



Established in 1936

The Doon School WEEKLY



Saturday • September 17, 2005 • Issue No. 2096

Regulars **2**

Roving
Eye **2**

Poetry
Page **3**

Swift
Sixes **4**

Close Encounters of the Real Kind

Priyanka Bhattacharyya recounts her foray into Real India

Every once in a while, we encounter realities that yank us out of our comfort zones; realities that giggle and tease us and say, "Hey! Grow up!!"

One such encounter with the big, bad world outside cushioned Chandbagh came our way on our recent trip to The Scindia School, Gwalior. It is not the lovely days we spent there, but the to-ing and the fro-ing from Dehra to Gwalior that I write about. It all began very well. We boarded our sleeper class compartment at 6 am, intending to catch up on our sleep. The boys caught a bunk each and I snuggled in by my window and zzzzz...and then, a man with matted hair, a kind of mendicant, settled into the next coupe. "Swaha! Swaha! Swaha! Swaha!" sang he, and rather tunefully, thought I. And he sang. And he sang. And he sang. We tried to shut him out. No luck. "Swaha! Swaha! Swahaaaaa!" Well, he alighted at Hardwar, looking calm and at peace with the world, while we glared after him. So much for sleep. We swore that of all the things we had heard mendicants chanting, this took the cake, the icing and the candles. And you thought that clichés like India being a land of fakirs were a thing of the past? Think again! After Swahaji alighted, things began to happen so fast that we lost all track of reality. The Common Man kept parading through, of course, in all shapes and sizes and descriptions, while we turned up our noses at the sights, sounds and smells, yes, smells, of Incredible India.

There were vendors selling exciting-looking munchies we dared not eat, beggars in impossible states of repair, eunuchs who came fishing for money and sympathy, shoe-shine boys who insisted on polishing the Doscos' floaters(!), daily travellers with winsome smiles who settled in first and then asked for permission, promising to alight in the next ten minutes...and then came the children. Almost always, these children would be cleaning the floor of the bogie, pushing all the refuse before them with a cloth, rendering an invaluable service to the passengers, and extending a tentative hand for small change.

We were somehow managing to eat our lunch, squirming under the gaze of hungry eyes staring at the food I had spread on the bunk. A bold sweeper-boy passing by pointed at the hard-boiled eggs and smiled. We were disarmed. We handed him one. And then we steadily handed out bananas and biscuits to several children. I had a tough time eating, though. I think the boys too swallowed their food quickly, almost embarrassed to have the good fortune of getting to eat at all. Each time the food bag was stowed away, we'd all look relieved. Halfway through the journey we had lost our appetites... We survived the hot

afternoon somehow. It was late evening when we hit Gwalior. I think by then we'd had too much reality for a weekend. Strangely, the participants from other schools who alighted from the AC bogies of the same train complained of how horrid and cold it had been!!

The days at Scindia flew by—and soon we were returning with the Quiz trophy. We decided to try our luck with the Shatabdi Express out of Gwalior. I remember running pillar to post at the station, asking officials if it were possible to secure seats at the last minute. Nope, they said grimly, did madam not know that India ground to a halt on a Sunday? Madam, of course, was close to tears—how could she go back to the boys waiting patiently and hopefully on the platform in the sweltering heat? So I tightened my mind-belt and made The Final Attempt.

A young railway official sat poring over reams of charts. I poured out my soul. He heard me out and said, "Madam, I think teachers are nation builders. And you say you come from The Doon School. Though I'm not supposed to do this..." and Hallelujah! I had managed the magical four seats on the Shatabdi!! I swear I've never felt this great. Or victorious. Or touched. The nation-builder hopped, skipped and jumped all the way to the bricks who were latched on to their Discmans. The four of them, the builder and the bricks, did a mini war-dance right there, while two sleepy dogs watched out of the corners of their eyes...

The Shatabdi trip was over all too soon, whizzing by in a haze of laughter and butter chicken, and we hit reality again. Our taxi was to pick us up from the New Delhi railway station at 4 in the morning, so we decided to wait. We found ourselves a platform, plonked ourselves on the seats and waited. Huge rats (I think they are called bandicoots) scurried about, giving us the heebie-jeebies. A family of monkeys materialized at 3am, scouring the metal rods of the asbestos roofing for whatever snacks could be found there. A policeman came strolling by, warning us not to fall asleep. Too many thieves, he said. He must have been kidding. Sleep? There? In the middle of Real India? Then came a madman who fell in love with a calendar we were carrying. He even asked us politely if he could touch it once, just once. We persuaded him to leave us. He moved away, and kept staring at the calendar from far, longingly...

The taxi turned up at 4 am, and bone-tired and weary, we returned to Chandbagh. What a trip, what a journey! And what a close glimpse of reality. And you thought life was all about Good Chits and YCs?

YOUNG DEBATERS

In the **Inter House Junior English Debate Competition**, Tata House was placed second while Hyderabad House won the trophy. Samkit Sethia and Akshit Batra were jointly awarded the Best Speaker prize. Shaurya Kuthiala was adjudged the Most Promising Speaker for the debate. Congratulations!

COMPUTER CONQUESTS

The Doon School represented by Kushagra Kumar, Pranay Agarwal and Gaurav Gupta won the **Vasant Valley Multimedia Contest** held at Vasant Valley School, New Delhi. Bravo!

MATHS MANIA

In the Senior **Math Colloquium Test**, Akhil Kejriwal was placed first and Karan Rawat came in second place.

QUIZ WHIZZES

The Doon School won the the **Inter Public School Quiz** held at Scindia School, Gwalior. We were represented by Parag Rastogi and Ashish Mitter. Well done!

SOCCER COLOURS

Hemant Bishnoi, Sahil Batta, Shivtaj Singh and Selvin Michael were awarded school soccer **Full Colours** and Arjun Sengar, Pranav Swarup, Rishabir Singh and Aayush Wasu were awarded **Half Colours**.

SPORTS TALK

On Tuesday, September 13, **Ms. Jill Belcher** gave a talk in the Main Building on common sports injuries.

Unquotable Quotes

The Illiad and the Odyssey were written by Homer Simpson.

Parag Rastogi, the classicist.

I am going to have a fun during Founders'.

Chirag Nangia is very excited.

Limpin Park.

Vibhor Gupta, on being asked to name his favourite band.

Henry Higgins is very appetizing.

Uday Pratap Singh, the budding cannibal.

Roving Eye

COP, Chief Ed 'n Ed

The Eye busted bounds last Sunday...legally! Witnessing the last Socials was quite something as the Scs took advantage of their last chance to eat as much as was humanly possible. Apart from being the ultimate food fight, the Socials saw several antisocials take the desperate plunge and the G-unit broke at last. It saw movers like Dalip, shakers like Shamsher and quakers like your COP.

Our Technological Committee Secretary was finally forced to give up his GOD membership as he, at last asked out something that wasn't made of silicon. Meanwhile, Vidur's...errr...slinky dance moves, or maybe his melodious voice, attracted a Melody with whom he spent the better part of the evening. The *News and Views* also seems to have suffered a major setback as one of their editors almost died of suffocation as she was enveloped in the noxious fumes emanating from a certain someone. The sidelines were busy as ever with the stalwart couples and there were many more duos added to their ranks. Akshay Thapan, Anchal Tewari and Mayank Negi have been looking rather starry-eyed for a while.

However, every high has its low and every happy couple has a shattered single counterpart. Keswani joined the ranks of these extraordinary gentlemen for the 5th....no, 9th....no, 16th time! There was also a minor crisis near the food tables as Raghav Mediratta narrowly escaped a very painful death after tripping a certain exchange-returned *baski* player. (Hint: it's a Welhamite!)

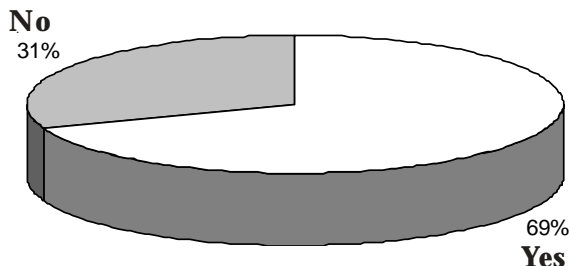
These Socials were certainly like none other. The *kebabs* were to die for while the ice cream and chocolate sauce was also welcome. The lack of spoons didn't bother the Doscocs in the least as they ate in the 'Indian way'. As 10 o'clock drew closer, the Dehradun SPCA arrived at Welham after several passersby insisted that they had just heard about a hundred cats being strangled to death. They went away disappointed, however, when it was revealed that it was merely Welhamites singing *Auld Lang Syne*.

Other news. The campus seems in fear of being drowned after the recent spate of rain. D formers from Martyn House can be seen swimming to class every day. The History department has come up with a novel way to battle the weather, with PMV, PDT and KAR sporting umbrellas in all known (and some unknown) colours. KRS, of course, has kept up with her motto of 'a different coloured umbrella a day, keeps poor fashion sense away'. As Founder's draws closer, the campus is being enthusiastically whitewashed. MLB accidentally drove away in Mr Makhija's newly 'white' Maruti. The redecoration frenzy has manifested itself in the Library. The King of Flowers is very 'happy' redecorating the Library in 'rainbow' colours and has also been asking ATB to teach him the secret of how to make the walls as 'faunky' as ATB's car and umbrella.

There are many talks scheduled for today, however three of them will not take place because the eminent personalities were scared away by animal sounds issuing from the Music School. On closer inspection it turned out to be the House Choirs rehearsing their *quawalis* for the forthcoming Music Competition. Leaving you to the happy prospect of a talk-filled Saturday, we'll sign off for now. Adios amigos.

Opinion Poll

Do you *now* support the new Test Week Schedule?



413 members of the school community were asked

Next Week's Question: Do you think Class X Boards should be done away with?

Tailor

Karam Vir Lamba

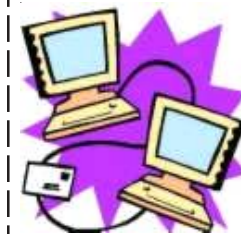
Even through the dirty, puddle street
Fight the rain, the stench and staring faces
Past paan-sellers, the shops of trinkets and cell phones
Step into the furthest and smallest doorway –
Lost in the colourful canvas.
Inhale the heavy air, laden with smoke
And the nauseating sweetness of perfumed candles.
Up the rickety, winding staircase,
Into the low-roofed, dim-lit room.
There, among the tall shelves
That try, and fail,
To hide the paint peeling off the walls
Over his half-moon spectacles
Resting at the very end of his unusually long nose,
He surveys you imperiously.
A reluctant, though welcoming grin
Reveals crooked, nicotine-stained teeth,
Peeping out from behind a bushy moustache.
Hair, long and oily, parted almost artificially at the centre
Sweeps past a creased and scarred forehead –
Bordering those sunken eyes
That now bore into you
Like black velvet curtains
Willing to divulge nothing.
Will you forget the face that now haunts you?
Will you forget it the moment you leave?
Weave me a fabric, vivid and rich.
Slowly, torturously, he measures you up
Like the women at the street corner,
At the tea-parties, at the dinner parties –
Feeding on insecurity, sipping fear.
Waist, chest and shoulders –
But can he see through the patches on your jeans?
Past the fraying cloth
That is both a feeble attempt at keeping up with fashion
And not.
In times to come,
Will he remember the face that you now put on?
The only link, perhaps –
The artist of your new appearance.
Can he hear the shadows that are your past,
Whispering, sobbing, screaming?
And reaching
And deafening silence that follows.
Can he mend the eaten cloth?
Tarnished, like termite-infested wood.
Or do you only go to him
To see yourself reflected in his half-moons,
Summed-up
A blot on a piece of crisp white paper?
Like a moth drawn towards a flame.
Weave me a fabric, vivid and rich
I can no longer bear to be pinned
And observed under magnification
Struggling and wriggling, writhing
Like an insect that has strayed too far.
Weave me a fabric, vivid and rich
Cover the bruises, the bleeding wounds,
Drain the darkness with splashes of colour.
And let me feel alive again.

Chess Game

Parag Rastogi

I sit here
Thousand miles away.
Across mountains,
Each of which I would so gladly climb.
Across rivers,
Each of which I'd swim against the tide.
Across a bloody continent,
That knows not us and we know not.
And yet I sit here
Try and console myself
With verse, work, curse.
And I rue the twists of
Fate, and I play my pawn.
That sadistic old hag,
Who sits on a chess board
And whose thrust we cannot parry
Mate, game to be her quarry?
Fate has attacked my castle
No rook nor bishop to save it.
This verse is a demanding mistress
Whose ecstasy
Lasts but a moment.
Then it shatters and I am left
With my pen, my books, my pressures.
And I am left with
Life, to lead.
Must it come to this?
The cold, cold rain and
That same bloody song,
Playing in my head.
And my heart leaves me
And my mind leaves me
To wander in the rain
Yet I advance my rook.
Singing songs of pain
And writing useless verse
Sheltering under the umbrellas of philosophy
Even walls can't keep out Indian rains.
My bishop pleads like a pawn.
And I am drenched to the bone
But I have no will to move
But I am still lying in the rain
The cold, cold rain of sadness
And that same bloody song
Playing in my head.
Check mate, I fall to the ground.

Career Call



The Careers' Notice Board will focus on the IT sector this week. All budding whizzkids are advised to scan it.

Swift Sixes

Shikhar Singh and Naman Goel get to know some of the new teachers on campus

Your first impression of Doon?

PKB: Disciplined. Professional. World class.

NBD: A school of/for elite.

KAY: Simplicity, discipline and dignified atmosphere.

ANJ: Lively, dynamic and beautiful.

SBL: Very nice.

ADN: Systematic.

Describe yourself in three words:

PKB: Willing to learn.

NBD: I don't know!

KAY: Honest, caring, and cheerful.

ANJ: Patience, taking challenges.

SBL: Honest, patient, simple.

ADN: Simple, understanding, loving.

Your second impression of Doon?

PKB: World Class. Professional. Disciplined?! Hmm ... ask me again next year.

NBD: A good place for learning.

KAY: Boys are disciplined and dignified.

ANJ: Challenging.

SBL: Nice.

ADN: Calm atmosphere.

What made you come to Doon?

PKB: A newspaper ad, fortunately spotted!

NBD: A job

KAY: I love challenges. It is a challenge to teach boys. I want to teach in a different atmosphere and learn from it. Teaching this energetic age group is a challenge and learning experience.

ANJ: The interest to work in a residential school.

SBL: Growth in profession.

ADN: Better prospects.

What do you like about the school?

PKB: Chicken burger on Thursday mornings!

NBD: The school.

KAY: Students make a school. Students are good and therefore so is the school.

ANJ: The freedom to work without many barriers.

SBL: Infrastructure, work conditions and professionalism.

ADN: Working conditions and coordination.

PKB: Priyanka Bhattacharyya, English Dept.

NBD: Navneet Bedar, Hindi Dept.

KAY: Karuna Arya, Hindi Dept.

ANJ: Aaron Jacob, Psychology Dept.

SBL: Skand Bali, Geography Dept.

ADN: Ashish Dean, Physics Dept.

Your mantra for life?

PKB: Live Life Kingsize.

NBD: Live and Let Live.

KAY: Positive attitude towards everything.

ANJ: What you see is what you get.

SBL: Live and Let Live.

ADN: Patience is the key to success.

Online Edition: <http://www.doonschool.com/magazine>

dsw@weekly.org

IPSS® All rights reserved. Printed by The English Book Depot, 15 Rajpur Road, Dehra Dun, Uttaranchal - 248001, India. Published by Jayant Hari Har Lal, The Doon School, Dehra Dun.

Editor-in-Chief: Tushaar Kuthiala. Editor: Parag Rastogi. Senior Editors: Raghav Puri, Salman Chowdhury, Karam Vir Lamba, Vidur Sehgal. Hindi Editor: Deepansh Chaudhary. Associate Editors: Ayushman Jamwal, Uday Pratap Singh, Akaash Pathare. Special Correspondents: Shikhar Singh, Naman Goel. Correspondents: Saurav Sethia, Shaurya Kuthiala. Online Editor: Omaer Khan. Chief-of-Production: Aditi Chaturvedi. Assistant Managers: Stuti Bathla, Priya Chaturvedi, Arvindanabha Shukla. Special Assistance: K.C.Maurya

