



Established in 1936

The Doon School

WEEKLY



Saturday, February 24, 2007 • Issue No. 2142

REGULARS **2**

RACIST
ROW **2**

UP IN THE
HILLS **3**

COPYING
NOTES **4**

Biking Diaries

Eeshaan Tiwary writes about the talk given by Ferran Bonell, an amateur cyclist from Andorra

Follow your dreams—that's what we're all told. In today's world of cut-throat competition and cushy jobs, however, dreams are too often held hostage to ambition. It is thus a brave man who ventures into the unknown just because his heart says so; Ferran Vila Bonell, from Andorra, a small country nestled in the Pyrennes between France and Spain, is a man who is doing just that.



His dream was born after hearing about the experiences of a man and his journey on a bicycle. Running along much the same lines, Ferran's dream, as he said himself, "has been in my head since the age of 14". As he grew up, the desire only became stronger.

Having worked a year after college, Ferran had enough funds to sustain his dream. He now started to work on the details. For conveyance, he had a bicycle won in a lottery that had lain unused for years. Being constructed of iron, it provided him with a far more reliable vehicle than the modern aluminium ones. For sleeping, he had a tent which was accommodated in a side-car attached to his bicycle.

He has so far travelled through twenty countries, including Germany, Italy, UAE, Iran, Pakistan and India. The only time that he did not travel on his bike was from Oman to India. He has done most of his journey alone, though at certain stages he was accompanied by one more biker.

In an informal interaction he had with some of us, he talked about following your dream and not just blindly looking to be the best and setting 'Guinness World Records'. He also said that though many people considered him crazy, he was not deterred, as he knew that this gave him the most satisfaction. Any plans of writing a book about his travels? He replied that he was certainly thinking of writing one so that he could guide others who may want to take adventurous cycling tours.

One inevitable question asked of him was to name his favourite country. The very diplomatic reply was that he could not say which was his favourite, as they were all different.

Beating the Boards

Pranjal Singh discusses the issue of pre-examination stress on the eve of the Board examinations

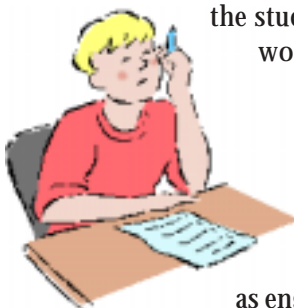
Laughter and good cheer are no longer a common commodity in Chandbagh these days. I find my form-mates (in A Form) have suddenly acquired a serious look, bordering on gloominess. Many of them seem perpetually tired or tense. The reason, I feel, is, they all have one thing in common: they are worried about A form and their ICSE exam. Their worries are amplified when they see the ATs or ScLs with an aura of stress and strain about them.

But surely, those dreaded Boards are not so fearsome? In fact, passing them is probably easier than doing well in the A and Sc Form final Trials. After all, the Council has the responsibility of catering to students all over the country. Of necessity, the Board papers are standardized and, provided one puts in regular work, the system recognizes and rewards this.

So the question that arises is: why stress? The answer is as simple as the question: since childhood, elders fill our minds with this unknown terror known as the Board examinations. Our parents, at times, appear more stressed than us when it comes to it. They have expectations from the child of getting a distinction in his Boards even if he/she has been a seventy percenter throughout. If questioned, their invariable rejoinder is: the marks secured here are counted throughout your life, they decide your career and the direction your life will take.

True, but would getting under stress and duress help the student in securing better marks? It would only worsen their performance. Under stress, our mind tends to lose its balance and our academic performance suffers. Today, if one wants to go into the medical profession or wants to pursue a career such as engineering one does not even need these exams. There are competitive exams one has to sit for in order to gain admission to such institutions.

We really don't have to kill ourselves with pre-Board examination tension, because in the end a calm mind will earn you a lot more than a mind falling apart under stress.



REGULARS

APPOINTMENTS

Keshav Krishna Kapur and Himmat Singh have been appointed **Boys-in-Charge** of the **Chair Squad** for 2007. Congratulations!

QUIZZING ACROSS BORDERS

Ashish Mitter, Ramakrishna Pappu and Saurabh Tiwary participated in the **Indo-Pak Quiz** held at the RIMC. The School won the quiz.

Well done!

CRICKET NEWS

The School played the **Old Boys** led by Nalin Khanna in a day-night fixture at Gyan Bharati School, New Delhi, on February 16. The School lost in a nail-biting encounter by one wicket in the last over.

The School also played **Roshanara Club, Delhi**, on Sunday, February 18 and lost by six wickets.

A detailed report will follow in a subsequent issue.

VISITORS ON CAMPUS

Ferran Vila Bonell, a ski and hockey instructor and seasoned mountain guide from Andorra, addressed a gathering of B and C formers on Monday, February 19. He talked about his experiences gathered while cycling through twenty countries. The front page carries a report.

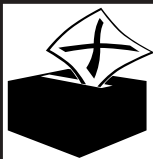
Geeta Powell, a representative from **Brock University, Canada**, spoke to the Scs who are interested in studying overseas, on Thursday, February 22 in the AV Room.

VIRTUOSO VIOLIN

The Music Society presented a solo violin recital by **Alexander Yablokov** on Friday, February 16, at the Music School. The artiste, who is an internationally acclaimed concert performer and a Professor at the Bratislava Music Academy in the Slovak Republic, gave a virtuoso performance featuring the works of Bach, Paganini, Mozart and Tchaikovsky.

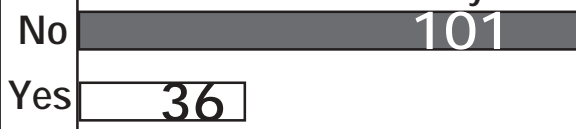
OBITUARY

Ashok Roy, Music Teacher at Doon (1977-1988) passed away in Sydney on Thursday, February 15. Our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.



Opinion Poll

Does the outcome of the Uttarakhand polls engage and interest you?



137 members of the community responded to the poll.

Next Week's Question: Do you think the new School Bag is a better product than the previous one?

Unquotable Quotes

Paddycurie is funner.

Anindya Vasudev at a spa.

Which catch should I catch?

Samaay Mangalgi, a man in a hurry.

I thought 'r' was a vowel.

Samaay Mangalgi restores order.

We have double KLA in second school.

Mehul Goyal, receives a double dose.

He was riding a David-Harleyson.

Abhishek Jain bikes into the sunset.

I want to photocopy the CD.

Skand Goel the duplicator.

I could hear you from one miles away.

RSF caught in the 'slips'.

You watch and see.

Vahin Khosla is extremely cautious.

Racism?

KP Somaiah discusses the racist row over remarks made against Shilpa Shetty in a British reality TV show

The 'racist' abuse of Shilpa Shetty in the recently concluded *Celebrity Big Brother* show has brought to light certain issues that have been simmering on the backburner for a long time. I am not referring to the abuse of Shilpa herself, but of 30,000 highly skilled immigrant workers from India, consisting mainly of doctors and nurses.

As for Shilpa Shetty, I sympathize with the lady for what she's been through. But frankly speaking, I don't think that what she endured was even a fraction of what migrant Indian workers have to go through on a daily basis in England and other parts of the world. If the rejection of so many highly skilled workers on racial grounds in England does not serve as a good enough example, think of all those construction labourers from India who are toiling in the Gulf countries, working day and night, often without pay, in order to sustain their families back home.

Shilpa herself seems none the worse for wear, and I think she has just converted this row into a highly intelligent and well-planned career move. This entire saga seems to have benefited her more than harm her, as she now has a career in the West laid out for her, while sponsors line up to be graced by her acceptance of their contracts. Ironically, one cannot help but feel sorry for her tormentors, as they are now themselves the unfortunate victims of mass hate in England. They were C-grade celebs anyway, and presently they have been reduced to the status of fugitives. Jade Goody, Shilpa's tormentor-in-chief, had to first undergo psychological treatment for depression and then go underground. I wonder whether we are asking ourselves if she is not the victim of racism too?

Shilpa has done a marvelous turncoat and she now implies in her statements that her 'racist tormentors' were in fact just a bunch of girls who were desperate to hurt her. This is, of course, in keeping with her new 'gracious, forgiving' act. As a seasoned veteran of Bollywood, she really turned things to her advantage.

(continued on page 4)

| Travel |
A Winter Trek's Tale
Naman Goel

At the end of last term, while the rest of the school was heading back home, eleven of us were heading off in the opposite direction on a trek. (We prefer calling it 'end-terms'.) Some of us had taken a few short-cuts to liven up our mid-terms. This is why we were being sent for another trek to drive home the true value of mid-terms.

Trekking up in the mountains is rarely appealing to most of us, especially when it is in the middle of December. Even thinking about going to Dodital sent shivers down our spines. We had no choice however, and on December 14, as the rest of the school made their way back home, we made our way to Sangam Chatti. After a long trip we were welcomed at a small village by the river, ahead of Uttarkashi. We spent the night at a yet-to-be inaugurated guest house. Early next morning, we had our breakfast and made our way to Majhi. Till now the weather had been kind and had been warm enough.

The trek was difficult yet enjoyable. Pushing the slower ones up the steep slopes was irritating yet amusing. One of the best things about the trek was the variety of landscapes that we encountered en route. The trek never got monotonous and boring. We stopped on the way at a village called Bewara. After Bewara, we came across the first snow, which put new energy into our limbs. We suddenly picked up pace in order to have the upper hand in the snow fights. Oddly, even with snow under our feet, we felt quite warm.

On the way to Majhi, the snow began to thin out. But then we took one turn and we saw Majhi covered entirely in knee-deep snow. The landscape looked like out of a movie. The snow was very white and dotted with low wooden huts. While one hut was chosen as our kitchen, we were left to decide where we would spend the next two nights.. Now it was actually getting very cold so it was nice to have a hot cup of tea in the evening and hot *dal-chawal* for dinner. Then we all collected wood and lit a fire in our hut.

The fire made the hut warm enough to survive, but the floor of the hut was too uneven to sleep on. We all woke up with terrible body aches in the morning. After a quick breakfast we all made our way towards Dodital. ASH stayed behind, and a single guide led us. The entire route to Dodital was covered with snow and it was very hard to trek. The danger of slipping was always there. But it was also one of the most beautiful trekking routes. We came across a frozen waterfall on the way. We couldn't believe it was real.

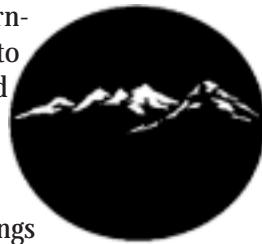
After trekking for five hours we reached Dodital. We were utterly exhausted but the amazing beauty of the place revived us. However, we were thankful the idea of going to Darba Top had been dropped. During our one-hour 'rest' at Dodital we did everything but rest. We had snow fights, tried making snowmen, and we tried fishing with a stick. After several attempts, we were almost about to catch a fish, when the local authorities came and stopped

us, telling us that it was illegal to fish there.

It was about noon when we started for Majhi. We were to sleep there for another night, and considering the previous night's experience, that was the last thing we wanted. We wondered if we could spend the night at Bewara instead. When consulted, our guide assured us it was possible to get there by the evening if we were fast enough. So we put in all we had and practically started running back to Majhi. We reached by 2:30, and the first thing we did was to try to convince ASH to let us go on to Bewara. However, our hopes were shattered, and even after long deliberation, ASH did not budge. He said it was impossible to reach Bewara on time, as there was a difference in trekking with and without rucksacks.

We finally gave in and put our bodies through another night of torture. The next morning ASH told us that the cars would be waiting at Sangam Chatti to take us back to Doon. This way we would reach Dehradun by 8:00 in the evening. The trek had taken us six hours when we had come. But it was down hill now and we had way more determination, as we were all in a hurry to get back home. We trekked as fast as we could, actually running most of the time, and not stopping at all. Four of us reached by 11:30, and the rest kept pouring in till everyone was there by 1:00. Everyone, that is, but the cars. We spent time at Jaan ki Chatti, waiting for the cars which finally arrived at 4:30 and we drove into Dehradun by midnight, to finally begin our winter vacations.

None of us had really wanted to go on this trek. We were all too scared of the sub-zero temperatures. But ASH had promised we wouldn't regret it. After living through it all, even though we may have missed a few days of our holidays and faced discomforts, we had still had an experience we wouldn't forget for the rest of our lives.



CAREER CALL

The Careers notice board will focus on **tea management** as a career this week. All prospective estate planters should consult the board for details.



doonspeak

The recent spell of rain was...

A bolt from the blue. – **Arpit Panjwani**

It was good because our change-in-break got cancelled.

– **Aahan Malik**

Very cold! – **Rahil Badhwar**

A display of the rain gods' sadistic intentions. – **Harsh Mall**

It is really good because we got to bunk cricket practice. – **Shivam Pal**

Not good as matches were cancelled and we had to run to save ourselves from getting wet. – **Samarth Jaiswal**

Notes (Copied) in Class

Parag Rastogi (ex- 458 H'06) comments on the copying culture prevalent in classrooms across the world

"Dude, just send me your homework yaar, I didn't attend class and so don't understand what we have to do." A ubiquitous and omnipresent set of words, heard throughout school with slight variations. We copy left, right and centre. Entire projects taken off the Internet. Assignments copied word-for-word. Answers in tests that are identical to a fault. And then suddenly one goes outside the country to find that copying one paragraph from somebody else, without acknowledging it, can lead to suspension/expulsion. At higher levels, even copying somebody else's original thought without proper citation can cause something as serious as a lawsuit. Most of us have come to regard the Internet as a vast storehouse of information (Wikipedia, anyone?), that does not need to be acknowledged or cited.

It was always the more convenient thing to do, copy. I did it, most of my form-mates, seniors and juniors did it. And we were never checked. Only last year, a speaker in the Gombar Speech Contest gave a speech which had been given by a boy two years previously. Another speaker lifted entire passages from an article in the *Weekly*. Although I admit I was rather flattered (the article was mine), the incident raises some very thorny issues. Issues which appear harmless perhaps at this stage in our lives. However, one doesn't always stay in school. And this brings me to an observation I've made in my six or so months of college.

There are swarms of Indians of every hue here at Purdue University. Out of those that I know in my batch, four or five have already been 'caught' for plagiarism. Three have failed entire courses. There are other cases of which I have heard very little. But I did come to know that they also involved Indians. These are indelible blemishes on these students' academic records, which will be questioned at every job interview. Universities in America have been known to suspend dozens of students for copying one test. A friend of mine from Singapore said that there, projects for the A Level exams are checked electronically for plagiarism. On my exchange to a school in Germany, a student was pushed back an entire year for copying in an exam, after a warning. In universities in Canada and America, Indian students are increasingly being caught in plagiarism scandals.

After a while, one starts to wonder if there is something wrong with our education system, or the way we approach the giving of credit where it is due. The ISC rules, as far I remember, mention only cheating in exams and not plagiarism in any other aspect of educational life. And it is students who suffer here, since sooner or later, one has to compete and be critically examined by the rest of the world. Not one class in my entire schooling taught me how to cite sources in essays, papers or projects.

The Doon School has been at the forefront of education in India since its inception, having introduced concepts now integral to the system. It is time we stopped looking at the rest of India, and pitched ourselves against the rest of the world. The IB is a positive step, but the school will have a lot on its plate with batches of students who have no idea what plagiarism even means. The ISC may not have any such concept in its syllabi, but since when have we done only the bare minimum of what the ISC requires? Students must be taught that it is simply not done to borrow other people's work and copy it. A gradual introduction to the idea would probably be better than suddenly punishing offenders seriously.

When I was a kid, I remember being told time and again, often with great glee, arrogance and pride, that Indians can take apart any machine/electronic gadget made in the West or Japan and reverse engineer it to produce something cheaper. "*Arrey ye machine tum hamare Chhotu ko do, woh isko khol kar tumhe nayee aur sasti cheez degaa...*" This is not something to be proud of; it is blatant plagiarism. It takes great ingenuity and skill, and not to mention vast amounts of time and money, to design new products. Shouldn't we be more concerned with when the last time an Indian engineer/scientist made a novel product or original breakthrough? Shouldn't we put our noses to the grindstone instead of battenning off the hard work and ingenuity of others? We must realise that making something more cost-effective under proper licensing is different from just copying it. We gave the world the zero; let's not have the world give us a zero now.

* * * * *

(continued from page 2)

Racism is not new to India though, and all those guardians of 'conservative Indian morality' should occasionally take a peek into the matrimonial section of any leading newspaper in order to get a good, solid dose of it.

Forget even the matrimonial section; a large body of our politicians has taken advantage of this 'r' word to create vote banks for themselves. 'Vote bank' politics is the order of the day, especially around election time. Certain *netas* have inadvertently created a Frankenstein's monster of communal hatred in parts of the country which will, at some point, threaten the unity and integrity of the nation. Not to say that there are no examples of communal harmony in our vast country, but to continue ignoring religious hatred while it flourishes would be foolish.

Shilpa Shetty's success is an example of how racism is more complex than we imagine, and that it is a force which can be both used and abused, in some truly unexpected ways.

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

weekly@doonschool.com



IPSS® All rights reserved. **Printed by:** The English Book Depot, 15 Rajpur Road, Dehra Dun, Uttaranchal - 248009, India. **Published by:** Philip Burrett, The Doon School, Dehra Dun.

Editor-in-Chief: Shikhar Singh **Editor:** Ashish Mitter **Senior Editor:** Harsh Mall **Hindi Editor:** Suhaas Khullar **Associate Editors:** Shaurya Kuthiala, Abhaas Shah, Vishnukaant Pitty, Saurav Sethia, Mansher Dhillon, Rushil Singh **Special Correspondents:** Dhruv Velloor, Pranjal Singh, K.P. Somaiah **Correspondents:** Shoumitra Srivastava, Bharat Ganju, Uday Shriram **Chief-of-Production:** Naman Goel **Webmaster:** Vishal Mohla **Assistant Managers:** Stuti Bathla, Priya Chaturvedi, Arvindanabha Shukla **Special Assistance:** K.C.Maurya.