.
- Through Aham, Idam, Sarvam Brahma - “I, this food, and everything around me is Brahma” - he showed that the eater, the food, and the universe are inseparable. Thus, he urged Ramdandees to approach every meal

with gratitude and mindfulness, for eating is not merely filling the stomach but connecting with creation itself. “When we respect food as Brahma,” he said, “digestion becomes not only physical, but also mental and spiritual.”

### Practical Wisdom on Food and Nutrition

Moving from philosophy to practice, Dr Munshi gave simple yet powerful insights into daily eating habits:

#### • Oil and Ghee as Natural Lubricants

He explained that just as machinery needs oil to run smoothly, our bones and joints need lubrication too. Oil and ghee, staples of the Indian kitchen, act as natural lubricants, keeping joints flexible and bones strong. Unlike synthetic supplements, ghee also provides fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K), boosts immunity, and enhances brain function.

#### • The Role of Pickles

Pickles, often dismissed as just accompaniments, were highlighted as natural probiotics. Fermented with spices, salt, and oil, they introduce good bacteria into the gut, aid digestion, and enhance absorption of nutrients. A spoonful of traditional homemade pickle, Dr Munshi noted, is a centuries-old secret for digestive strength.

#### • Six Tastes and Balance

Ayurveda recognizes six rasas (tastes): sweet, sour, salty, pungent, bitter, and astringent. Each plays a role - sweet builds tissues, sour awakens digestion, salty balances fluids, pungent clears channels, bitter detoxifies, and astringent strengthens. When all six tastes are included in balance, both body and mind remain in harmony. But an excess of one or neglect of another can disturb equilibrium and lead to disease.



- **Santhaalana: The Art of Balancing**

Santhaalana, meaning balance, was introduced as the key principle not only for health but for life itself. Overeating, oversleeping, or even overstudying leads to imbalance. Cadets were encouraged to balance food, exercise, academics, and rest — for this is the secret to long-lasting energy and excellence.

Learning Like Eating: The  $5 + 5 + 5 + 1 = 16$  Formula

Dr Munshi shared an innovative method for academic success - the 16-minute learning cycle, showing that knowledge, like food, must be digested properly.

1. First 5 minutes – Read aloud, skim and scan using mouth, eyes, and ears together. This triple-sense activation builds stronger memory links.
2. Next 5 minutes – Recall without looking. Write, speak, or explain the topic. This develops motor skills and strengthens brain circuits.
3. Next 5 minutes – Revise actively. Cross-check, correct mistakes, and fill in gaps.
4. +1 Day Later – Reinforce. A quick review transfers knowledge from short-term to long-

term memory.

This method, he explained, aligns with both modern neuroscience (the “spacing effect”) and Ayurveda’s concept of *smaraṇa* (reinforcement). “Education was never a burden for me,” Dr. Munshi said, “because I enjoyed it, digested it, and practiced it the right way. That is how I could collect degrees across so many fields.”

#### **Fascinating Facts on Digestion**

Cadets listened in awe as Dr. Munshi revealed the inner science of the human body:

- The stomach functions in four compartments, each with its own role in breaking down and preparing food.
- The digestive tract is an astonishing 13 metres long. The small intestine absorbs vital nutrients, while the large intestine regulates water, electrolytes, and beneficial bacteria.

This understanding reminded cadets that good digestion is not just about food but about learning, focus, and stamina. “If digestion is smooth,” he said, “your brain receives the energy it needs to excel in every field.”

#### **Mrs Manisha Ghare’s Practical Advice**

Following Dr. Munshi’s deep insights, Mrs

Manisha Ghare grounded the session in everyday realities. She cautioned cadets against the dangers of packaged food—chips, sauces, instant noodles, and western fast foods. While they may look tempting, these items slowly deplete health, causing fatigue and lowering immunity.

She reminded cadets that their mess menu is carefully pre-planned to ensure they receive a balanced and nutritious diet that supports their physical training and academic performance. Her message was sharp and memorable:

**“If food is medicine, fine. Otherwise, medicine becomes food.”**

### **The Takeaway**

This session was more than a lecture - it was a revelation. By connecting Ayurveda, nutrition, science, and student life, Dr Munshi and Mrs Ghare showed that food is not only fuel but a teacher, a healer, and a guide.

As cadets walked away, they carried with them more than knowledge - they carried a new attitude: to eat with gratitude, to balance their lifestyle, and to treat learning as nourishment. Truly, Āhār Kranti is not just about food - it is a revolution in living and learning.

