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Regulars

2

Athletics
Report

3

The Week
Gone By

4

Crossword

4

Bihar: Battle Royale

Arjun Singh reviews the recently concluded elections in Bihar.

Commonly called a 'do or die' phenomenon in contemporary politics, the recently concluded legislative assembly elections in Bihar have dominated the headlines as a topic of extensive debate. With a huge electorate that commands factors outside the ambit of just 'governance' i.e. development, caste and the youth population, the settlement of key parties into several factions has further intensified both the race and uncertainty surrounding its result predictions. Of these alliances I've mentioned, two are the primary contenders to form Bihar's next government – the incumbent *Mahagadhbhandhan* or 'Grand Alliance', and the National Democratic Alliance led by the BJP and three regional players; the communist 'Left Front' having been marginalized this election. Their campaigns have boasted an intensity unknown to prior elections, for the verdict of Bihar involves a battle much larger than just one state. On the larger platform, it is a battle of perception and political credibility.

The Grand Alliance comprising the Congress, Janta Dal (United) and Rashtriya Janta Dal (RJD) has campaigned primarily on the past achievements of current Chief Minister (and its candidate for the same) Nitish Kumar, along with tapping into traditional caste vote-banks of the state. On the former front, the alliance promised general changes to the state's infrastructure and youth education policies. Moreover, their campaigns made frequent attacks on Prime Minister Narendra Modi: painting him as a *bahari* (outsider) lacking domestic credentials for establishing a government in the state. In addition, they sought to intensify current criticism of the NDA-led central government to bolster his alleged incompetence. On the caste platform, the alliance adopted a strategy of seat allocation corresponding to a party's traditional vote banks – the Congress fielding upper caste and Muslim candidates; Lalu Prasad's RJD from the Yadavs and Extremely Backward Classes; and Nitish Kumar's Janta Dal from the Kumris and remaining OBC groups.

Nitish's promise of economic prosperity remains popular, leading to the absence of an anti-incumbency sentiment despite the alliance parties' combined 25 year tenure of power. This election however, the other two members of his alliance attract uncertainty over their ability to ensure security within the state, an opinion that rose after the degradation of law and order that occurred during Lalu Prasad's former government. The popular distaste for Lalu (a crucial caste ally) has left the alliance's credibility in doubt across swaths of public opinion - fearing a return to Bihar of the '90s under a government including him. Furthermore, the equation's junior partner, the Congress, still bears a tattered reputation after the UPA's defeat in last year's General Elections – one that may prove detrimental in gathering votes from its allotted constituencies. The election remains crucial to the alliance's two domestic leaders – Nitish Kumar and Lalu Prasad - who seek a resurgence from the loss in last year's Lok Sabha elections. Another defeat would effectively finish their political careers.

The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) banked their prospects on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's continued popularity, with the hope that promises of massive development would transcend caste lines as in 2014. In a series of more specific promises, the NDA began their campaign with a Rs. 1.25 Lakh Crore aid package from the Central Government to vindicate their development commitments. Following this, the NDA turned its focus on women voters – announcing a merit-based distribution scheme of scooters to female students completing school, as well as an expansion of the 'Beti Bachao' programme. Additionally, the NDA made an orthodox appeal to Mahadalit and OBC communities with the inclusion of former Chief Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi's HAM (S) and Upendra Kushwaha's RLSP into the alliance, hoping to attract their vote banks.

With a development-oriented campaign, the NDA was favorably received by the electorate as 'the people's alternative' to the Grand Alliance. However, the fact that none of the its members have ever held power in the state (apart from a short BJP-JD(U) coalition) does much to counter any pretexts for certainty of a victory. Additionally, the alliance's failure to portray a clear Chief Ministerial candidate from the state cost the NDA portions of local confidence (making Nitish Kumar's *bahari* assertions somewhat justified); one here must recall the traditional caste and domestic identities rooted deep within Bihar's people. On this premise, it is doubted whether the NDA's development-campaign would at all be able to transcend caste in the face of the Grand Alliance: dominated by domestic giants and their voter banks. A victory in the face of these impediments would restore credibility to Modi's popularity in the face of notions of its dwindling; the win restoring his 'wave' to the original behemoth.

In view of this myriad of countervailing factors, to draw a clear prediction of the results would be inapt. Personally, my greater concerns are of the return to a lawless state once proliferated under the 'secularist' banner, and I favor healthy co-operation between the state and central governments: the NDA thus being my choice out of pragmatism, with the hope that fundamentalist forces do not take foot. Likewise, the hopes and concerns of sixty million Biharis shall culminate in tomorrow's result, where the verdict of two battles – of power and perception - shall come forth; leaving its mark as a watershed in the state's political history.



Regulars

Accession

The following boys have been appointed as **Boys In-Charge** of various activities for the **forthcoming year**:

Stage Committee: Savar Khanna

LAMDA: Rahul Bhagchandani

The Echo

Editor in Chief: Uday Nath Behl,

Chief-of-Production: Tejit Pabari,

Editor: Chinmaya Sharma.

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

Masterminds

The results of the **Inter House Chess Competition, 2015** are as follows:

Seniors

1st: Oberoi

2nd: Kashmir

3rd: Hyderabad

4th: Tata

5th: Jaipur

House Cup

1st: Oberoi

2nd: Tata

3rd: Kashmir

4th: Hyderabad

5th: Jaipur

Juniors

1st: Oberoi

2nd: Tata

3rd: Kashmir

4th: Jaipur

5th: Hyderabad

Well done!

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

Become a bio-technician and invent a invention.

Rishabh Agarwal, to correct your grammar.

Stop making voice!

Sanidhya Mittal, for English like that, yes.

It's not joke. It's a funny.

Prakarsh Gupta, clearly.

Let's make this moment rememberable.

Keshav Maliah, this one truly is.

"The difference between stupidity and genius is that genius has its limits"
Albert Einstien

IAYP

The following boys have completed the **Bronze, Silver and Gold Standards** of the **Duke of Edinburgh's International Award**.

Bronze Award

Ishan Roy, Abhiraj Lamba, Ritwik Saraf and Kriti Luther.

Silver Award

Siddheshwar Hans, Madhav Singhal and Ashwat Madhok.

Gold Award

Pranav Kothiwal

IAYP Blazer

Ishmam Mahmood Chowdhary

Well done!

Erudite

Rudra D Srivastava has been awarded an **Honour Scholarship** by the **K.C. Mahindra Education Trust** for winning the **Mahindra Search for Talent Scholarship** more than once.

For this, he has received a cheque of **Five Thousand Rupees** along with an **Honour Scholarship Award Certificate**.

Kudos!

Rhetoricians

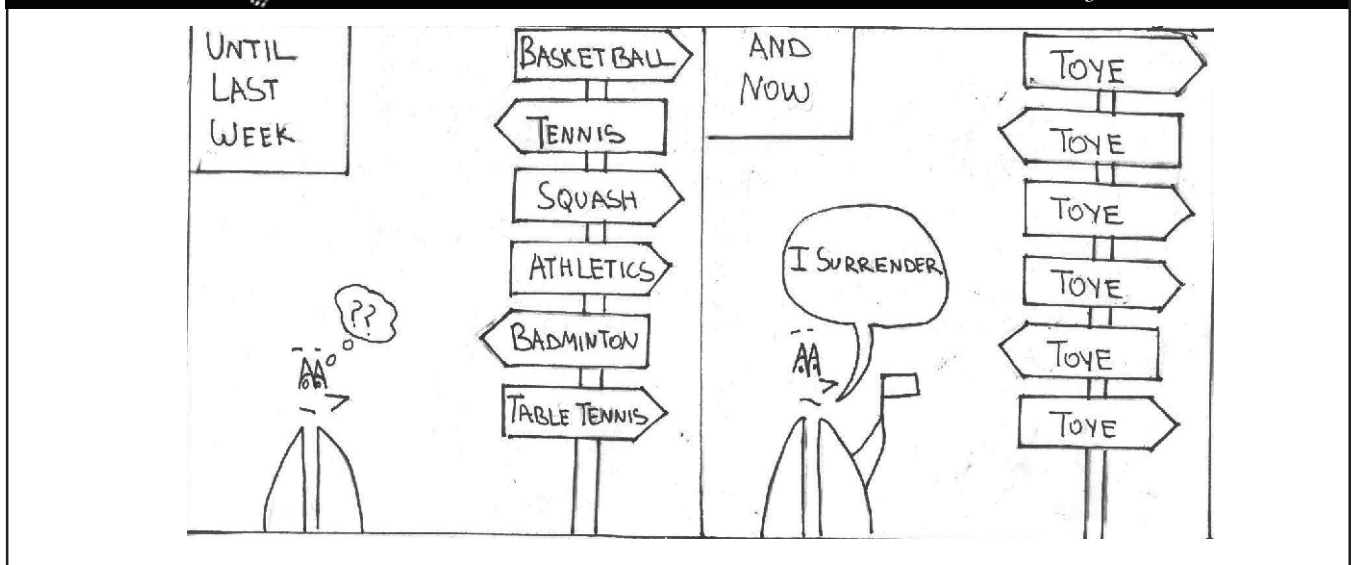
The school was represented by Arth Gupta, Chaitanya Kediya and Atrey Bhargava at the **International Independent Schools Public Speaking Championship** held in **Toronto, Canada**. The team had its best ever performance with Arth Gupta and Chaitanya Kediya qualifying for the **Parliamentary Debating** category. Furthermore, the team also won the **Best Overseas Team** out of 45 participating schools.

Congratulations!

Dosco Doodle

Choices?

Rushil Goyal



Get, Set and Go!

Omar Chishti *reports on the recently concluded Inter House Athletics Competition, 2015.*

Though the preparations for this year's athletics season may have been cut short by Founder's, it certainly wasn't lacking in the intensity one expects from the competition. Returning from midterms to find the football fields converted to the athletics track was a pleasant surprise, with preparations set for the various field events as well. The shot put area underwent a massive make over this season, with the concretization of the same. The high octane track events were accompanied by extremely competitive field events, injecting a fresh thrill into the competition for spectators and athletes alike. From athletes stumbling in the last stretch and losing races by a hair's breadth, to a new record being set in the Mediums Discus throw by Yugvansh Chawla, the competition saw new levels of spectator interest and high standards of competition across the breadth of events.

In the run up to the season, early morning marching combined with late night Founder's practices resulted in more than a few droopy heads in the classrooms, and athletes could be seen pounding the dust every afternoon on the Main Field.

The first day of the competition, with Founder's mania firmly behind us saw the five houses marching behind the School Athletics Captain, Kartikeya Kardam. Unfortunately for everyone, the lime markings used on the track, along with the dust from the leading houses' steps combined to form an asphyxiating cloud of dust which hung over the Main Field. Despite that, arms swinging and lungs burning, the squads managed an exemplary display of discipline and coordination, the end goal always in sight- The Marching cake.

The 100m heats event in all categories promised nail biting finales, with the official's table swamped with requests for information about timings and qualifications. The 1500m finals race in the mediums category was won by the Tata house duo of Rishabh Dev and Shubham Dhiman, who bagged the first two positions in the race, as they would continue to do for all the long distance events in their category.

After a daylong break for athletes, the second day of the competition saw the 200m heats in the three categories, the results corresponding to the results in the 100m heats. Kartikay Garg almost broke the Javelin throw record in the senior's category, falling short of the mark by a few inches. In the Senior's discus throw, Nadir Singh overcame the erstwhile Medium's record holder, Arunabh Utkarsh while in the Medium's Javelin throw Siddhant Kumar and Vatsal Bora bagged first and second positions respectively.

The day ended on a high note, with a crowd gathering around the high jump pit to witness the intense competition between Jaideep Gill and Aditya Verma of Jaipur house to bag the top position in the medium's category while Atreya Guru Prasad and Ajatshatru Singh engaged in a grand showdown to bag the first position in the Triple Jump event in the medium's category.

On the individual level, among the juniors, Udbhav Tomar of Tata house put up a stellar performance in the long jump event and Ravshaan Mangat rose above the competition in the high jump event. Nandil Sharma of Tata house dominated in the sprint events, bagging pole position in the 100m finals and 200m finals. In the Mediums category, Yugvansh and Yashvansh Chawla of Oberoi house dominated the shot putt and discus throw events, winning 24 points for their house through just these two events, while Keshav Maliah won the 100m finals, 200m finals, 400m finals as well as the 100m hurdles in the Mediums category. Daksh Bhatia pulled off a similar feat in the Senior's category, firmly establishing his dominance in the sprinting events and going on to share the Best Athlete trophy with Kartikay Garg.

The pentathlon was held early on Sunday morning. Consequently, the few spectators comprised the officials and some early morning football enthusiasts from Hyderabad and Kashmir houses. Though the demand to institute a triathlon event, in true public school tradition, is strong amongst DoscOs, the pentathlon is held to be one of the pinnacles of sporting achievements in School. Kartikay Garg, last year's runner up in the event, duly came first this year on the back of strong performances on the track and in the Javelin throw.

The 5000m event in the senior's category was the culmination to months to preparation and the performance of the athletes reflected the hard work in every measure. The leading pack comprised Ritzy Rajasvi, Yajwin Tandon and Yash Dhandania, with the pace of their last two rounds not betraying in the slightest that the athletes had already covered 4200 metres. In yet another closely contested finish, the winner this year was Ritzy Rajasvi.

By the final two days of the competition, a certain pattern had begun to emerge in the positions for the cups and Tata house was the favourite for the cups in the Junior, Medium and Senior categories. The relays, with a maximum haul of 84 points for the House cup promised to be intense affairs as a house's fortunes could be much changed with a stellar performance in the relays and the jockeying for the cups was at an all-time high.

The relays did not fail to disappoint, with Tata house winning a majority of the relays and thus securing all four of the Athletics cups this year. The Marching Cake went to Oberoi house, this year's victory completing their hat trick of the Inter-House Marching event.

As the sun set on the last day of the athletics competition, the stuff of legend was already etched onto the wall of Chandbagh, with new record holders and split second victors having been congratulated and discussed over and over again by DoscOs. The emergence of fresh talent in the Mediums and Juniors categories signifies many such seasons like this one, and a bright future for school athletics, in the years ahead.

The Week Gone By

CC Chengappa

With the onset of trials, we were reminded of how quickly this term has gone by, as the main field bore a rather sombre look due to the end of most inter house sporting events. As for other events, the 'appointment month' has begun. Most boys will be hoping for the best, contemplating and deciding their future endeavours at the same time. One can only notice the tense faces as the appointments and awards are read out for the forthcoming year. At the same time, many are relieved that the much dreaded S-Form Second Term is coming to an end. Assembly talks that took place over the week implored 'Desi Aunties' to subdue their gossip! (Something that might hold true for a certain section of the School). As for the boys, gossip continues to intensify in the run up to next term; a detailed report of which will be printed in the weeks to come.

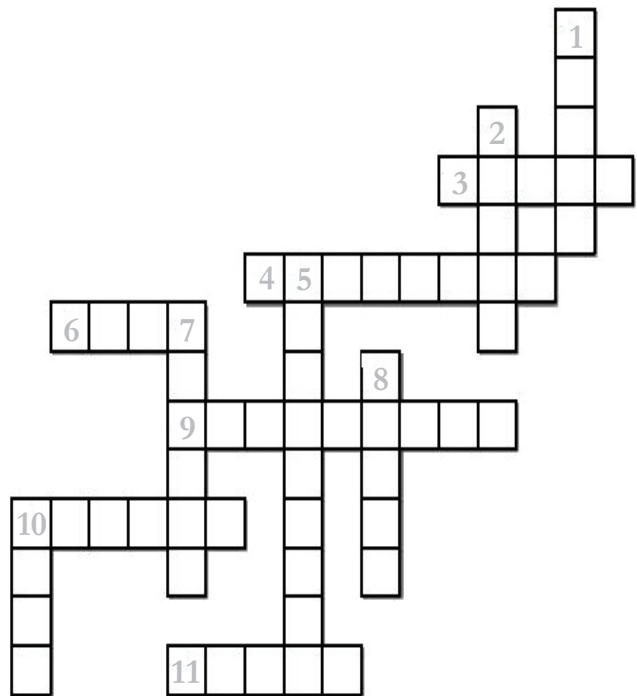
The first draft of the new three term schedule surfaced this week and was instantly the subject of many a discussion everywhere. It involves 'promotional trials' and other such academic endeavours that have been formed with the best interest of the school community. One can only wait and see what this new schedule has in store for us, until then, we must enjoy the last proper holiday that we will get in a long time.

The end of the Basketball season was marked by a brilliant display of skill, speed, strength and zeal on the new courts as two houses vied for glory. Something that was a common occurrence this year was the number of matches that went down to the last point. The final match was one that will be remembered by all, especially for the individual who had a go at his own basket during the match, and somehow managed to succeed.

The coming week will see some weight issues surface- from paper weights to light weights and heavy weights, all training for the much awaited boxing competition. Although practices were cut short due to various other events this term, our boxers have trained well and are now looking to finish off the season in style next week. We wish them the best of luck!

Our very own Game Of Trials seems to be hurtling towards us as we read. If I may say...Winter is Coming, and we must be prepared because our very own 'white walkers' will not spare us.

Crossword



Across

3. Creator of Star Wars.
4. Recently elected, first female president of Nepal.
6. This rapper plans to run for President of the United States 2020.
9. Container of relics in a museum.
10. Only forward in the World 11 announced at the *Ballon D'Or* but not a best player nominee.
11. Inventor of the printing press.

Down

1. Country with the highest GDP per capita in the world.
2. MVP of the NBA 2014-2015.
5. This person plays Jon Snow in the popular TV show 'Game of Thrones'.
7. Most refugees live in this country.
8. This gathering in India in 2011 was visible from space.
10. Mother of Zeus; wife of Kronos in Greek Mythology.

Note: All answers related to persons this crossword refer to their surnames.

Answers to this Week's Crossword	
Across	Down
3. Lucas	1. Sheng
4. Bhandari	2. Curry
6. West	5. Harrington
9. reliquary	7. Turkey
10. Robben	8. Kumbh
	10. Rhea

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