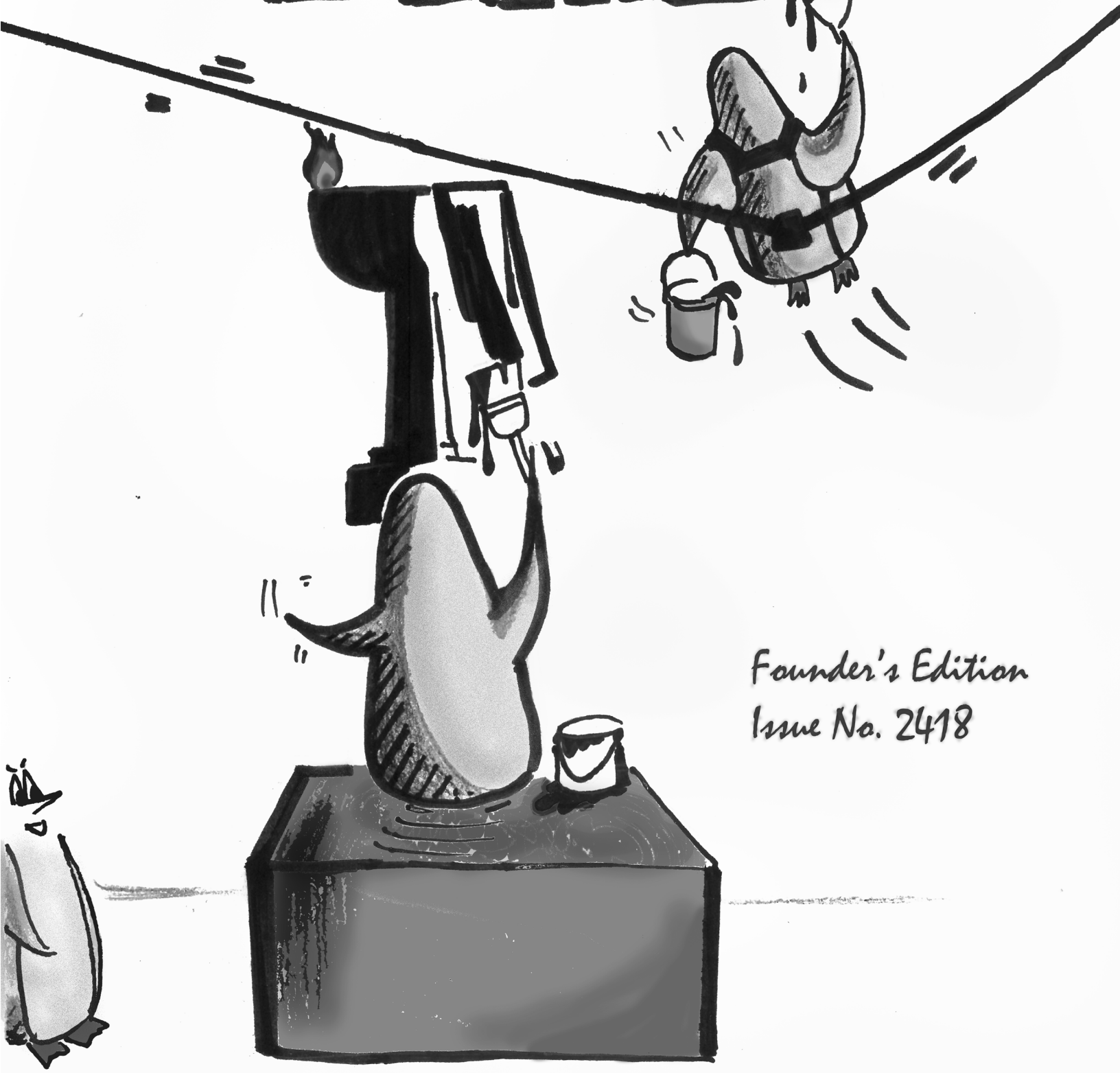


THE DOOM SCHOOL

WEEKLY



Founder's Edition
Issue No. 2418

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From the Headmaster's Desk



At the time of DS75, Doon's platinum jubilee in 2010, the world was deep in economic turmoil and India had just emerged with relief from fears that swine flu would carry off a large part of the population in an apocalyptic epidemic. There is no major anniversary celebration in this eightieth year of our existence – the next big one is the centenary in 2035 – but at DS80 the world is still in political and economic turmoil, and the threat of apocalypse still pours out from our frenzied media, not only daily, but on a minute-by-minute basis. The world economy is still lurching from crisis to crisis like a drunken sailor on the rolling deck of a ship floundering in a storm, an existential fear of shipwreck never far from our minds. New “viruses” have sprung into existence in the form of movements such as Islamic State spreading like a rampant contagion along the major communications arteries of the Middle East and breaking down political bodies established a century ago; toxic debt is still sloshing through the veins of the world's financial system; cyber-hacking infects the internet and phone networks with viruses and malware; fears of ferocious, anti-biotic resistant diseases breaking out in our crowded, polluted cities and

spreading through the airlines criss-crossing the globe at 38,000 feet; all these are a playground for dystopian fiction writers or nihilistic media junkies. In the meantime, we cling to our little gadgets as if our lives depend on them, digital life rafts in a sea of troubles.

The question, “What on Earth is going on?”, a figure of speech we use when perplexed or confronted with confounding realities, should now be taken almost literally. All those legions of economists, commentators and policy wonks pouring out of so-called elite universities, business schools and schools of government and international relations; all those think tanks that are proliferating like mushrooms in the darkness; all those who write the never-ending flow of self-help and “next big thing” books infesting airport bookshops; all those World Economic Forum conferences, all of them seem incapable of thinking their way through and out of our relentless and ever-faster rollercoaster ride. The most striking feature of our age of existential angst is the lack of imagination evident almost everywhere. The educational world we have created seems to have so disempowered us all that we are rendered incapable of thinking and feeling our way out of the atmosphere of perpetual crisis in which we now live.

“ *It is extremely difficult to teach children and adults morality in a world without religion, but The Doon School has always been quite properly secular because it emerged at a moment in this nation's history when religion threatened to tear British India asunder, which it duly did in 1948 at enormous cost in lives and subsequent history.* ”

The problem, it seems to me, is a spiritual one. Not a religious problem, but a crisis of the human spirit. It is extremely difficult to teach children and adults morality in a world without religion, but The Doon School has always been quite properly secular because it emerged at a moment in this nation's history when religion

threatened to tear British India asunder, which it duly did in 1948 at enormous cost in lives and subsequent history. Two historical generations later, almost no-one seems capable of imagining, never mind creating, a world without India and Pakistan at each other's throats. This endless crisis has helped to discredit religion, as have the many conflicts along religious lines since the end of the Second World War. But spirituality should not be confused

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Militant atheists may claim that they believe in nothing, that the universe is a void in which all is random. But the danger in believing in nothing is that we end up believing in anything.

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with religiosity. As Fat Tony in Nassim Talebs' challenging works might say, "Religion and spirituality are not the same 'ing." Militant atheists may claim that they believe in nothing, that the universe is a void in which all is random. But the danger in believing in nothing is that we end up believing in anything. Adolf Hitler once famously stated: "The broad masses of the people are not made up of diplomats or professors of law nor simply of persons who are able to form reasoned judgment in given cases, but a vacillating crowd of human children who are constantly wavering between one idea and another." This was insulting (especially to children), but he had the German people believe that he was a Messiah who would lead Germany back to a Promised Land in which all would live happily and harmoniously forever, or at least for the duration a

heavenly Thousand Year Reich. The German people, their spirits dashed and faith in the future hollowed out by defeat and humiliation in the First World War and the Great Depression of the 1930s, worshipped the man like a god, but instead of rising to heaven, the world plunged into a ghastly, unprecedented hell. Hitler was a response to an existential and spiritual crisis in Germany, and it and the rest of the world paid the price for it.

The German philosopher Nietzsche declared the death of God in the late nineteenth century; and the German people got to worship Adolf Hitler in God's place. Last Founder's, I quoted Paypal billionaire Peter Thiel, that icon (religious word!) of that new temple of worship, Silicon Valley, in his deep disappointment at the lack of real progress brought by recent advances in technology: "We dreamt of flying cars, but all we got was 140 characters [on Twitter]." The pop band The Beatles made waves in the 1960s when they claimed that they had more followers than Jesus Christ; Mark Zuckerberg certainly has and has been raised to the status of a demi-god, alongside the late Steve Jobs, in the pantheon of gods in modern consumer society. Every day some new techie messiah, device or start-up we seem to hope will lead us out of our troubles and confusion and into the promised land is paraded in the media; now that we believe in nothing, we surely will believe in anyone, and anything. Furthermore, great meaning is found in the trivial lives and banal utterances of "celebrities" whose absurd lives, words and bodies are displayed and scrutinized as if they are the very prophets of a new dawn of human existence.

This is not a plea for religion or religious practice, for Doon must always remain a secular school in which boys of every faith, and none, can live and work together in mutual respect, understanding and tolerance. But in the years between DS80 and DS100, the most important question we shall all face is, "For how much longer will the human habitat be habitable by us, and for how much longer will the ecosphere support our continued existence." The answers will lie partly in scientific and technological advances, in gadgets and the great god social media, but the larger part of the work will lie within us. This is the work of the soul and the heart and the imagination, of the poetic sensibilities and human spirit that has taken us on a 300,000 year journey to date, and, hopefully, not just to DS100 or even DS500, but on for another 300,000 years. On Doon's eightieth birthday there is much to celebrate, but also much to contemplate. I wish everyone all the best and good luck on this incredible human journey.

- Dr Peter McLaughlin

Thinking In The Lamplight

Arnaav Bhavanani | *Editor-in-Chief*

Penning this Editorial has been a surreal journey. It started three weeks ago, in the warm glow of a nocturnal lamplight at 4am in the morning. The grand silence that pervaded my thoughts was deafening, because there was so much going through my head that it seemed as though the House Feast was in full swing outside. I shut my laptop; 100 words lay scratched into the back of my Economics notebook.

My destination was always certain: no matter how long I took, it was always going to be my last. No matter how long I dragged it out, October 10 would come knocking.

As I write this now, I sit in the nocturnal glow of the lamplight. It's 2 in the afternoon, but with the curtains drawn, the light is somehow comforting. I feel as I have felt for the past few weeks - that I have more ink than words, and more words than ink.

The Construction

When I sat down with Madhav in the beginning of the term to finalize the design, it hit me that no matter how much we tried, *The Weekly* has a certain character that cannot be ignored. When I see all the other publications in School, with their colour, vibrance and optimum page lengths that match Dosco attention spans, I feel a twinge of envy, but also a serene understanding that while their design character changes with each issue, *The Weekly's* is a constant. Incorporating new design with the Weekly standard isn't easy, but I believe we did justice to it.

Now, the Founder's Issue is finally taking shape. Nails are being hammered in; pages are being bolstered together in blistering conditions. Metal is bending in the furnace, either being discarded or withstanding the heat: articles are being etched into the framework of this issue. The foundations, I hope, are solid; inspired in design as they are by one of the leading chroniclers of our age: *The New Yorker* magazine. I've always imagined the Board of *The Weekly* as something of a construction crew, and *The Weekly* as the edifice that we need to build and dismantle every week.

Make no mistake: The Founder's Issue is no towering skyscraper. It might be longer than most publications in school, but what we always aimed for it to be was an architectural marvel, not by show, but substance.

To that end, the construction is complete. All that remains is this. The very last piece to be placed comprises the last words I will write for *The Weekly*.

A Bit On The Issue

This issue presents some of the burning topics of our time and features work from across the spectrum of our community. Ex Editors-in-Chief, teachers, students across all forms - all have given us their voice - and we have tried our best to include them all. We've also included *Vox Populi* analysis of key questions to reveal a sliver of Dosco contemporary thought. The firmament of this issue, however, is molded by the placing of work. Though seemingly random, poetry and cartoons have been spaced out at regular intervals to break the monotony in blocks of text. This works in a manner similar to that of most modern magazines. More about the aesthetics of the issue can be read in the "*Note On The Issue*" that follows this.

When picking topics, we narrowed the underlying theme on one core aspect: the virtue of thought. To that end, we have tried our level best to include works that will inspire debate and critical thinking, and for first-time readers, form the base from which they begin to shape their critical faculties.

A Writer's Conclusion

I thought long and hard about the sentimentality of this Editorial, perhaps as much as the content itself. In the end, I decided that the first time was enough. Having spent more than 16 hours a day at times on this Issue, I really feel that words will never be enough for all that is due. I have to thank everyone who made it possible- from the members of the Board of 2015 for bearing my eccentricity, to the night guards, who let us stay long nights in the Publication Room to complete the issue, to Abhayraj, for berating all my design errors and then happily spending hours correcting them. To those I have not mentioned, I owe more to you than I can ever repay.

The Doon School Weekly is an institution that has been the greatest constant in my life in Doon, as it has for many before and will be for those to come. While this issue is arguably the best work I have been a part of in the past 6 years, it is only a stepping stone to greater things, to greater lives but most importantly, a testament to those who think.

To the thinkers amongst us: I feel that writing as a pursuit is something that is to be cherished. Our world of sound bites and newflashes is growing increasingly smaller. I feel that somewhere along the way, we are losing a universal appreciation of both the faculty of critical thought and intellectual advancement. It is far more difficult to convey oneself through words when pictures would suffice, but that is what makes it such a beautiful pursuit. Keep thinking, changing, loving the work you do and changing the world around you.

A Note On The Issue

Inspiration isn't easy to find, and even tougher to live up to. This year, for the Founder's Issue of *The Weekly* we've tried to incorporate some new ideas and have based our design on one of the most influential magazines of the world: *The New Yorker*. The introduction of three columns, instead of the usual two columns allows for better and more comprehensive writing. While our design is unique, readers of *The New Yorker* should notice certain similarities (and hopefully a glimmer of its fine quality).

We have also left behind the traditional division of the Founder's Issue into sections on the basis of genre. We feel this actually helps prevent the issue from getting dry and monotonous. With a variety of articles being placed in an order whose logic is based on certain aesthetics, we want you, the reader, to think, to enjoy and to discuss. So don't be surprised if you see a poem right in the middle of an article about the political structure in Hong Kong, or a cartoon about the School in the middle of a story. At the price of structured uniformity, we would like to ensure unexpectedness, so that you are always on your toes as you read *The Weekly*, never truly knowing what is going to come next.

While *The Weekly* has always been in black and white, this time there are a considerably larger number of photos and cartoons, to add a little 'colour' to the articles and the publication. We have also revived the Vox Populi (Latin for 'Voice of the People'), and these little gray boxes that you will see over the course of this issue are an analysis of the opinion polls that were conducted: an attempt to figure out why Doscocs think about certain issues the way they do.

We hope that you enjoy reading *The Weekly*, as much as we enjoyed making it. And we would love to hear what you think about it and what we could do to make the publication better. Enjoy the 80th Founders Day, 2015, and have a pleasant time at Chandbagh. Signing off, the board of *The Doon School Weekly*, 2015.

One Last Time

Devansh Agarwal | *Editor*

I've been told that nothing is constant and that all things eventually run their course. Take School for instance. I recall walking down the road from the CDH to the main building, surrounded by the likes of seniors, form-mates, and banners; all brandishing the might of DS75. I recall asking myself back then "Would I get a chance to be a meaningful part of this grand occasion?" The answer to that question lay on the relatively blank screen of a word document titled "Weekly Article". The exhilaration that every aspect of *The Weekly* both demands and imparts has been my discovery of a constant.

When I picture myself writing this editorial, I am often tempted to describe my relationship with this publication as a journey. However, this would be wrong on one crucial count. A journey is usually made with a destination in mind. *The Weekly*, however, is that road which offers no end. Sure, my School life will soon be over. The bonds that I have formed, the experiences that I have shared, maybe they will last or maybe they will perish. Who knows? However, every ounce of skill that I have developed while serving this publication will not only contribute to my growth but also act as a 'pass on' and hopefully outlive me. In essence, *The Weekly* comprises my legacy as it has for many other individuals.

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I had often wondered in my junior forms whether the effort I put into *The Weekly* would bear any fruit. It took approximately four Editors In-Chief, countless hours in the publication room, being put on probation an umpteen number of times and yes, even getting thrown out occasionally to realize that *The Weekly* gives back far more than it demands. Those Editors In-Chief taught me work discipline and ethic. The long hours in the publication room served as my lessons in perseverance. The probations were my regular meetings with reality. And finally, my moments of 'forced unemployment' taught me humility. It is a concoction of elements such as these that define the principles upon which the foundations of a Dosco were built.

I believe it would be criminal if I didn't admit the fact that there have been instances when I could have contributed far more than I did. The occasions and opportunities upon which my services for this publication have been requested were umpteen. Unfortunately, I was never fully able to deliver. At times, even if I did deliver, my services were inadequate. It is at times like these when I am reminded of, arguably, the most important quality of this publication.

Forgiveness.

Even though we board members make mistakes that are usually set in stone, *The Weekly* does not hesitate in exonerating. One would almost consider it ironic that the school's journal of record would be so lenient in forgetting errors; errors that at the time of occurrence seemed rapture-like.

Therefore, in conclusion, I believe it is only fair to pay respect where it is due. Hence - to that one solemn computer which at one solemn time ran a copy of page maker, to those merciless size 12 Garamond placement procedures and brutal page 2 standardizations, to those desks and that room which now serve as a repository of experiences and memories, to those pieces of writing which faced both the Editor's wrath as well as his favor, and finally, to those companions who have grown and let me grow:

Thank you.

Reviewing a Dosco's Yatra

Anvay Grover | Senior Editor

This Editorial marks one of the last, if not the last pieces of writing I am going to pen down for *The Weekly*. Therefore, I wish to use this opportunity to address an issue that I have observed over my time in School, especially over the last two years. I am going to talk about an ideology of a particular kind, which due to its nature is responsible for certain consequences in Doon's civil society.

Let me begin by talking about the daily schedule we follow at Doon. What the authorities have in mind is that a typical Dosco should wake up for PT, have breakfast, attend classes, play games or attend an STA/SUPW before settling for toye. This is meant to provide a Dosco with all-round development; a much-prized facet of the Doon School education. How this plays out in reality is quite different. I was speaking to a C-Former recently who told me what his daily schedule really was. He wakes up half an hour before PT for fitness for some sport, then attends PT, attends classes and runs a change-in-break about three times a week. After classes he attends practices for multiple sports, doing some form of fitness for each. When it comes to toye, he is so tired that his mind is never engaged with his books. He can't wait to fall asleep.

This is just an example of how Doscos are inadvertently impeded from holistic growth in School. Most Doscos struggle to balance their activities, sports and academics. And they are not to blame; this is a consequence of the culture that they are part of in school. Amidst this perplexing balancing act, we somewhere lose sight of the purpose of education - to foster excellence. We compromise on learning for learning's sake and we compromise on intellectually challenging a student. The issue is compounded by the fact that reading and writing is restricted to very few students in any batch.

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Moreover, what is perhaps most critical is that many times we do not realize what we are missing out on. I think it is best here to make a distinction between doing well in examinations and intellectual challenge. We often make the mistake of assuming a correlation between the two. This is clearly not the case. The nature of our School examinations is such that a student, by studying concertedly for a short period of time before the examination is enabled to perform well. This is why I said that I had begun noticing this issue in the last two years, after I had shifted to a different examination style.

It was only when I started doing research on overseas universities and the candidates that applied there that I took proper notice of this cultural phenomenon. Universities want students who challenge themselves outside the classroom as well; they want students who reflect on certain experiences that they have had. This is because intelligence partly comes from exposure. It comes from being nurtured the right way. The way I see it, this is not happening at Doon. The difference between scoring well in exams and expanding one's mind needs to be clearly underscored for us to at least understand where we are lacking.

In a similar vein, this is why I believe that switching the education board for D-A Forms to IGCSE is a definitive step in the right direction. This system might be light on theory, but if it can make Doscos go further than what they are taught in class, it is worth it. However, more nuanced changes will be needed in the School culture to inculcate the desire for excellence. Masters must promote inquiry and further reading and students must choose a few select things that they wish to participate in. I think that these decisions can have an impact in the manner Doscos approach education.

A Guest Appearance

Rishabh Agarwal | Senior Editor

Being awarded the tag (quite frivolously might I add) 'Guest Appearance' by the members on the board of *The Weekly* was not something I took as a criticism for my far lesser involvement in dealing with issues such as pagination or problems that surfaced rather spontaneously during the week. I knew that being inducted onto the board of *The Weekly* at a stage as late as August in my S-Form meant that I was only an added support to the far more experienced editors already on the board. And I am grateful to everyone in understanding that, and using my abilities as a helpful resource while limiting my involvement in matters of administration.

So why sit up after midnight finishing a column or a report when you could be in that sweet repose as the heads next to you? This, I think, is a question that I can answer after my short, albeit cherished tenure as a Senior Editor for *The Weekly*. What my experience on the board has taught me is that we write because we can. If one could read the following explanation without hearing a tone of condescension and brag, it would help me put my point across. I have observed that not everyone is gifted with a certain aptitude for writing. Structuring a piece, writing it with a certain flow of ideas and using the correct tone and tenor of the language is not something that comes naturally to everyone. This is not something I would like to term as 'talent'. In fact, I believe this flair for writing resists being classified under any such label. It is just a certain clarity in thought

processing that is more abundant in some than others.

'With great power, comes great responsibility.' So for those with this flair for writing and this power of the pen, it is their duty to voice the opinion of the masses. *The Weekly* caters to (with a certain amount of censorship) satires, commentaries, letters, poetry and a whole host of other modes of literary expression. Then for those with the aptitude and the ability to frame this expression in its most intense and powerful form,

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it becomes a moral obligation to help the masses express themselves through the art of writing.

On a final note, this ability to shape people's thoughts or voice their opinions does give me a sense of joy and satisfaction. Motivating people to write letters to the editor when they feel they have been wronged by the School community, or helping them make a subtle comment on the shortcomings in our society by giving them ideas for a cartoon were things I cherished doing as a Senior Editor. In retrospect, I am not quite sure why I was taken into *The Weekly*.

Maybe it was to fill the missing spot of a fourth board member, or to ease the workload on the senior-most members. Whatever it was, I am very glad that it happened.

Ink

Arnaav Bhavanani

For the simple lack of paper I
jury-rig your shifting form,
Wipe the deck and dip the pen
in the ink pot of your storm.

For the complex lack of paper I
bolster poems across your arms,
Paint my stories on your skin,
Pour my souls into your palms

I drop the anchor, pull you closer,
Rake our forms from stern to stern,
Watch the Ink run gauntlet then
walk the plank to ocean's churn

For the complex lack of paper you
splash your poems across my chest,
Your felt-tip mutinies, and
grabs a pause, exhorts a rest.

For loss of ink, we're done today
For long there will be more to say
For now just kiss my ink-less lips
Stow your words and save our ship.

Silent Sentience

Abhayraj Jain | *A story on failure, discovery and persistence.*

*Epiphany, heresy, novelty, ingenuity, industry, ubiquity.
Science. Usually in that order.*

At 6 am, the sun began its assault on vast fields of rye. At midday, the only thing resisting the harsh solar stare was a lonely pear tree, as it lent its shade to a prostrate mass of perspiration. The perspiring mass looked exhausted, as if it had fought the sun's onslaught and lost.

A grasshopper leaped gracefully from a fallen leaf to the nose of the mass, causing it to wake with a start. It raised a hand to stretch, while the other wiped sweat from its brow. With a short yawn, it sprang up and faced its workbench. Littering the bench were metal pieces, surrounding an odd contraption that almost resembled a common radio.

Kurt gingerly lifted the contraption and carried it towards his modest house; a downcast but determined look adorned his face. Entering by the back door, he placed it on the kitchen counter and turned to choose a recently picked pear from a basket. He whistled a tune as he laid the pear on the chopping board. Raising the knife, he brought it down in a swift motion, decapitating his lunch.

An almost inaudible whine issued from his machine. He stared at it for a moment; decided it was phantom noise. He lifted the knife again, this time carefully, slowly slicing the pear into equal halves.

The whine grated his ears again. This time, the sound was almost indignant, and considerably louder - it sounded like a coal train grinding to a squealing halt. His throat uttered an illegible sound of its own accord. He dropped the knife and turned to regard his machine with a quizzical look.

His voice trailed off as he lifted the knife again, this time stabbing the pear in its heart. He dropped the knife at the resulting scream. As the metal fell from his hand, the nails faded off the chalkboard. A sudden understanding flooded his mind.

He sank into a chair in awe of the moment. He had worked all morning; through the night, even, to create a device that could sense frequencies far beyond human auditory ability, and render them audible. He had thought it a failure when a dog whistle had produced no reaction, and sunk to the ground in defeat. But no - it worked! Perhaps it only detected the slightest frequencies, such as those produced by plant life? Determined to test his hypothesis, he raised trembling fingers toward a potted plant by the sink. Steeling his resolve, he ripped off the bottom-most leaf.

The resulting shriek filled the entire house, like metal being dragged across stone.

He shuddered as he realised the implications of his discovery. "This is monumental! And what of the trees? If a small potted plant can scream at the moment it's limb is amputated..." A wondrous look creased his eyebrows.

"Everything alright, Kurt?" called his neighbour, snapping him out of his reverie.

"Yeah Eric," he replied, "everything's just fine."

He looked up and out of the small window at the vast farmland surrounding him. Abruptly then, he reached for the 'off' switch - a look of pure terror crossing his face - as Eric pushed his lawnmower toward the grassy field.

Doon, Indian Education and International Curricula

Dr Kanti Bajpai | *Looking back, looking forward.*

The School first considered the idea of the International Baccalaureate (IB) as far back, I think, as the 1980s when Gulab Ramchandani was HM. I mention this to remind us that Doon was attracted to the IB curriculum from quite a long time ago, well before the current crisis in the Indian examination system. Indeed, given that the IB was founded in 1968, Doon's interest in it dates back to its infancy.

Why did Doon not opt for the IB earlier? I am drawing on memory here and to some extent on hearsay, but a number of causes apparently were at play. The IB is expensive – and certainly for those times. Also, it was a “foreign” examination, and this led to some discomfort, plus Doon had been an early, enthusiastic, and shaping member of the ISC. It was recognized too that the IB is demanding in terms of facilities, teacher training, and pedagogy. The School was unsure if it was therefore viable. The IB Diploma begins in the 11th standard, which meant the School would have to run two systems – the ICSE until the 10th and the IB and ISC thereafter. This would have strained both boys and masters, it was felt, at a time of other challenges.

Why did the School change its mind? In a sense it didn't, because joining the IB was never decisively rejected. A final decision was held in abeyance, with an understanding that the idea would be revisited. This occurred almost as soon as I became HM. The fact that it was revisited had nothing to do with my becoming HM; rather, it reflected the growing dissatisfaction in the Board of Governors and the Indian Public Schools Society (IPSS) with the ISC. Perceptive members of our leadership saw that the burden on students and teachers of rote learning, the often dull curriculum and associated pedagogy, and the increasing difficulty of getting college admissions in India meant that the holistic and ecumenical education of the School was under threat.

The Board and IPSS also sensed an opportunity in the new environment in India. The economic reforms of the 1990s had taken hold, GDP growth was surging, India was more open to international trends and standards, and Doon parents like other middle class parents had more money in their pockets. The School had hired more teachers in the 1990s and early 2000s, and it was embarked on improving the infrastructure at Chandbagh. Most importantly, a decision was taken to wire the campus for internet and to introduce technology into the classroom. In short, by 2003, the IB was likely to be affordable for many parents and to be more viable as a curriculum with growing staff strength and infrastructural enhancements. As more boys were going abroad for their college education, it was also likely that the IB would be a popular choice.

The IB offered several advantages. I remember at the time that we looked quite closely at other examination boards including other Indian boards, an American-style curriculum, and the IGSCE. We eventually narrowed the choice to the IB and IGSCE. Both were impressive, but our conclusion was that the IB was the international gold standard: if we were going to make a change it should be in the direction of the best. The IGSCE has, I believe, made changes over the years. It was then, and is now, a very strong curriculum.

Coming back to the IB, we used to joke and say that if the IB did not exist, Doon would have had to invent it! Or that Doon had the IB before the IB! When we were visited by the IB team at the time of our application, it noted that Doon was the Indian school perhaps most ideally suited to the IB. There are many great schools in India and several are doing the IB with distinction; the remark simply acknowledged that Doon had many systems and structures

that were commensurate with the IB, indeed pre-dated the IB. I am thinking in particular of the School's emphasis on adventure in the curriculum (embodied in the midterm trips most specifically), our commitment to social and community service, and our insistence on an all-round curriculum. The last was in part an inheritance from the British public schools; but in 1935 Doon was in all probability ahead of its British cousins in co-curricular depth. The School still compares quite well with schools elsewhere on the extent of its co-curricular activities and the energy with which these are pursued by the boys and masters.

The IB is now nearly a decade old at the School, and I believe is thriving. Boys who have graduated with the IB have excelled. Helped by the new careers counseling and college applications process, the School's university placements are better than ever. The School is also set to introduce the IGSCE, the Cambridge examination system. It will therefore continue to be "one school, two systems". Nearly a decade on from the introduction of the IB, Doon should be very well placed to handle the demands of a dual system.

What will the two examinations do for the School? The plain and simple fact is that in a globalized world an internationally-recognized and acclaimed set of certifications is a great advantage. The CBSE and ISC are internationally recognized; I would not say that they attract the adjective "acclaimed". My sense is that the IB is still the most acclaimed curriculum. Among English language certifications, the IGSCE also scores very high. Both examinations are a much better fit with the educational philosophy of the Doon School, and in this sense their adoption will make the School a happier curricular place.

Both curricula are at the same time more demanding of one's critical faculties as well as intellectual independence and creativity. In a complex world, there is a premium on an intelligence that is skilled and that can think outside the box. It is vital in a world as densely-connected and information-soaked as ours to be able to "connect the dots" and to penetrate the miasma around us, to construct new patterns and to imagine innovative ways of doing things. The IB and IGSCE, to my mind, equip students far better to think rigorously and imaginatively in a way that the Indian (and most other) curricula do not.

To conclude, Doon at 80 is embarked on a curricular adventure that was immanent at its founding and at the core of its DNA. As in all adventures, there are risks. I used to say that the importance of the midterm expedition is that it teaches the boys and masters how to handle a setting of "measured risk". Life is a risky adventure. Without an element of risk in human existence, there cannot be growth and progress. Offering the IB and IGSCE, the running of one school-two systems, is an extremely measured risk for a school so rich in talent, experience, leadership, and resources. As an Old Boy, I can say in all candour that I wish I was back in Chandbagh as a student, sitting in a classroom transacting either one of these two wonderful curricula! The current and future boys of Doon are lucky, and I envy them.

The HM, the Board, and the IPSS are determined to make the School one of the best schools in the world. Bringing the dual curriculum is part of that quest. In the deepest sense, there is much to celebrate at Founder's Day.

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The Sounds of Silence

Arth Gupta | *A reminder of the importance of silence.*

This article addresses some issues that have long existed in our lives, but for some reason are always subverted by what goes on around us. It is in this context, where words dominate, either on the side of citizens, or politicians. When something like the 'Vyapam' scam happens, words are as commonly found in the mouth of an accused politician as meat in a vegetarian's.

To those who are unaware, the following happened - Vyapam is the Hindi acronym for Vyavsayik Pariksha Mandal, a self financed autonomous body in the state of Madhya Pradesh, responsible for conducting several entrance tests in MP. The results of the tests are used to place candidates in government jobs and educational institutions. The scam involved some members of the Mandal accepting bribes from students in return for higher ranks in the examination. The scam also involved cheating, copying, manipulation of answer schemes and records and leaking the answer schemes. Till now, more than 2000 members have been found guilty and have been arrested in connection with the scam.

When an individual in a position of power is accused of such a dealing, the media finds itself asking questions that need answers. However, these are not the questions that bother the accused, for they have a more pressing question to answer first: to speak or not to speak. An event like this leads to the emergence of a

situation where silence has the power to communicate more than words ever could. And when the efficacy of silence is in review, one is sure to be presented with a moral or an ethical dilemma.

Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi chose to stay quiet when asked about Vyapam. Silence in such a case seems to be extremely ineffective, and at times even counterproductive when used as a tool to establish moral superiority in order to present an image that is not coherent with reality.

The real question that comes to my mind though is not one that questions the credibility of ministers, but that of fellow citizens.

Often we believe that the road to success progress and inclusive citizenship is a goal independent of the recipient, something that should solely be the responsibility of the state. Forgetting that fundamental rights come along with duties, we take for granted that we as citizens have an active role to play in the functioning of the government. The Vyapam scam goes back to 2009, when the first PIL was filed regarding the case. Since then, there have been many who have suffered, many who have failed, and all because it was truly not their fault. Six years is what it took to peel the Band-Aid off and expose the nature of reality. If the citizens of the nation turn a blind eye to a crime they are witness to, then they don't deserve to be pointing

fingers at those who are silent.

Mahatma Gandhi used silence as a tool to fight. Non-Violence was used as a weapon, not as a means to celebrate indifference. It was a situation that demanded its citizens be active rather than be passive, engaged, rather than indifferent, citizens, rather than individuals. The last best time to do that was then. The next best time - now.

I agree with Dante who said that the "darkest places in hell are reserved for those who maintain their neutrality during times of moral crises." The culture of silence is one that we have unconsciously and unknowingly cultivated since Independence. This culture has been ingrained in our minds so deeply that most of us nurture it unknowingly and involuntarily. With deep roots in the history of the nation, it continues to affect society even today. From the time a child is born, he is taught not to question, not to disobey and not to respond. We are told to choose silence over debate, and passivity over activity. Progress for humanity is only made when some indignant man raises his hand and asks 'why not' to every explanation and 'why' to every assumption.

To conclude, I would quote Thomas Jefferson who said: "All tyranny needs to gain foothold, is of people of strong conscience to remain silent." The most important symbol, in the English Language perhaps, is the question mark, without which I

presume we would still believe death was reasonable for the man who went too far. I urge you to use this symbol today, tomorrow and whenever you see something that should not happen. Society cannot progress if bound by the shackles of a culture that is self-imposed, self-created and self-sufficient. We must, at first, break free.

The Thought Manifesto

Ritvik Khare | *The vision statement for public intellectualism*

Often used in our daily lives, words like ‘intellectual,’ or its derogatory cousin, ‘pseudo-intellectual’ have become embedded in our vocabulary. While the former is used to elevate the value of a person’s opinion on various aspects of life and society, the latter often questions the motives behind this critical thinking and reflection. Amidst such accusatory mayhem, I present my feeble attempt of forming a vision statement for public intellectuals from all the corners of the world and defend the budding intellectuals of our generation.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his essay, “The American Scholar”, defined an intellectual as a human who embodies all human action and potential – a sportsman, a teacher, a coach, a farmer, a fighter, an artist, a cynic, a Pollyanna, a worker – and critically examines various aspects of the society in the pursuit of truth. The intellectual aims at being a pivotal point of transition of knowledge between generations as he preserves the historical ideas and modifies them with modern concepts. An intellectual’s mission in life is to advance human freedom of thought and ensure the free flow of knowledge. This mission often involves disrupting the unquestioned zeitgeist, often isolating the intellectual in his attempts. His defamation must not stop him, as his obligation is not towards any recognition that he might receive, rather towards the betterment of

his own intellect as well as others’.

An intellectual’s first duty is to be true to his intellect and the society, even if it berates him, as he is their base of opinions. An intellectual true to his own intellect will be one’s own lie detector. He, and I do mean he or she, must be flexible in his ideals, except the ones that ensure the reliability of his words, and welcoming to criticism of his opinions. He must not get defensive over his opinions using the old trick of play of words or any other, except if his opinion stands firm on the pillars of truth. He must search for an absolute truth, with an assumption that there is one, for if he begins doubting the nature of truth or the fact that there is an absolute truth, he must delve completely into his alethiological endeavors, departing from the field of engaging in a discourse. Julian Barnes, in his book, “The Sense of an Ending” asserted that a thinking person has the philosophical duty to examine both the nature of life and the conditions that come with it, and if he decides to renounce his life, it’s his moral and human duty to act on that decision. Parallel to that, an intellectual has the same duty to examine the nature of society and offer solutions to the normative problems that plague it, and for no reason whatsoever must he refrain from making his opinions public.

An intellectual must be trained in a particular field, for it is this training

that allows his facts and opinions to develop in a productive manner. When he decides to speak and write about his discipline to an audience other than his contemporaries, he becomes a ‘public intellectual’. A level 1 public intellectual discerns opinions strictly regarding his discipline and progresses to level 2 when he relates his area of knowledge to the social, cultural and political world around him. Level 3, a step that must be taken with great caution, is when he or she decides to speak on subjects other than their field of expertise. Level 3 intellectual is a prominent figure in academic circles and he must take great responsibility in his position of influence. He must be aware about the limitations of his knowledge and must recognize his personal prejudices and must strive to remove any, for they might hinder his pursuit of truth.

High school students with their little hats of philosophy, unaware of their limitations and aggressively defensive if exposed, often fall into the lure of recognition and approval that comes with being an intellectual and fail to realize their duties as one. This is in no way an attempt to discourage them or affront them, but a warning to the realities of the society, a society that is in a state of crisis due to an apparent lack of intellectual vigor. So budding intellectuals of my generation, vilified by many as “pseudos”, I only ask you to remain true to your intellect and to yourself and strive with passion, not for wealth or fame but only for an unfading responsibility that you owe to society and your goal, Truth.

If Only They Knew...

Chaitanya Kediya | *Poverty, drug-addiction, hopelessness, and their effect on a 'family'.*

The light drizzle gave little respite from the raging sun. The sweltering heat beat down even as rain steamed on the road. She sat at the traffic light, in the midst of this desert cloaked in asphalt. She watched her son lovingly as he walked across the street, barefoot, naked, and dirty. He had a smile running across his face, and amidst the dirt his teeth shined like white pearls. He clasped the round coin in his hand proudly and brought it to his mother. She looked at him, pleased to see that in the few minutes that the boy had he had been able to beg for something. She took him into her lap and sang to him as the cars sped by. They were truly alone, irrelevant specks, not even worth looking at. An interesting paradox, seeing as how people usually gawp at nakedness. Poverty then, drives away the crowds that are attracted to scantily clad women.

She looked at him, as her hand grazed his cheek. She wondered how she would ever tell him about his birth, or his father. She felt ashamed when she remembered that he was more than just an illegitimate child; he was the child of abuse. He had been born out of her lust for drugs, and his father was the man who supplied her to this date. She eyed the coin the boy had in his hand, and thought to herself whether she now had enough for another hit. She promised herself, it would be her last one. Empty words of course, devoid of meaning because of their repetition. While the boy slept all alone, by the traffic signal, the mother slowly crept away. She reached the usual spot, and saw

the boy's father lurking around. He smirked, he knew why she had come, and he stretched out his hand. She took out her box, full of coins and the occasional note, while telling him that it was enough. The man looked

at it, and took out a small packet of white powder, her elixir, tossed it at her, and grinned. She grabbed it and stared at it with a mad delight. She quickly poured out the contents and took them. In her state of frenzy

Ode To A Toad

Krishna Lohiya

The world grew weary. Time thundered on as it
Had for ages hence. The skies roared;
Clouds filled with water as the Earth braced
For impact. Nothing prevented the
Drop as it sped to flatten itself on the back of the magnificent Beast.

It stood proudly at the edge of a cliff,
Spotted back, rough, scaly skin and all.
The tongue shot out, wrapped around the fly,
Returning it to the mouth of the Toad.

The Beast turned, hopped, its hind legs extended,
Toward the fractured, fractaled stone ribbon,
Very aware of the young giants running.
The wind buffeted past, as one giantling,
On the verge of gianthood, nearly squashed it.

Frightened, it scrambled past the twigged-trees,
Over the edge and into the sewer beneath.
Heart racing, gasping, the creature barely
Rested a second when it heard the dreaded sound.

In the smallest fraction of time, it was over.
The snake licked its lips, grinning at the
Late toad's cousin in the distance who,
Petri-fied, raced out of the sewer
And onto the stone ribbon where he
Was promptly squashed flatter than rain-drops
When they fell on the ground.

The world grew wearier and Time rolled on as it had for ages hence.

she sat there, murmuring to herself, occasionally pointing animatedly at people around her.

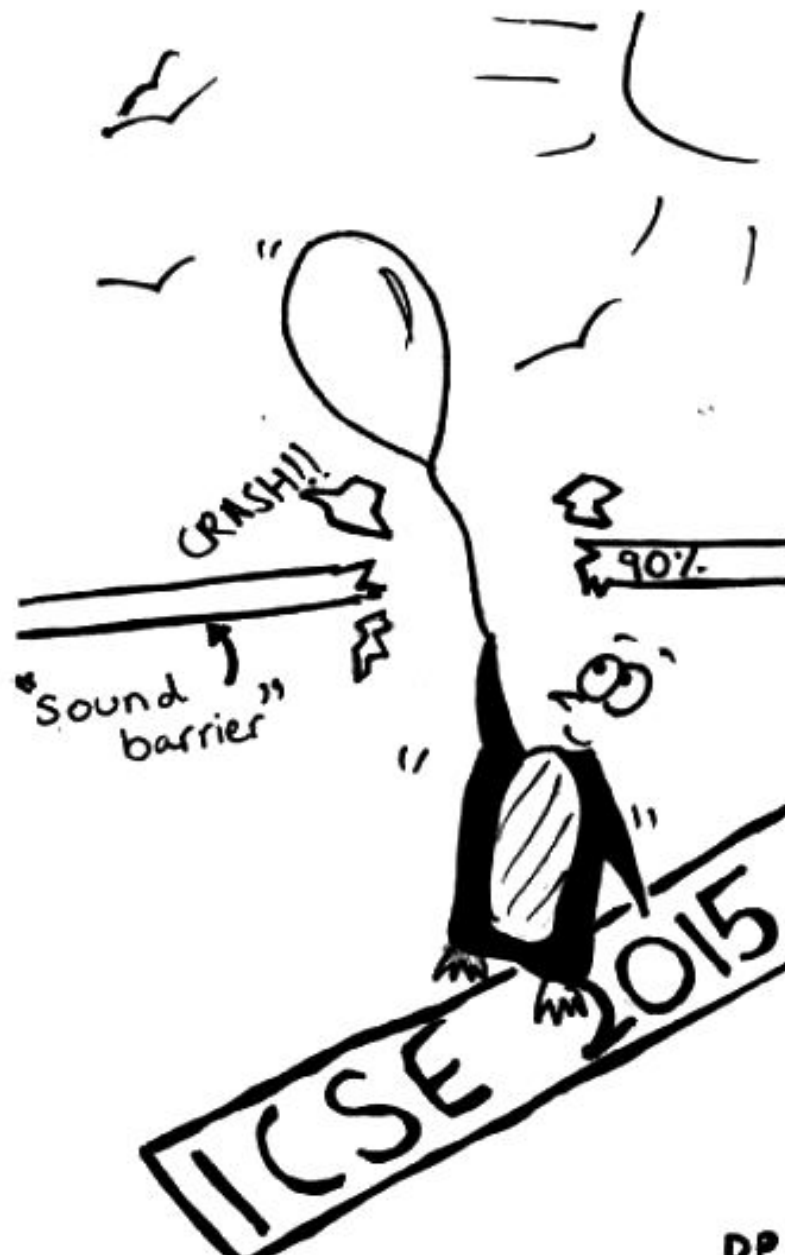
After a few hours the boy woke up, and started searching for his mother. He was a young child, probably five or six, but who kept count where they lived? He was worried, but this had happened before and he walked to the spot where he knew his mother would be. She was asleep, and the boy curled himself near her. He was emaciated; the shape of every bone was clearly visible under the taut skin. Every morsel of food was a luxury. Night dawned and his stomach rumbled as he helplessly tried to go to sleep. The mother, indifferent to her surroundings, snored loudly.

She woke up the next day to the beatings of the police officer, as he hit her repeatedly with his *lathi*. She hurriedly grabbed her child, and ran away. They went back to their traffic signal, and waited patiently for the morning rush to arrive, so they could earn once again. But the boy looked weak, and tired, and he wasn't able to walk. The mother felt worried and she soothed her child as he lay on the footpath. She tried her best, as she knocked on each tinted car, pleading for money and food, but all she received was their apathy. She went to the nearby tea stalls, hoping they would spare her a morsel, but even there she was threatened, and shooed away. She returned to the child, tired and empty-handed.

In this weariness, her craving returned, and impecunious as she was, she began wondering what to do. Where there had once been love, hate began to seep in. She blamed the child for her woes and worries. She had sold her body to finance her

addiction, and now she was stuck with this baggage. Suddenly, it struck her that the child was the burden; it would be better if she just got rid of him. She remembered that his father, her supplier, was also in the business of child trafficking. Perhaps he would have some use of the child. She dragged the boy to the spot, and saw the man. The man, was pleasantly surprised, his master would reward him handsomely for this child. The woman handed the child over, and in her madness, looked for her reward. The man threw her a packet, considerably larger, and quickly left with the child.

The oblivious father happily counted the thick bundle of notes he had received. Their child cried quietly as he was dragged far away and the mother slipped back into her cocktail of ecstasy and delirium.



The Dragon's Democracy

Arjun Singh | *An evaluation of the constitutional document governing the city of Hong Kong*

In 1842, at the end of the first Sino-British opium war, both belligerents signed the Treaty of Nanking; where the defeated China ceded the harbour city of Hong Kong to the victors. Another 'opium war' later, Britain was able to wrest the Kowloon Peninsula - a proximal area - from China as well. However, it relinquished permanent control over these areas in 1898; instead negotiating for a lease lasting 99 years over these territories. The move had economic roots: aimed at maintaining the important British trade monopoly with far-eastern nations. Despite facing a Japanese occupation during WWII along with a political shift in mainland China, the islands' lease to Britain remained intact; the final handover took place in 1997 after nearly 150 years of British Rule.

While the newfound People's Republic of China embraced communism in 1949, the region of Hong Kong retained its western-style liberal democracy under Britain. Coupled with its capitalist economy, the colony flourished as an important centre for trade, tourism and investment, remaining stable in times of crisis. It consistently held a high HDI rank and made major developments in education, infrastructure, and public housing. These achievements contrasted with mainland China, where often-struggling conditions and political suppression caused its population many pains: none of which were ever felt by the residents of Hong Kong.

As the century-long lease neared

expiry, the fall of communism in Europe prompted China to view Hong Kong's system as a financial asset. To complement its economic liberalization, China decided to preserve Hong Kong's capitalist arrangement for fifty years after repossession. For such an initiative, however, Hong Kong as a territory would require to retain its democratic laws that contrasted those of Mainland China. To facilitate this demand, a coalition of Chinese and Hong Kong representatives drafted a constitution-like document which would bridge Chinese possession with capitalist democracy. Termed as Hong Kong Basic Law, it was established in 1990.

Under the Basic Law, the new Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is not legally bound to China's Constitution, instead possessing its own set of laws valid for 50 years after 1997. The law provides Hong Kong's citizens inalienable rights of speech, assembly and conscience. In accordance with capitalism, the right to private property and free enterprise are also protected, retaining the Hong Kong Dollar as legal tender. Though loosely-responsible to the mainland, the Basic Law preserves Hong Kong's sovereignty over all issues, and remains the only document in force guaranteeing autonomy from China.

Politically, the Law establishes a government structure resembling the US Constitution- with three independent branches. The Executive Branch, headed by a Chief Executive

(the de facto head-of-state), wields the responsibilities of enforcing laws and policy control. The 70-member, directly elected, Legislative Council forms the territory's parliament, and is vested with powers of approving executive laws and legislation. Hong Kong maintains a single unified judiciary, with an apex 'Court of Final Appeal'. However, most legal activity is exercised by its subordinate institution- the 'High Court' - having both original and appellate jurisdiction. The Basic Law further subordinates duties to the Magistrate's Court (which includes a Juvenile Tribunal) and the District Court, both of which handle minor infractions.

Though similar, Hong Kong's founders took to modifying the system against traditional flaws in republican democracies. A distinct reform was creating Hong Kong's electoral system, today widely regarded for its political novelty. The Basic Law stipulates the establishment of 'Functional Constituencies'- special seats which represent citizens through their occupations in civil bodies and economic sectors. While electing the Chief Executive, eligible voters choose electors within the constituency of their occupation rather than residence: creating seats for sectors such as Agriculture, Finance and Transport. Unemployed citizens vote within a separate constituency. Electors, chosen through a Proportional Representation system, are elected to the Election Committee (an electoral college) which nominates

the Chief Executive, who is nominally confirmed by the Chinese Government. These constituencies also possess reserved seats within the Legislative Council. Parliamentary elections for these seats are largely restricted to corporate bodies rather than all workers, giving some voters the controversial ability of voting twice. Though debatable, the process uniquely allows business interests to be represented in government, given that they contribute greatly to Hong Kong's prosperity.

In spite of its autonomy, final interpretation of the Basic Law lies with the Chinese Legislature. China's exercise of this ability, albeit rare, is often controversial. Its recent usage was in 2014 when the Chinese government attempted to modify elections for the Chief Executive by restricting nominations by the Election Committee to candidates who "love China". The reform clearly contravened the 'freedom of conscience' protected under the Basic Law, and instigated mass protests owing to its outright rejection. Similar protests in the past have led to the inception of an 'Umbrella Movement' against Chinese domineering- which Hong Kong has (so far) been able to resist.

However, the impending question remains: 'What happens after fifty years?' A non-permanent agreement has left Hong Kong's bearing an uncertain fate, placing the burden of decision on future generations. Instituting far-left change has constantly met with fierce opposition, and a system change could deteriorate prosperous conditions within the city. While the Basic Law still has a few decades left, it remains to be seen whether China will proliferate

communism at its expiry, or allow the Hong Kong democracy's survival.



His Angel's Last Sigh

Krishna Lohiya

God's tears fell from the sky as he lay,
His most devout worshipper on his bed
waiting for the gentle arms of death to
carry Johann away to meet his deity.

His eyesight long gone but his hearing
remained as good as it was when He had
bestowed it upon the father whose child sat
at the organ, playing a partita.

Johann groaned in pain and right before the
end, his son stopped to tend to his father.
The father heard and could not bear his
unfinished Melody. On the verge of

a stroke, Johann woke and hobbled to the
Organ, sat and finished his last tribute
to Him, as His tears fell from the sky.
Then, with a sigh of satisfaction,

knowing that he had pleased his creator,
his God, the court composer lay and with
a final sigh, he smiled and closed his eyes.
His Lord had recalled his Angel to his world.

The Weekly...

Pratik Basu | ...Or *How One Innocent Idea Continues To Haunt My Life.*

Joining the Editorial Board of *The Doon School Weekly* was the worst decision I have ever made.

You see, I had no intention of doing anything but gliding through School, head down, no fuss, no muss, emerging unscathed by effort and ambition on the other side of the ISC, happy to join whatever mediocre college would be willing to accept me, studying whatever innocuous subject I could find, and then settling down into a slow, steady life of domesticated and paternal contentment until my Final Graduation.

And then I met AD. Or, as those who know him so well would tell you, I MET AD!

It all started innocently enough. Some friend (in retrospect, some friend he was) read some essay I had written for some exam and suggested that I submit it to *The Weekly*. Flustered by this unexpected turn of events I acquiesced rather meekly, without for a second considering the monumental impact this innocent decision would have on my life to this day (many, many, many years later).

A strange, sage-like figure approached me (again, innocently) while I was making a rather sorry attempt at playing hockey (Field Hockey for my fellow US denizens). Rather off-handedly he told me he enjoyed my submission and perhaps I should consider making another contribution. Given that I was trying

to keep from getting murdered by the onslaught of forwards making their way down the pitch, I agreed.

Naturally, I forgot all about this, and a few weeks later (not as innocently this time) the strange, sage-like figure materialized seemingly out of thin air and wanted to know about my promised submission. Terrified at the prospect of being spoken to by teachers outside the classroom for the next six years, I hurriedly wrote another piece and submitted it to *The Weekly*.

This became a pattern: AD (as the strange, sage-like figure was called) would materialize, I would be terrified into doing his bidding, and he would disappear into the mist. The requests would evolve: why don't you join *The Weekly* Board, why don't you try out for a debate, why don't you audition for a play, why don't you...

Now mind you, these weren't really requests, more like commands from up on high and the strange, rather unexpected thing was that I found myself enjoying it all. The late nights putting the issues together, tracking down submissions, making the trips to the printer (those rare, innocent moments of freedom from campus), delivering the issues to the CDH before dinner, then having to start all over again. *The Weekly* was so much... FUN.

I was ruined.

When the time came to make that

terrifying leap into the world beyond Chandbagh, inspired by my time at *The Weekly*, I decided to set my sights further afield than I had once imagined, much further. The next thing you know I found myself shivering to death in the exotic land known as Upstate New York. Perhaps I was trying to break free from *The Weekly's* grasp, but even 7,000 miles away it would continue to haunt me.

Realizing that perhaps Optical Engineering was not quite as creatively stimulating as initially imagined, I sauntered into a Film Studies class. Big mistake, very big mistake. I was hooked, and somewhere I knew that AD was giving me that glasses-on-head-downward-facing-I-told-you-so smile of his.

Eventually I made my way to a consulting firm, ready to settle into my previously dreamed-of life of excellent ordinariness. But again, I felt that old familiar creative pang, and the next thing you know, I'm moving kit-and-caboodle (literally) across the American heartland to go to Film School. Chasing me through the asphalt rivers running through those vast expanses of the American heartland was AD's laugh.

While the rest of my Dosco classmates were doing the things that I longed to do (working, marrying, procreating, becoming, gasp, grown-ups) I was chasing my dream in Graduate School, the way that AD once chased after me through campus. And again, just like the old days at *The Weekly*, I was rather enjoying myself.

I am no novice to calamities

Nehansh Saxena

I am no novice to calamities.

I was born on a night that wrung with pain.

Thunder fell upon the roof above me like arrows.

The darkness evolved into murk.

Clouds formed gloomy shadows.

The moon was not prepared for even a faint visit.

He decided to keep himself concealed

that night, not facing me.

The line of electricity was cut off;

Perhaps, for me, to see dark as my first light was what I was destined for.

I have developed an ability to see through it today.

My fifth birthday drew blood.

There is still a motif,

between my nose and lips, of pain.

It was a mere fight with a friend: a fight to be forgotten.

I haven't forgotten it though, but he has.

The scar to linger was mine, not his.

Why didn't he have another memory, for him to keep?

Perhaps, for me, to have blood drawn, and see a grave wound,

was enlightenment on the futility of such things,

I feel no superficial pain today.

My tenth birthday drew heart;

I felt genuine tears,

Not for myself, but others.

21 died and 133 injured in blasts not far away: a forced smile over my face,

and then a cutting of a cake filled with guilt of deep blood red,

as my heart lost over those invaluable hearts that still beat

without a body to live on.

Perhaps, the forcefully unfurled smile

was a reminiscent of deliberate ignorance.

My wretched heart now has learnt to hold in.

As I turned fifteen this year,

my soul was drawn.

A lost son washed ashore.

A lost daughter washed ashore the next morning.

Clad the same as they had when they immersed in depths unmeasured,

they had returned after a long voyage,

of hope, then despair and then, shipwreck.

They drifted ashore, perhaps,

to snatch my soul, and keep it with their selves.

My form doesn't hold itself anymore.

I managed to get myself through Graduate School and got myself a nice steady gig in Corporate America. This time I was determined to get it right. I got married, got a grown-up car, a grown-up house, grown-up friends, grown-up pets... everything geared for me to slip into grown-upness. Life was going to be perfect.

I was wrong. So. Very. Wrong. Sigh...

Again, the familiar (innocent) itch returned. Again, AD and *The Weekly* loomed over me. And the next thing you know, somewhere in between emergency surgery, and a nun, and those delicious painkillers (a story for another day!), I decided to chuck it all up and follow my creative muse (again). I decided that I wanted to make movies.

Somewhere out there in the land of strange, sage-like figures, I could hear AD laughing.

So kids, the moral of the story is that if you find yourself being approached by a strange man during a hockey game, do yourself a favor, turn around and...run!

Otherwise you'll be stuck following your dreams.

Mr Pratik Basu was the Editor-in-Chief of The Weekly from 1992-1993. He is currently the Head of Development at Vinod Chopra Films in Los Angeles, USA.

"AD" refers to Mr Amarnath Dhar, Master-in-Charge of The Weekly when Mr Basu was a student. He taught in Doon in 1962-63, and again in 1993.

The Future Of Reservations In India

Omar Chishti | *On the future of the reservation system in India.*

'Reservations' and 'quotas' are heavily loaded terms in the Indian dictionary; used at risk, for fear of offence, since almost everyone maintains a strong view either for, or against, the existence of the system of reservations and quotas in a 21ST century democracy. Keeping this polarizing nature of the subject in mind, I shall do my best to remain objective and restrained in my denunciation of the system; and try to explain the myriad shortcomings and failures of the system without resorting to the patronizing prose that one typically expects in a piece on reservations.

To begin with, I must declare I fall under the 'General' category and hence do not have any benefits bestowed upon myself by the reservations system. Before my stance is dismissed for being inherently anti-reservationist on that ground alone, I hope readers will be cognizant of the ideals of *The Doon School Weekly's* editorial process and trust that strongly prejudiced material would not be allowed to deface the pages of this publication.

The first subject to be settled before the well etched pattern of discourse on the subject is repeated, namely the cries of 'Unfair' from non-beneficiaries and the replying 'Correction of past atrocities' from the other, is understanding the ethos on which

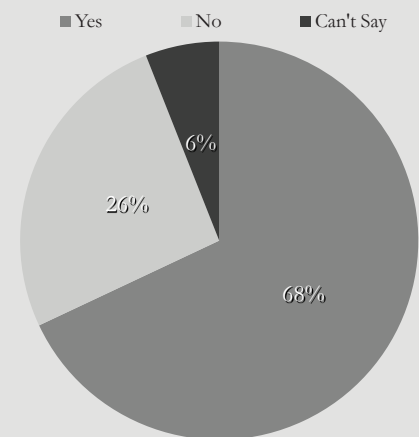
reservations were born. 'Affirmative action' is a concept that is already past its first century of existence in India, having been introduced by the British back in 1902. Caste based, and religion based, reservations were provided for in the 'Communal Award' system of elections instituted in 1933; strongly protested against by Mahatma Gandhi, the system survived thanks to the efforts of BR Ambedkar, and led to the division of the Indian electorate on religious and caste based grounds. The Communal Award system was a facet of the British policy of 'Divide and Rule', and it was perhaps the most successful of the lot, resulting directly in the Partition and acting as a deterrent to the rise of a functional democracy in India.

Democracy did rise though, in 1947, and now more than 68 years of independence lie behind us. The system of affirmative action has survived; has the time for it to die arrived yet? Hardik Patel has been called for talks with the Gujarat government and the 'Dandi March' protest has been called off. The first one helped grant us independence from the British, the second may well have been the first nail in the coffin for reservations in India. It is deceptively simple, actually, the "Why?" behind this turn of events. We, the people of India, gained independence in 1947 only from the British colonialists who applied the policy of 'Divide and Rule'; we never remembered to cast off the shackles of the policy itself.

VOX POPULI

Have punishments in School lost their essence and impact?

Punishments have been reduced in recent years. However what most seniors feel is that the general sense of discipline that was brought about through punishments has been lost, over the course of time. The juniors too feel that punishments are still an important and prevailing mechanism in the School's functioning. The degree and intensity of punishments has definitely decreased in the past few years. This decrease gives more freedom of choice to the juniors and thus increases the probability of mistakes and complacency. Hence, they think punishments in School have lost their essence.



Slumber

Varun Sehgal

The gate was wide open, the wind was blowing hard.
Leaves on the trees rustled as I entered the graveyard.

There was not a being to be seen, not anyone in sight,
Only gravestones and trees cast their shadows on that starry night.

The wind had slowed down, an owl was hooting from a nearby tree,
It was quieter now, though the howl of a wolf could be heard distinctly.

I treaded down the worn out footpath, walking with a measured stride,
Looking for my dear friend's abode, so I could rest by his side.

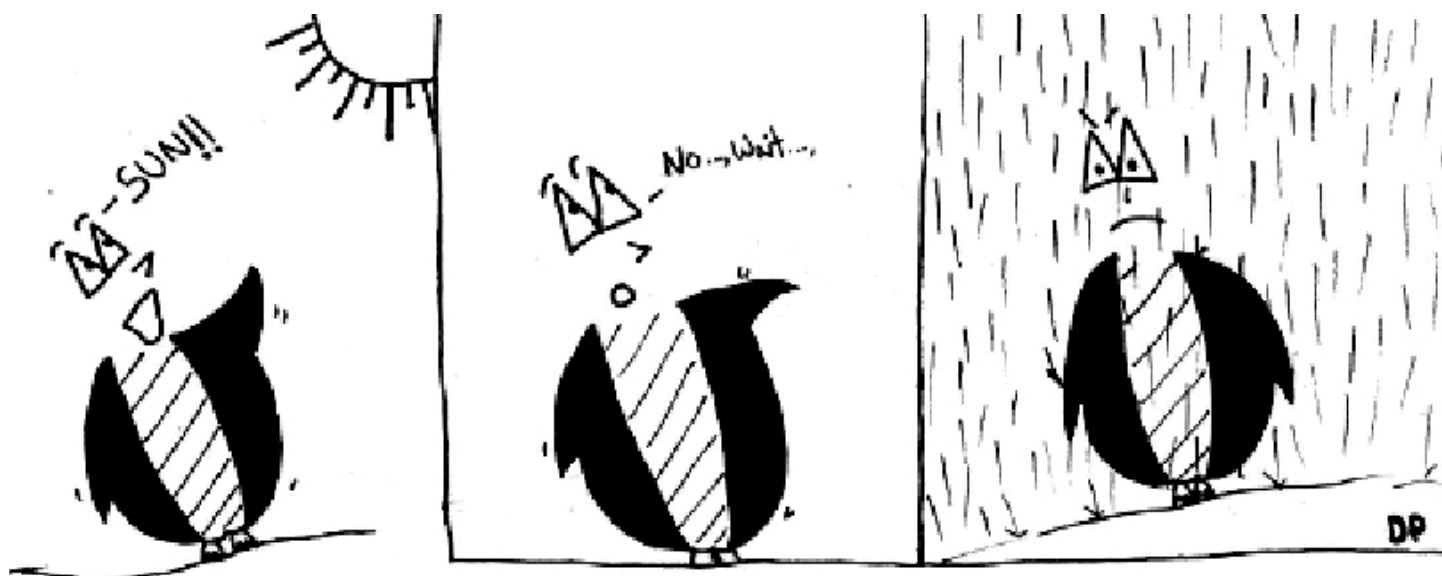
When I found him, I lay down against the tree he sleeps under,
Waiting for the night to end, waiting for him to wake up from his slumber.

Today, caste based affirmative action provides Indian polity with the tools to perpetuate the policy of divide and rule. The British began affirmative action to divide India. Tagore's immortal words - 'narrow domestic walls' give us an idea of this divide, which continues to erect barriers well into the 21st century. Think: Caste is a separate issue from economic deprivation. The first tenet of a meritocracy, of capitalist thought, of a democracy serves to delink 'birth' from 'achievement'. Reservations conveniently serve to link the two again. The problem has always been casteism; affirmative action only serves to regulate the caste system, an arachnoid system granting the 'Certificate' of backwardness to the selected castes and branding the identity of caste ever more prominently on the people.

Half a million Patels congregated in Ahmedabad recently, on force of their common caste. If only affirmative action had died with the Raj, perhaps today caste would be a forgotten aspect of our identity as Indians, one and all, and the other weekly, the Sunday Matrimonial, would not read like a census of

prevailing castes in the nation. So much for identity; one must never forget the impediment affirmative action places on India's progression toward a meritocracy. When a system relegates the aptitude of candidates secondary to their birth, it becomes difficult to accept said system as just in any manner whatsoever. Economic parity can be achieved by ending prejudice and close mindedness;

true, the easier path has always been the institutionalization of division but putting an end to division itself is a challenge. That is a future I hope we live to see borne to reality.



A-Moral Religion?

Krishna Lohiya | *Scrutinizing the folly of the current interpretation of religion.*

The Babri Masjid issue, the Godhra riots, the ISIS crisis- this is my inheritance of religion. Most of us come from backgrounds where a certain degree of religious belief has

“ *The idea of God is meant to be of a higher and stronger supernatural force that is benevolent towards all people, a force that is merciful and accepting of all people.* ”

been instilled within us from a young age. However, at a more societal and universal scale, how many of these values are preserved in moderation? Let me be explicit - I am not against the edicts of a particular religion. What I am appalled at is at the interpretation of religion today. The ideals and edicts in the religious texts of old like The Tanakh, The New Testament, The Gita have very little in common with what their respective religions have, for lack of a better word, evolved into.

What do I believe in? Given the inheritance of religion that I talked about, that is the dilemma that faces me. Do I believe in my sacred text? Do I believe in what the so-called, and sometimes self-proclaimed, gurus claim? Priests are supposed to be the men of God and, therefore, are trusted with carrying forward God's word. However, some of these people go to the extent of saying that other religions are bad and are

blasphemous. I really doubt that my God(s) or any God would say that. The idea of God is meant to be of a higher and stronger supernatural force that is benevolent towards all people, a force that is merciful and accepting of all people. How, then, can the men of these merciful and tolerant Gods call other religions evil? According to them, God's love is limited to the believers. For some reason, the all-merciful and the forgiving Being just stops caring and loving and discriminates between people simply on the basis of their beliefs.

According to many anthropological studies, religion was meant to be just a term given to a set of beliefs which acknowledged the presence of the supernatural and decided to revere it. The idea of organized religion originated from here and then different branches of religion were formed. All these branches then formulated their own ideals and texts with one common aim- they were all geared towards a happy and successful life of the believers. There was no mention of Gods being supremely controlling, there was zero evidence of God being pleased with you if you put a 100-rupee note in the daanpeti, there was no proof of God forgiving you if you paid for the indulgences. Yet this has become most synonymous with our generation's idea of religion. I want to know why, if an entity is shown to be omnipresent, he/she can only be worshipped as idols in temples. The words of one our school songs make for a beautiful example-

*Moko kahaan tu dhunde re bande,
mein to tere paas mein.*

*Na mein dewal, na mein masjid,
na Kabe Kailaash mein*

As translated by Rabindranath Tagore-

*O servant, where dost thou seek Me?
Lo! I am beside thee.*

*I am neither in temple nor in mosque
I am neither in Kaaba nor in Kailash*

It's strange how the very thing that serves as the inspiration and the reason for some of the most amazingly brilliant art- music, sculpture, paintings and literature- has also served as fuel for something like the Crusades. There is a phrase that I believe most aptly captures the deviation of the religious schools of thought- human intervention. Religion, as an idea, was meant to be a way of life. The idea never proclaimed itself to be one that pledged an almost ultimate belief in one's faith. It was simply a guide, of sorts, for people to live their lives by. As an idea, there was nothing wrong with religion or even religious beliefs in moderation. Of course, these ideals then grew to become over-arching and polarizing schools of thought because of the manner in which they were exploited. Indian sages used to take an ample amount of money and food to conduct certain rituals which had no relevance or impact on the life of the individual. It was the same with Christianity in the Middle Ages- priests used to give out Indulgences in whole sale in return for, in some cases, an absurd amount of money. Human intervention has caused the

pollution of something that inspired Bach's most divine and complex music to a radical ideal which led to the burning of people simply on the basis of difference of belief. Tolerance and mercy are virtues that lie, or at least should lie, at the centre of all religions. Nearly all religions portray their particular God(s) in a forgiving, merciful and benevolent light. Why, then, are the so-called people of God promoting radical and completely opposite schools of thought?

The afterlife is another one of religion's most potent and powerful arms. Since the very advent of religion, the idea of heaven and hell has driven fear into the minds of the believers. People who wield the ability to control people with regard to their beliefs have, for quite some time, continued to change the manner in which a belief group looks at these ideas. Many contemporary religious icons go to the extent of saying that only believing a particular religion ensures a place in heaven and a person whose faith lies in another religion is doomed to the flames of hell. The afterlife is a rather vague concept. Like the idea of deities, there is no

conclusive proof of the presence of these realms. These ideals are based solely on faith and there is no concrete evidence of the existence of such realms but one's belief in a certain religion, coupled with his/her desire to have a good life even beyond the living, drives people to worry about these concepts.

Why has religion, something meant to be a way of life, come to be synonymous with superstition, radical belief, power-hungry religious icons and violence? Human intervention has polluted an innocent idea and made it commercial and something to be fought over. Far from ensuring the life it was meant to for its believers, religion and its interpretation have caused more distress than good. Kant said that the only thing that does not change across societies is good will. Good will allows people to transcend the differences of religion or culture and live in cohesion and ensure a good life for one's self. That was also meant to be the role religion plays in our lives-it was meant to be a guideline to help people live better lives. But because

“ *Religion, as an idea, was meant to be a way of life. The idea never proclaimed itself to be one that pledged an almost ultimate belief in one's faith. It was simply a guide, of sorts, for people to live their lives by.* ”

religion's interpretation has caused it to fail in its mission, maybe it is better for us to adopt this particular philosophy of Kant. Maybe it is time for us to place the ideal of "good will" where religion is, because good will almost nearly ensures what religion is meant to, across the boundaries of the strongest human differences - differences in beliefs.

Silence

Aryaman Kakkar

Silence. Does such a word exist?
If it did, it certainly doesn't now.

Not here, not really anywhere.
Everyone hears the machines in the
mist.

The droning factories,
The honking cars,
It grates the ears to hear
People chatting, even from afar!

No peace, no silence.
Only excessive words and violence.
Do you see any end
To this horrible, wretched trend?

Is this how we pass? Buried in words
and violence?
Why? What grudge do YOU have
against silence?



Die Stiegende Feuer

Arnaav Bhavanani | *1st Position*

Foreword: The Enigma of Youth

Many feel that when people die in the clutches of war, it's the end of the world-that lament and sorrow manifest themselves inextricably into the lives of those living. But it's strange how war affects us less than we think it does. When the Second World War began, Prime Minister Churchill ordered large mental asylums to be set up around the city of London, fearing that the impending devastation would drive people out of their minds; that they would be un-able to cope with their losses. But when the bombs did fall, he received the shock of his life-Londoners went about their lives as though it were any other day. There were no riots in the streets, and tears shed were few and reserved for those loved most. The structures Winston Churchill built to support the weak became obsolete, because nobody really needed them. The truth is that war changes people, and often brings out the fact that nobody truly is weak. When we're at the brink, we are capable of change, and it is especially in the youth that this power to adapt conflagrates. For the youth are inexperienced enough, they are immature enough to be the first to adapt to these new surroundings. Those older may be wise, they may be more equipped to deal with violence physically, but mentally they are interminably scarred because they can completely understand what they are seeing, and further reflection only entrenches their feelings. In this story, Manny watches his family

disintegrate before him, and his father die right next to him. But he moves on, and far more quickly than many of you reading it will be able to understand. And it's because he is too young to assimilate the events he experiences. On retrospection, moreover, the probability of this happening is actually far higher than is widely thought. For it is Manny's youth that empowers this strangely ephemeral mindset; to realize that the world has not ended, that he has a whole life ahead of him. And it is this power that we underestimate. The power of inexperience to lift us out of the darkest nights and reveal the light at the end of the tunnel. The ability to make something out of nothing and revel in the joy of such premature success. It is said that one's youth is formative.

What an understatement.

Die Stiegender Feuer or The Rising Fire

Manny Berlitz lay on his bed in a refugee home. The ceiling above him swirled in complex vicissitudes of light, and as he watched it, a strange, apocryphal sense of emptiness settled over him. He knew not from where it came, for more than a month had passed since his family had left him. Time had passed quickly in the melee of aid workers and refugees, and though he often tried to grasp it as it slipped through his fingers, it seemed a senseless fight. It was in these fleeting moments of emptiness that Manny remembered

the nights spent alone with his father in the woods. The freezing wind cutting through their winter jackets as they poached the ducks on the other side of the farm, the deafening silence of the night as they waited; he replayed those nights again and again until he could no more. He remembered his loathing for the farm's owner: Old Tucker. What a glutton that man had been, and a selfish one too! So often he had yelled at Manny's father, and even blocked their water tubes in spite! But now, reflecting on the past, Manny wondered if perhaps it was Tucker himself who had made their poaching such a thrill- to watch the guards shoot aimlessly in whichever direction they heard a sound, to hear the dogs barking in the cold winter nights while they ran though the undergrowth- the joy at watching the old man's face go red in anger had been worth all the setbacks. And it all seemed as though it would never end. "It's Papa and Manny against the world, son." That's what his father had said.

And now he lay, six feet under. The fire had been kindled.

In these fits of self-exploration, Manny often wondered how life might have been if the British hadn't come. How peaceful they were- their side of the farm offered them enough to live on, and to make up for the solitary nights, they used to poach Old Tucker's ducks. It was blissful, and even Mama used to liven up their dull days with stories of her childhood days in Vienna. Manny's



sister, Annabelle, was a beautiful young girl. And being five years old, she often used her childish innocence to get prize apples from Mama, which often depleted their selling stock. It was a golden, visceral life.

It was on a bleak morning in November that Manny was out in the fields, tending to the crops, when he felt the earthquake. Immediately he lay down on the ground and looked around for help. The sound suddenly stopped, and Manny heard a crackling. He was confused. It was then that he got up and saw the flames eating through the walls of his home, while a warplane zipped off overhead. It hadn't been an earthquake. It was a bomb.

While he processed the situation, the fires leapt hungrily into the bleak mountain air.

Manny sprinted to the house, delirious with fear. He couldn't see anyone, and his lungs were straining against the smoke. Brushing inhibitions aside, he ran in. The first body he found was Annabelle's—bloody and torn, her delicate frame

torn apart like a worthless sheet of paper. When he saw her he broke down, because she was holding an apple in her hand. Her eyes were open, devoid of the innocence of her life. Even in death, she evoked a sense of love that was unparalleled, and made it all the worse.

Stumbling bleary eyed through the burning wreckage, he soon found his father, struggling to lift a heavy beam that had fallen on him. Manny cried out—his father was still alive! Wiping his eyes, he ran to him and tried to lift the beam. Too heavy. He pushed and pushed, but to no avail. The beam would simply not move.

And that was when he fell down, while the rising fire enveloped his consciousness.

Manny's body simply couldn't take the fumes anymore. He fell to the ground, his vision fuzzing into blackness, his mind shutting down. He tried to reach his father, but the exertion was too much. He fainted. When he woke, the stars were out, but the flames, fed by the fresh mountain air, refused to die out.

Blinking, he tried to recollect. It hit him like a hammer—PAPA! Manny scrambled to his feet, only to see his father lying under the beam, his eyes glazed over and hands reaching out for him.

Overhead, the stars twinkled through what had been the roof of Manny's home.

The fires rose.

Manny Berlitz lay on the bed in the refugee home. The ceiling above him swirled in complex vicissitudes of light, and as he watched it, that strange, apocryphal sense of emptiness left him, to be replaced with a determination. He was eight years old. No father, a missing mother, a dead sister. He was alone, and would have to make it through alone for the rest of his life. But as the light stopped swirling, Manny Berlitz got off his bed. Grabbing his few possessions, he stuffed them into a small moleskin bag, and in the early hours of morning, left the comfort and

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shelter of his helplessness and walked into the unknown. He was ready to move on. Ready to fight. And as time passed he would understand the true implications of his past. But his hatred for the enemy of the Germans, though immature, made him an unstoppable force.

Inside his hardened heart, he felt a kindling.

The fire, now inferno.

Three years later, Manfred von Richthofen attended a military school in Wahlstatt. He excelled in all outdoor activities, and was a star pupil, show-

ing a special interest in piloting war-planes. His foster parents doted on him, and managed to secure for him a place in the 1st Regiment of Uhlans Kaiser Alexander III. From then on it was all onward and upward. His success was unmitigated by his lineage: the Richthofens thought it prudent to keep that a secret from the prying eyes of an untrusting world that craved for its heroes. For that was what Manfred was: a hero, for the best part in the eyes of the German people.

On 21 April 1918, Manfred von Richthofen, the Red Baron, was shot down deep in British territory. His

life was meaningful, his youth had not been consumed by regret. Rather, the events of his life had fuelled his destiny to greater heights, and he was perhaps one of the most successful war pilots to tear through the war-zone. Manny took three years to become Manfred, and the rest of his life to become the Red Baron. He was a prizewinner, a man of many talents, and a German hero. Arguably, he almost changed the course of an entire war. The Red Baron was the pride of the German air-force.

He was the flame.

Through The Netted Veil

Atrey Bhargava | *2nd Position*

Through the netted black veil of her hijab, Adan's eyes sparkled like the rest of the city. She walked swiftly through the roads of Paris, consuming every sight she could see. People would be amused on seeing the shady yet delicate figure, covered from head to toe, stopping every now and then and again dissolving in the crowd.

Although she was fifteen, she carried herself like a lady. Full lips, curvaceous figure and a rosy complexion gave her a few many second glances. Adan Fatima belonged to the wealthiest families of suburban Paris, studied in the best of schools and was a favourite amongst her friends, relatives and teachers.

Her friendly demeanour, intellect and beauty endowed her will and gave her all that she had ever desired in the eyes of the World. She was

certainly lucky.

Alas, this luck landed her with Akbar, a jihadi.

She first met him through a friend, and this acquaintance evolved into something much more for her. Akbar was a man of great physique and a warm smile. At the age of twenty he walked the roads of Paris as if he owned them. His thoughts were radical; he had aspirations of a Muslim world, a place where words from the Quran framed the law, where the creator, preserver and destroyer was Allah itself.

Adan tried her level best to start a conversation but it was useless. Akbar simply ignored her. But she could sense something and there certainly was something in his ignorance that made her try harder.

Only Akbar knew how much he was in love with her but he could not let himself be vulnerable. He had a purpose, a duty of creating His World. He was supposed to leave for Syria after recruiting new comrades from Paris and Adan certainly could not be a part of his mission. However he too wanted to love and be loved; he wanted someone upon whose shoulders he could rest his head when things went wrong. Somehow deep down he knew that he and Adan were meant to be. Such meaningless thought, meaningless to him came to his mind.

Adan in her own blissful world was disillusioned by the power of love. She followed Akbar wherever she could. Soon, Akbar gave way and the bud of their relationship started. She would meet him every day after school and within months their relationship grew from strength to

strength. Akbar too despite all his efforts could not get over her. Adan knew Akbar to be a revolutionary; still she respected him and believed in his ideals and efforts. Such is the power of love that makes even the strongest fall into the dark stairs of folly and innocence.

In the course of time, Adan completely transformed. She now dreamt of using guns, AK47s, Makarta; of going to Syria, the birthplace of the new world. She saw no wrong in beheading innocent people-she had sworn allegiance to the ISIS. She was desperate, frantic to visit God's city and marry Akbar. Akbar, the most handsome, fearless and valiant, with whom she dreamt of spending the rest of her life, whose children she dreamt to bear, the person who had given a purpose to her life.

Akbar, understanding her innocence, and her fairy-tailish idea of a romantic jihadi marriage tried to persuade her to not join his mission, as he himself believed that the probability of success and survival were very low. He loved her too badly to make her come to Syria. Syria was not a nation which had notions of equality and secularism, she would not get the freedom that she possesses now and she would be in a society which does not even respect her gender. Syria was a land crammed up with bodies of innumerable innocent souls; 'pure blood' had filled the corners of the country with Allah's followers in search for Allah's rule fighting amongst them only.

However much Akbar tried he could not get over his love (its more tough for Jihadi men as they usually get whatever they want). He dreamt

about her, imagined her and was mesmerized by her looks. Love makes people do strange things and in Akbar's case it was a sacrifice, a sacrifice wherein Adan eloped with him and in the long run destroyed her own living soul.

Adan along with seventeen new recruits of the Jihadi force led by Akbar travelled in 'THE Turkish Airlines' to Istanbul where at the Turkey-Syria border; Adan for the last time talked to her parents. By the time her parents traced the call back, it was too late, Adan had promised she would keep well and vowed never to fight. She had eloped with the love of her life and left her bright career in shambles. Soon enough, Akbar asked for Adan's hand and her parents' bluntly refused, but of course it did not matter. Her parents losing their only reason to live were stranded in the middle of nowhere. They had given her everything, whatever she wished for and this is the price they pay. Her mother fueled with distress and regret committed suicide. No wonder, her father was happier now, he had got a new bride.

Syria was not definitely the place Adan would have ever imagined. A typical negativity ran through the broken landscape of the state; with unemployment rate as high as 40% and the abundant fear of bomb attacks, people begged on the streets, not for money but for mercy. She juxtaposed this atrocious situation with the one in France and slowly began to realize what was in store for her.

Through the first week, she got to know that they were living in East Syria; the area controlled by the rebels under the ISIS. She was mandated to walk out of her make-shift tents wearing a hijab. Hijab was not a

problem but enforcing it was a direct question of her liberal sovereignty. In the course of her stay she got to meet other girls too, youngest of whom was Noreen, a thirteen year old girl from Germany. She had met her lover on a jihadi dating website and it was her love too which made her reach Allah's land. Others were no less, Raza, Mia all were lured into this trap by the power of love, the excitement of violence, the profound sense of Allah's rule and the innate want to be one of its first disciples.

Men were indifferent to Adan, they ignored her. Akbar too started to act differently. The only time they acknowledged her presence was when Akbar ceremoniously married her, and this too was a fortnight ago. Adan sensed that something bad was coming her way; she overheard one of the men talking about her beauty, and her ability to bear a child. Though she kept quiet, her uneasiness increased day by day. Her father in his last ditch effort tried to contact her but to no effect. Akbar returned the call and robustly told him that Adan was here by her own wish and she was free to go whenever and wherever she wanted.

Contrary to this though, the next day Adan was locked up with the other Muslim Girls in the far east of the city. She was told that such measures were for her security and well being, but she knew that this arrangement was made only to hold her back. Even in the darkest of the places, women were forced to wear 'full veil', they were mandated to wear burkha all the time. Women were not allowed to leave the building and even had no freedom to talk to the father whose child they were bearing.

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Women there clearly summed up their life story with their greeting to Adan- 'Welcome to Hell'.

At the beginning, Adan opposed such ideologies and be-friended some women on grounds of such talk. But later when Akbar did not turn up for months at end, she realized that she too had become a penniless piece in the war for Allah's rule. She desperately wanted to go back to her birthplace but didn't her other contemporaries in jail wanted to do the same. She made strategies, plans but to no effect, the only way to get out was to jump over the three storey building they were housed in. Adan begged the guards to call Akbar; this was not what she expected her life to be. She wanted Akbar to love her back but what she got in return was nothing.

Her luck and faith got her out of the building but what she saw in front of her eyes appalled her completely.

Destruction, the town was burnt to the ground, lost amongst the skin, blood and flames. The jihadi's, unrecognisable in their dark green uniforms were patrolling a city which had no inhabitants.

In despair she tried to run back to her cell which now appeared much safer but was stopped by one of the men who gripped her. Soon there were ten men surrounding her conversing in Arabic in their loud voices. She knew enough to know that they were talking about her body and what they would do it, but little to tell them that she was Akbar's wife.

They were hungry eyes and strong bodies and no matter how much Adan protested, kicked, cried and screamed they did not let her go. She was brutally abused and raped by each of the men one after the other in the middle of the lone street. She was kicked back into her cell, late at night after the momentous feats of the harbingers of allah's kingdom.

Adan was kept under stricter supervision since then. That incident made her lifeless, no more than a doll waiting to be played upon by the powerful. All the Eid festivities for the girls were annulled for the future and so she lost the few friends that she made.

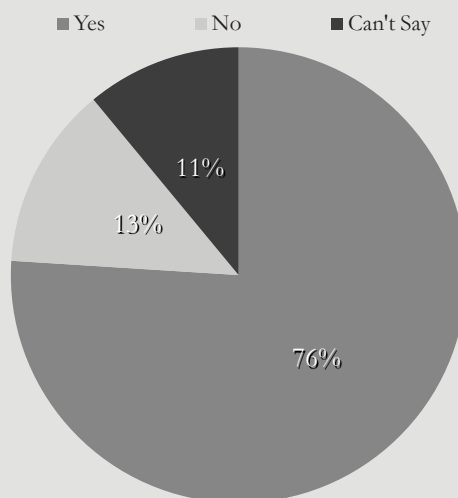
Adan was mentally dead, her lifeless body moved around vacantly in the dark corners of her cell. After months of such listless existence one day she saw Akbar again. She stared at him with blank eyes and he stared back with disgust and hate. He knew what had happened and his eyes blamed Adan for it. You asked for it, they said. Akbar renounced his marriage then and there.

Adan knew this was inevitable. THE MOMENT Akbar left, Adan for once saw a purpose. With unfaltering steps she walked upto the top floor and came crashing down on the broken Syrian landscape. She had 'attained Adan' and delved her way into another life, one much better than the one she was living in.

VOX POPULI

Do people do Social Service just for the sake of doing it?

This question is one that has been asked by many Doscos and often serves to show the materialistic and selfish nature of our School Community. But social service, amidst all this is still an integral part of our school and showcases the 'Aristocracy of service' that Arthur Foot strived to endeavor among the students. It gives us a standard to live up to, for in the eyes of the have nots we are an example of the elite India and how we respond to them does not show their character but our own. The poll showed that social service is done just for the sake of doing it without a solid purpose and often to improve one's college application and boost their chances to get into college.



Editor's Note: Both articles "Die Stiegende Feuer" and "Through The Netted Veil" have been printed in the exact manner that they were submitted. There has been no editing, either in terms of content or in grammar.

Crooked Teeth and Pyromania

Nikhil Deogun | *Reminiscing The Weekly, and the years that followed.*

The first thoughts I have of working at *The Doon School Weekly* have nothing to do with the art of story-telling or writing. Instead, it's the memory of making my way week after week -- by foot or auto rickshaw -- through the crowded streets to the printer to deliver the articles and proof the pages. That outing was freedom. Liberation. To leave campus not by illegally "breaking bounds" but officially was its own thrill. It was almost like I was daring someone to stop me and question why I was out on the town.

With the couple of rupees I had smuggled in my pocket, I would sneak in a soft drink or something to eat, though the print-shop owner always generously offered me something. I would sit in his cramped office by the movie theater surrounded by all kinds of printing paraphernalia going over each article after it had been set in hot type. The smell of ink and strong tea suffused the place. He employed a balding typesetter who was missing most of his teeth except two or three that protruded at a 45 degree angle. The gentleman could speak very little English but, with his spectacles perched on his nose, he could identify every letter of the English alphabet on the hot press by touching it with his fingers backwards. He was meticulous and would correct typo after typo, with an attention to detail that was remarkable.

It was intoxicating to be able to write and edit, to watch the other boys and teachers picking up the paper to

look for the unexpected, almost as if a group of friends was collectively opening a surprise gift. Perhaps one of the highlights of my time was that Mohit Jayal's penguin comic strip was introduced at the time and proved to be a great hit. Every time I see a fruit fly, I remember Mohit's line: "Time flies like the wind; fruit flies like the bananas." It still cracks me up.

My friend and fellow editor at *The Weekly*, Ashwin Bulchandani, swears that I got all of us in a bunch of trouble by calling the one-eyed sardar who ran the dining hall and his cohorts a bunch of pyromaniacs. I have no memory of this but Ashwin has always had a better memory than I did, whether it came to memorizing lines for plays and debates or for arcane bits of trivia. This is why he's a hedge fund guy and I'm not. I probably had learned the word pyromaniac and wanted to use it somehow and made the connection to some burned food. Our beloved Headmaster, Gulab Ramchandani, forced us to apologize, probably fearing a revolt from the kitchen staff.

In retrospect, one of the biggest catalysts to what has been a lifelong career in journalism was a trip we took in "S" form to Delhi to interview Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi for a special Golden Jubilee edition of *The Weekly*. Our adviser and my Housemaster and mentor, Sumer Singh, had arranged the trip with the help of another ex-Dosco, Suman Dubey, who was advising the PM. In truth, what I found more

fascinating were the interviews Sumer arranged for us with a number of top journalists, including Arun Shourie and B.G. Verghese. I still remember interviewing Mr. Shourie and finding his passion, and the row of books behind him, absolutely captivating. If I recall, the headline in *The Weekly* of our interview with Mr. Shourie read, "Arun Shourie: No Punches Pulled."

Now that I've worked in journalism for 25 years in different media and watched journalism change, I'm still struck by what stays the same. The rush of adrenalin on a hot story or a scoop is hard to beat. The beauty of surprising a viewer or reader with a well-crafted story or a bit of analysis makes you want to do it again. The importance of humor, whether in a comic strip or a light story is a reminder that life isn't all spinach or stone cold chappatis. And perhaps above all, it's important to sweat the small stuff just as the typesetter would to make sure we got it right.

Editor's Note: Mr Nikhil Deogun was the Editor-in-Chief of *The Weekly* in 1986. He went on to earn a bachelors in Muckingum College in New Concord and is currently the Editor-in-Chief and Senior Vice President of CNBC.

सम्पादकीय....

पतझड़ का समय है और हवा में महकती हुई सर्दियों का आभास होने लगा है। हर साल इस समय पूरा स्कूल [फाउंडर्स] की तैयारियों में जोर शोर से लगा होता है। हमारा नन्हा सा सम्पादकीय मंडल भी पूरे जोरों से पत्रिका के लिए काम कर रहा होता है। इन छह पन्नों के समापन के पीछे सम्पादक दल की महीने भर की मेहनत और हार्दिक प्रयास है। मैंने खुद पिछले चार सालों से इस मंडल में जुट कर चार अलग-अलग फाउंडर्स संस्करणों के लिए काम किया है।

स्कूल की अन्य अनेक गतिविधियों में से समय निकाल कर कार्य समय पर पूर्ण करना काफी कठिन लक्ष्य होता है। सम्पादन कार्यावधि में कभी मज़ाक के पल होते हैं, डांट-डपट और गुस्सा भी होता है। विश्वास मानिए, इस के पीछे उद्देश्य केवल सफल और पाठकों की कसौटी पर खरा उतरता हुआ संस्करण छापना होता है।

इस संस्करण में हमने प्रयत्न किया है कि पाठकों को एक ऐसा अंक दें जो केवल मनोरंजक ही ना हो अपितु अपने आस-पास घटती छोटी-बड़ी घटनाओं के बारे में जागरूक भी करे। इस सम्पादन में नारी सशक्तिकरण से लेकर अधिकारों के प्रति जागरूकता, धर्म का व्यावसायीकरण, प्रतिभा-पलायन जैसी समस्याओं की ओर पाठकों का ध्यान आकर्षित करने का प्रयत्न किया है।

आज के समय में केवल लेखक या पाठक होना काफी नहीं है। तेज़ गति

से बढ़ते हुए समय के साथ रहने के लिए जागरूक, सांसारिक और खुले विचारों वाला पाठक होना बेहद ज़रूरी है। इसी ज़रूरत को ध्यान में रखते हुए हमारे दल ने यह अंक तैयार किया है।

अपने अथक संघर्ष और मेहनत के फल को आप सभी के हाथों में सौंप कर आपकी प्रतिक्रिया भांपते हुए बस यही आशा करेंगे कि हमारा सन्देश आप सभी द्वारा समर्थित किया जाएगा। मेरे और मेरे दल की ओर से सभी पाठकों को आनंदमय पठन एवं मनन की शुभकामनाएँ!

- वल्लवी शुक्ला

जागो ग्राहक जागो!

• सिद्धेश्वर हंस

'इस शहर को यह हुआ क्या, आँखों के सामने है धुआँ-धुआँ।

कोई इसके विपक्ष में नहीं बोलता, इसे क्यों है झेलता।'

दूरदर्शन पर आने वाला विज्ञापन भारत में बहुत मशहूर हो गया है। जिस प्रकार दुकानदार ग्राहकों को ठगकर पैसे बना रहा है, वह दिन दूर नहीं जब भारतीय नागरिक को दुकानदारों के पैरों पर गिरना पड़ेगा। सब कहते हैं 'चलता है', और इसी वजह से कोई इसके विरुद्ध चूँ तक नहीं करता है। दुकानदार वस्तुओं कीमत बढ़ा कर अधिक मुनाफ़ा कमाते हैं और ग्राहक इसे लगातार अनदेखा करता रहता है।

आज हमारे देश की मुख्य समस्याओं में से एक है, भ्रष्टाचार; चाहे वह क्रिकेट में 'मैचफिक्सिंग' से हो, या शिक्षक को पैसे देकर अतिरिक्त अंक पाने से। मानव मनोविज्ञान के मुताबिक यह भी पता

चलता है कि मनुष्य को लालच देना बहुत आसान है। यही कारण है कि भ्रष्टाचार आसानी से फैल गया है। दुनिया के अधिकतर देशों में भ्रष्टाचार भारत से बहुत कम मालूम पड़ता है। इसका कारण यह है कि जब लोगों को लालच दिया जाता है, तो वे अनायास ही उसका शिकार हो जाते हैं। धन की लालसा ने दुनिया को अंधकार की खाई में धकेल दिया है। कहीं चोरी तो कहीं धोखा, कहीं डकैती तो कहीं हत्या। धन की लालसा ने ही मनुष्य में स्वार्थ भरी सोच उत्पन्न की है! अब आम आदमी करे भी तो क्या? ग्रामीण लोगों को पैसे और लेन-देन की बहुत काम ही जानकारी होती है। इसीलिए, वे चाहें भी तो कुछ नहीं कर सकते। सरकार इसे रोकने के लिए कई विज्ञापन भी जारी कर रही है जैसे 'जागो ग्राहक जागो' ताकि ग्राहक सतर्क रहे और अपने अधिकारों के प्रति जागरूक रहे। सामाजिक परिप्रेक्ष्य से देखें तो अधिकतर लोग वस्तुओं की 'एम-आर-पी' देखना आवश्यक नहीं समझते। ग्राहक चाहे तो वह ठगने के जुर्म में मुहल्ले के पुलिस-थाने में दुकानदार के विरुद्ध प्राथमिकी दर्ज करवा सकता है, पर समस्या है की कोई यह करता ही नहीं। 'मैन्नु की'।

भ्रष्टाचार का एक अन्य रूप भी देखने को मिलता है, जब दुकानदार ग्राहक को पुराने और तयशुदा तिथि के बाद पदार्थ बेचता है। यह कानून के विरुद्ध है। यदि लोग कोई पदार्थ खरीदने से पहले उसकी 'एक्सपायरी डेट' की उपेक्षा करते हैं तो इससे बीमारियों का शिकार भी हो सकते हैं। इसीलिए यह ज़रूरी है

कि ग्राहक इन छोटी चीजों को दिमाग में रख कर सोच-समझ से काम ले। हम सभी भारत के नागरिक होने के साथ-साथ उसके हितैषी भी हैं। हम कभी नहीं चाहेंगे कि हमारे देश की नींव कमजोर हो। यह हमारा कर्तव्य है कि हम इस भ्रष्टाचार को रोकेँ और ग्राहकों को सही और गलत के बीच की रेखा दिखाएँ। अंत में मैं यही कहूँगा - 'जागो ग्राहक जागो!'

नारी

• ऋषि चौधरी

अभी अधिक समय नहीं बीता, जब 'प्राइज गिविंग सेरेमनी' पर न्यायमूर्ति लीला सेठ ने हम से समाज में महिलाओं के खिलाफ होते हुए भेदभाव के बारे में बात की थी। उन्होंने हमें स्वयं के अनुभवों के उदहारण देते हुए यह अहसास दिलाया था कि एक औरत होने के कारण उन्हें कितनी कठिनाइयों का सामना करना पड़ा। दोस्तों, यह लज्जा की बात है कि इक्कीसवीं सदी में भी ऐसी घटनाएं घटती हैं। आखिर कब बदलेगी समाज की सोच? क्यों लोग आज भी भगवान से एक लड़का होने के लिए ही प्रार्थना करते हैं? जबकी सत्य तो यह है कि एक स्त्री ही जीवन में खुशियाँ ला सकती है। समाज में पुरुष नारी को अपने से तुच्छ और कमजोर प्राणी समझता है।

आज भी भारत के कई क्षेत्रों में नारियों के साथ दुर्व्यवहार होता है। आपको जानकर आश्चर्य होगा कि नेशनल क्राइम रिकॉर्ड्स ब्यूरो के अनुसार में दर्ज 2010 बलात्कार के 5, 484 2014 मामलों से बढ़कर यह संख्या 13 में हो गई है 766। एक तरफ हम

नारी की सरस्वती और लक्ष्मी के रूप में पूजा करते हैं और दूसरी तरफ उनके साथ ऐसा अन्याय? एक तरफ हम औरत को माँ समान मानते हैं और दूसरी तरफ उन्हें तुच्छ समझते हैं। नारियों की यह दुर्दशा देखकर हम मर्दों को शर्म आनी चाहिए, और हमें इसके बारे में कुछ करना भी चाहिए। भगवान ने तो मर्द और औरत को एक सामान बनाया था, हम इंसानों की सोच ने ही उन्हें नीचे करार दिया है।



वह नारी ही होती है, जो हमें जन्म देती है,

प्यार और दुलार से पाल-पोसकर बड़ा करती है, जिन्दगी के हर मोड़ पर हमारा साथ देती है और वह नारी ही होती है जो अपना सब कुछ खोकर भी हमें संतुष्ट रखती है। नारी प्यार, सुंदरता और उदारता का प्रतीक है। नारी वह है, जिसके बिना जिन्दगी, जिन्दगी नहीं। नारी ही है जिस के पास इंसान के विकास की शक्ति है। और नारी के साथ ही होते इस दुर्व्यवहार की ये कैसी विडम्बना है? मेरे विचार में, जो लोग नारी को कमजोर मानते हैं, स्वयं कमजोर होते हैं। आज की नारी कई क्षेत्रों में मर्दों से बेहतर या उनके बराबरी की है, मगर किसी भी क्षेत्र में कम नहीं। आज की नारी बहुत समझदार और होनहार है। फिर भी मर्द और औरत सामान क्यों नहीं? हमें इस सवाल का जवाब खोजना ही पड़ेगा।

मुझे पूरा भरोसा है कि अगर हम औरतों का साथ दें तो वह वह दिन दूर नहीं जब मर्द और औरत में भेदभाव समाप्त हो जाएगा और हम सब यह गर्व से कह सकेंगे- 'आज की नारी सब पर भारी'।

सपनों का सच

• आधिराज चौधरी

कुछ अपनी सी ही तीव्र गति वाली बी-एम-डब्लू में अपने दो दोस्तों के साथ वर्षा का आनंद लेते हुए, यूसेन बोल्ट को यह पता ही नहीं लगा कि कब अकस्मात उन्होंने गाड़ी का संतुलन खो दिया और उनकी गाड़ी सड़क पर से उतरती हुई किनारे के एक पेड़ से जा टकराई। भयानक गति के कारण गाड़ी को बहुत नुकसान पहुंचा उनके मित्रों को गहरी चोटें आईं। घटनास्थल पर पड़े-पड़े, वे दर्द से कराह रहे थे और तड़प रहे थे, लेकिन चमत्कार देखिये, बोल्ट को एक मामूली खरोंच तक नहीं आई।

इस चमत्कारी घटना के बाद बोल्ट को ऐसा एहसास हुआ कि भगवान ने उन्हें तीव्र गति का वरदान दिया है। उन्हें लगा कि वे ही हैं जो गति को ललकार सकते हैं। इसी जोश और लगन से शुरू हुई दुनिया के सबसे तेज धावक, यूसेन बोल्ट की जीवन-गाथा। एक छोटे और अविकसित देश जमैका में रहने के बावजूद भी उन्होंने अपनी ट्रेनिंग में कोई कमी न रखी। जी तोड़ मेहनत करके बोल्ट अपने काम में आगे बढ़े और अपने देश का नाम रौशन करके पूरी दुनिया को दिखा दिया कि चाह और प्रयत्न के बल पर किसी भी क्षेत्र में कामयाबी प्राप्त की जा सकती है। एक छोटे से घर में पलकर, उन्होंने शहर

के एक सामान्य विद्यालय में अपनी शिक्षा प्राप्त की थी। अपनी जिन्दगी की पहली दौड़ उन्होंने बचपन में अपने विद्यालय की अंतर-आवासीय प्रतियोगिता में जीती थी। जब उनके अध्यापकों को उनमें एक कामयाबी की किरण नज़र आई तो उन्होंने बोल्ट पर विशेष ध्यान देना शुरू कर दिया।

अपने यौवन में खूब खून-पसीना बहाने के बाद, बोल्ट दौड़ने में इतने माहिर हो चुके थे कि उन्हें न केवल ओलंपिक खेलों में भाग लेने के काबिल माना गया बल्कि पदक का दावेदार भी कहा गया। उन्होंने दो सौ मीटर की दौड़ में अपना ही रिकॉर्ड दोबारा तोड़ कर यह साबित कर दिया कि वे वाकई में दुनिया के तीव्रतम मानव हैं।

बोल्ट ने अपनी मेहनत और लगन से यह साबित कर दिया कि चाहे जिन्दगी में कितनी भी बड़ी बाधाएँ आ जाएँ, उन्हें आत्म विश्वास और प्रेरणा की मदद से पार किया जा सकता है। बोल्ट ने मुझे यह सिखाया है कि मेहनत, हिम्मत और आत्मबल से ही सपने सच्चाई में बदले जा सकते हैं। तो जिस तरह मैं बोल्ट से प्रेरित हुआ हूँ, आप भी किसी से प्रेरणा लेकर अपने सपनों को सच में बदलिए।

‘ब्रेन-ड्रेन’

• राहुल भागचंदानी

विदेश में अध्ययन करने या काम करने जाना, हमारे देश में आजकल नया चलन है। हमारा हर दूसरा दोस्त विदेशी विश्वविद्यालयों में अपनी आगे की शिक्षा-पूर्ति की या वहाँ काम करने की चाह रखता है।

इनमें से कई व्यक्ति बहुत प्रतिभाशाली और बौद्धिक रूप से विकसित होते हैं। ऐसे लोगों का देश से बाहर जाना, देश के आर्थिक कल्याण पर काफी गंभीर प्रभाव पड़ता है।

‘ब्रेन-ड्रेन’ या ‘प्रतिभा-पलायन’ का अर्थ होता है डॉक्टर, इंजिनियर तथा वैज्ञानिकों का विकासशील देशों छोड़कर, अमरीका, ब्रिटेन एवं जर्मनी जैसे विकसित देशों में जाना। इसके कई कारण हैं जैसे अपने देश में राजनैतिक अस्थिरता, अपर्याप्त वेतन और असंतुष्ट जीवन शैली।

भारत जैसे विकासशील देश अपने उन प्रतिभाशाली व्यक्तियों को खो देते हैं, जो एक बेहतर जीवन शैली की तलाश में अमरीका जैसे विकसित देश चले जाते हैं। भारत का ‘ब्रेन-ड्रेन’ एक तरह से विकसित देशों के लिए ‘ब्रेन-गेन’ या ‘प्रतिभा-प्राप्ति’ है। लोग विदेश की भव्य जीवन-शैली और आकर्षक नौकरियों की ओर आकर्षित हो जाते हैं और कई बार वापस भी नहीं लौटते।

सबसे पहले तो हमें हमारे देश के प्रतिभा-पलायन के कारणों पर विचार करना चाहिए। आजादी के बाद विशेष रूप से भारत में उच्च-शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में प्रगति की जा रही है। भारत में विश्वविद्यालयों की संख्या पैंतीस गुना बढ़ गई है और छात्र नामांकन दस गुना। यह चिंतनीय विषय है, क्योंकि छात्र और विश्वविद्यालयों की संख्या में



वृद्धि के कारण शिक्षा की प्रचुरता

और संसाधनों की उपलब्धता में भारी कमी महसूस की जा रही है।

दूसरा कारण है विकासशील देशों की बढ़ती जनसंख्या और उसके फलस्वरूप बढ़ती हुई बेरोज़गारी। यही नहीं, बल्कि विकासशील और विकसित देशों के वेतन मानदंड में भी भारी अंतर है। विकसित देशों में उतने ही काम के लिए अच्छी परिस्थितियाँ और वेतन मिलने के चलते लोग वहाँ जाने के लिए इच्छुक हो जाते हैं।

भारत में प्रतिभाशाली व्यक्तियों को अपने अनुसंधान लिए धन और उपकरणों की भी कमी है। वहीं दूसरी ओर, विकसित देशों में उन्हें निरंतरता के साथ पर्याप्त धन और आधुनिक उपकरण भी प्रदान किये जाते हैं।

आँकड़ों के अनुसार, काफी अचंभित करने वाली बात है कि विदेश में पढ़ने वाले भारतीय विद्यार्थी के कारण प्रतिवर्ष भारत को राजस्व के रूप में सत्रह बिलियन डॉलर्स का घाटा होता है।

‘प्रतिभा-पलायन’ का सबसे नकारात्मक पक्ष यह है कि भारत और अन्य विकसित देशों के बीच एक बहुत बड़ा ज्ञान-अंतर पैदा करता है जिस के फलस्वरूप ज्ञान-संपदा के क्षेत्र में भारत और भी गरीब होता जा रहा है और विकसित देश और भी अमीर। भारत बहुत बड़े आर्थिक घाटों का शिकार होता जा रहा है, क्योंकि छात्रों के प्रशिक्षण के लिए संसाधनों और धन की एक बड़ी मात्रा बेकार चली जाती है। छात्र अपने

प्रशिक्षण का पूरा लाभ अमरीका जसी विकसित देशों को दे देते हैं, और भारत को कुछ प्राप्त नहीं होता। अगर छात्र शिक्षा प्राप्ति के पश्चात भारत में ही रह लेते, तो उनकी बौद्धिक क्षमताएँ हमारे आर्थिक तथा सामाजिक कल्याण में बहुत योगदान देती।

दोस्तों, इस सब के बाद क्या आपने कभी यह सोचा कि प्रतिभा-पलायन भारत के लिए लाभदायक भी हो सकता है। जी हाँ, काफी दिलचस्प है। अध्ययन करने या काम करने विदेश जाने वाले छात्रों अपनी कमाई का अंश भारत भेजते हैं जिससे विदेशी मुद्रा के भण्डार में बढ़ोतरी होती है। अध्ययन के पश्चात वे अपने पेशे की एक और भी बेहतर समझ के साथ भारत लौटते हैं और अपनी संबंधित क्षेत्रों में आसानी से पनप सकते हैं।

मेरा मानना तो यह है कि भारत की शिक्षा-प्रणाली और प्रशिक्षण सुविधाओं की कमी ही ब्रेन-ड्रेन का मुख्य कारण है। भारतीय शिक्षाप्रणाली मुख्य रूप से प्रतियोगी परीक्षाओं पर आधारित है, जिनके दबाव में आकर विद्यार्थी अपने क्षेत्रों में शामिल कौशल और तकनीक की ठोस समझ पाने में असफल हैं। भारत धीरे-धीरे पश्चिमी शिक्षाप्रणाली अपनाने की कोशिश कर रहा है, जो मेरे हिसाब से प्रतिभा-पलायन को रोकने के लिए एक प्रगतिशील कदम है।

ब्रेन-ड्रेन हमारे देश के लिए लाभ दायक अवश्य हो सकता है, किन्तु हमारी अर्थ व्यवस्था के लिए यह

उससे कहीं अधिक हानिकारक सिद्ध होता है। वैश्वीकरण के कारण इस मुद्दे की गंभीरता और भी बढ़ गई है। इससे पहले कि हमारी अर्थव्यवस्था संकट में दिखाई पड़े, उत्तम शिक्षाप्रणाली और रोजगार के आकर्षक अवसरों की मदद से प्रतिभाशाली छात्रों के नुकसान को नियंत्रित करना चाहिए।

भारतीय संस्कृति

• युगवंश चावला

भारत की संस्कृति भारत के लोगों के जीवन की तरह ही है। भारत विभिन्न भाषाओं, धर्मों, नृत्य, संगीत, वास्तुकला, भोजन और अनगिनत पर्यटन स्थलों का केंद्र है। कई लोग भारतीय संस्कृति को एक संस्कृति न मानकर अनेक संस्कृतियों का मिश्रण मानते हैं। किसी हद तक यह बात उचित भी है। भारतीय संस्कृति इतनी प्राचीन और अनोखी है कि इतिहास के कई पृष्ठ इस ही से प्रभावित हैं। न केवल इतिहास के बल्कि मैं तो कहूँगा कि वर्तमान में भी भारतीय संस्कृति विश्व की अनेक संस्कृतियों को प्रभावित कर रही है। हमारे धर्म, दर्शन, भोजन, पहनावा, योग, आचार-विचार दुनिया की कई संस्कृतियों में घुल-मिल कर उन्हें गंभीर रूप से प्रभावित कर रहे हैं। भारत आज दुनिया का सबसे अधिक धर्मों का पालन करने वाला देश है। धर्म कई लोगों के जीवन में एक केंद्रीय भूमिका निभाता है। नवीनतम शोध के अनुसार भारत में अस्सी प्रतिशत लोगों को हिन्दू धर्म का पालन करते हुए पाया गया है। कई

पीढ़ियों से भारत में 'संयुक्त परिवार' की परम्परा है। आज भी पारंपरिक घर-परिवारों में, घर के सबसे बड़े सदस्य को घर का मुखिया माना जाता है। भारतीय नागरिक स्वभावतः उत्सव-प्रिय होते हैं। नाच-गाने और आनंद मनाने का कोई मौका वे हाथ से नहीं जाने देते। शादियों की सजावटें, होली के रंग, संगीत, नृत्य, वेश-भूषा आदि के साथ-साथ भारत सबसे अधिक उत्सव मनाने वाले देशों में से एक है। धार्मिक और सामाजिक उत्सव तो विविध समाजों और धार्मिक लोगों द्वारा मनाए ही जाते हैं इसके अलावा दो मुख्य राष्ट्रीय पर्व - स्वतन्त्रता दिवस तथा गणतंत्र दिवस भी सभी के द्वारा बड़े आनंद और उत्साह के साथ मनाए जाते हैं।

हमारा देश आज भी समाज और मेल-जोल का देश है। लोग आपस में गर्मजोशी से मिलते हैं, एक दूसरे के सुख-दुःख का ख्याल रखते हैं। घर में माता-पिता, विद्यालयों में शिक्षक, घर के बाहर मित्र जीवन का केंद्र होते हैं। सभी एक-दूसरे के प्रति जिम्मेदार होते हैं। इसीलिये आज भी हमारी सामाजिक व्यवस्था सबसे अधिक मजबूत है।

हमें पूरे विवेक के साथ अपने भाषाओं और संस्कृति को बनाए रखने के लिए उनका संरक्षण करते रहना चाहिए ताकि जिस तरह हमने संस्कृत जैसी एक अनोखी भाषा को खो दिया है, जो आज कम्प्यूटर प्रोग्रामिंग के लिए महत्वपूर्ण मानी जा रही है, उस तरह हम अपनी

संस्कृति के अन्य तत्वों को भी न खो बैठें।

श्रद्धा का चक्रव्यूह

• वल्लवी शुक्ल

गत दिनों, मनाली से लेह तक कि एक लम्बी साइकिल की यात्रा तय करके लौटते हुए, हिन्दुओं के बड़े तीर्थ, वैष्णो देवी के दर्शन करने गई थी। परिश्रम की थकान से चूर कटरा पहुँची, जहाँ से मंदिर तक का रास्ता शुरू होता है। माना जाता है, 'जब तक देवी नहीं बुलाती, तब तक लाख जतन करके भी उनके दर्शन नहीं होते'। इस धारणा के पीछे कारण यह है कि मंदिर तक की कठिन चढ़ाई चढ़कर केवल सच्चे श्रद्धालु भक्त ही देवी के दर्शन पाते हैं। लेकिन आस्तिकों ने देवी जी के दर्शन की कठिनता को देवी के 'बुलावे' में परिवर्तित कर दिया है। मेरी श्रद्धालु माँ को टिकट, समय और श्रद्धा के बावजूद भी वैष्णो देवी जी के दर्शन करने का मौका न मिल पाया था, तो यह बात सही भी हो सकती है।

खैर, वैष्णो देवी के श्रद्धालु बेहद प्रेम और श्रद्धा के भाव से उन्हें 'माँ' या 'माता रानी' के नाम से पुकारते हैं। 'माँ का मंदिर' 'माँ की इच्छा' अदि वाक्यांश कटरा में इतने अधिक सुनाई देते हैं कि तीर्थ खतम होते होते इस प्रकार से ना बोलने वाले भी इसी तर्ज पर देवी को 'माँ' कह कर पुकारने लगते हैं।

मैं और मेरे पापा थकान से चूर लेह से लौटे थे और यह चाहते थे कि तीर्थ हम जल्द से जल्द पूरा कर लें। वैष्णो देवी के मंदिर पर हर साल

सारे भारतवर्ष से बड़े झुंडों में श्रद्धालुजन 'माँ' के दर्शन करने आते हैं और जून-जुलाई के समय मंदिर पर सबसे ज्यादा भीड़ होती है। इस ही भीड़ से बचने के लिए हमने दोपहरी में चलना तय किया। दोपहर एक बजे, जब कटरा का तापमान करीब इक्कीस डिग्री हो रहा होगा, हमने मंदिर की चढ़ाई प्रारंभ की। इस बात को ध्यान में जरूर रखियेगा कि दोपहर की भीड़, सुबह या शाम की भीड़ से केवल अपेक्षाकृतरूप से कम होती है। श्रद्धा धूप, सर्दी, हवा या पानी एस अविचलित रहती है। 'जय माता दी' का नारा लगाते लोग मंदिर की ओर बढ़े चले जाते हैं। श्रद्धा में कुछ लोग इतने लीन हो जाते हैं कि उन्हें अन्य तीर्थयात्रियों का भी ध्यान नहीं रहता। धक्का-मुक्की, ठेला-ठेली का माहौल बना रहता है। भक्तों को एक दूसरे से मतलब, उन्हें तो बस माँ के दर्शन करने ऊपर पहुँचना था। मैं एक अनचाही सी अनिच्छा महसूस कर रही थी। मेरी अनिच्छा का कारण ईश्वर में मेरा अविश्वास नहीं था, बस शक्ति और प्रेरणा का अभाव ही इसका कारण था। मैं अपनी अनिच्छा व्यक्त करके पापा की, घर बैठी माँ की, और अन्य धार्मिकों की भावनाओं को तेज नहीं पहुँचाना चाहती थी। साच कहूँ, अपने पापा के चेहरे पर भी मैंने अपना सा ही भाव देखा था। हम दोनों पहाड़ चढ़ तो रहे थे, लेकिन अनमने से। उस तपती दोपहरी में भी हजारों भक्त चढ़ाई कर रहे थे। इतनी ज्यादा भीड़ मैंने पहले कभी भी नहीं देखी थी। सभी की

इच्छाशक्ति देखकर मेरे थके हुए मन और शरीर की अनिच्छा भी श्रद्धा में बदलने लगी। इतनी बड़ी संख्या में लोग वैष्णो देवी के दर्शन करने आ रहे थे तो जरूर वहाँ भगवान् के अस्तित्व का आभास होता होगा। अनिश्चय तो था, लेकिन श्रद्धा बहुत ही नाजुक एव संवेदनशील विषय है। तीर्थ का आदर करते हुए, अपने मन को समझाते हुए और मन की बात को मन में ही रखकर चलती चली जा रही थी, मगर रस्ते में मैंने कई ऐसे दृश्य देखे जब मेरी मनःस्थिति छोटे बच्चों, जिन्हें माता-पिता जबरदस्ती खींच कर मंदिर तक ले कर जा रहे थे, के द्वारा दर्शाई जा रही थी। वे रोते हुए बच्चे मन के साफ़ थे और भगवान् और धर्म के विषयों में अबोध। उन्हें क्या ज्ञान था माँ की लीलाओं और शक्तियों का? वे तो बेचारे बलपूर्वक ऊपर घसीटे जा रहे थे। कुछ रोते हुए, कुछ चिल्लाते हुए और कुछ हाथ-पैर फेंकते हुए जाने में अपनी अनिच्छा प्रकट कर रहे थे। माता-पिता और बाकी परिवार वाले लोग बच्चों को समझा रहे थे और बार-बार यही कह कर शांत करा रहे थे, []ऐसा नहीं करते! ऐसे भगवान् का निरादर होता है! भगवान् बुरा मान जाएँगे बेटा![]

भगवान् के प्रकोप से बचने के लिए थोड़ी देर के लिए चुप हो कर बच्चे आगे बढ़ जाते। यकीन मानिए, हर दस कदम पर यही दृश्य देखने के लिए मिल रहा था। इन बच्चों की दुर्दशा देख कर मुझे खेद भी हो रहा था और साथ ही आश्चर्य भी। चार-

पाँच साल तक के नन्हे-नन्हे बच्चों को माता-पिता भगवान् के नाम से डरा रहे थे और ये नादान बच्चे इस अनजान शक्ति से डर भी रहे थे। तीर्थस्थल, जहाँ पुराने समय में केवल साधु-संन्यासी या बूढ़े लोग जाया करते थे, अब आशीर्वाद की प्राप्ति के लिए जरा जरा से बच्चों को भी चढ़ाया जा रहा था।

चढ़ाई शुरू करने से पहले पापा ने भी मुझे से कुछ इसी तरह की बात कही थी, 'यह हिन्दुओं का बहुत बड़ा तीर्थ है, बेटा। यात्रा श्रद्धा और आदर से पूरा करना। करीब पाँच घंटों की सीधी अविराम चढ़ाई के बाद तो मैं श्रद्धा के नाम पर तो शुन्य ही हो गयी थी। मैंने बहुत कोशिश भी की थी कि मेरे मन में 'श्रद्धा' का संचार हो, लेकिन दुर्भाग्य से ऐसा हो न सका उस दिन दर्शनार्थियों की ज्यादा भीड़ के कारण 'माँ' का श्रद्धा का 'स्टॉक' शायद पूर्णतः बाँट दिया जा चुका था और मेरा हिस्सा किसी और को आबंटित कर दिया था।

चढ़ाई तो जैसे समाप्त होने को ही नहीं आ रही थी। हम बस सिर नीचे किये आदमियों, कुलियों, घोड़े-खच्चर आदि के बीच में फँसे हुए चलते चले जा रहे थे। रस्ते में न जाने कितनी बार रुक कर लौट जाने का ख्याल मेरे मन में आता रहा था। मगर मैं इस तीर्थ को वैष्णो 'माँ' के दर्शन से ज्यादा अपनी माँ की श्रद्धा का सम्मान करते हुए चढ़ना चाहती थी। मेरी माँ, जो दर्शन के लिए न आ पाई थी, उनके नाम से तीर्थ पूरा करना चाहती थी।

खैर, कठोर मानसिक और शारीरिक संघर्ष के बाद हम 'भवन', जहाँ वैष्णो देवी का मंदिर था, पहुँचे। दर्शनों के लिए हजारों लोग पंक्ति बना कर खड़े थे। भीड़ में अपना सामान अकेला छोड़ने की ज़रा भी गुंजाइश न थी और अन्दर सामान ले जाने की मनाही थी। मंदिर में भी हम निडर अपना सामान न छोड़ सकते थे। हमें हर समय चौकन्ना रहना था, अपने सामान की बहुत तगड़ी रखवाली करनी थी। मैं यह समझ ना पाई कि आखिर इतनी दूर-दूर से आये लोग अन्य श्रद्धालुओं के सामान का सम्मान क्यों न कर सकते थे? इतनी बड़ी संख्या में भक्त अपने पाप धोने आये थे और वही उनकी उपस्थिति पाप का आतंक भी फैला रही थी।

लाइन में धक्का-मुक्की इतनी भयानक हो रही थी कि पापा ने मुझे अपने से बिल्कुल भी दूर न जाने दिया। हम लाइन से भी बाहर भी न निकल सकते थे अन्यथा कोई अधीर श्रद्धालु हमारी जगह ले लेता और हमें दोबारा बिल्कुल पीछे जा कर पंक्ति में लगना पड़ता।

वहीं कुछ दूर घोड़े और खच्चरों को भी पंक्ति में बांधा हुआ था। दुर्गन्ध का साम्राज्य फैला था। हम दोनों वहाँ मुँह ढाँपे अपनी अपने दर्शन की बारी का इंतज़ार करते खड़े रहे। अंततः दर्शन की बारी आ ही गयी। सुबह से जिन पिंडियों के दर्शनों के लिए तड़पते हुए हम यहाँ-वहाँ घूम रहे थे, आखिर दर्शन का मौका आ ही गया! लेकिन 'माँ' के दर्शन के

लिए हम दोनों के पास कुछ ही सेकंड थे। दमघोंटू भीड़ में निरंतर संघर्ष के बाद हम दर्शन के लिए पहुँचे, मगर पिंडियों की एक झलक ही मिल पाई। इतनी दूर आये भक्तों को अपनी 'माँ' से दो पल संवाद करने का मौका भी न मिला था।

इस ही निराशा के साथ देर रात हम लौट कर आये तो बस मन में ये ही सवाल घूम रहे थे कि क्या अब भगवान का वह महत्व रह गया है जितना शायद पहले था? अब भगवान, भगवान कम और बिज़नस आइकॉन ज्यादा हो गए हैं। छोटे-छोटे बच्चों को खींच कर आशीर्वाद प्राप्ति के लिए पहाड़ों पर चढ़ाया जा रहा था। उन्हें अपनी आस्था चुनने का अवसर भी न दिया जा रहा था। बस सभी भीड़ बना कर पुण्य कमाने पहुँच गए थे भगवान् के घर।

चित्र निम्नलिखित वेब साइटों से आभार सहित लिए गए हैं-

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UN: Unaccountable Nuisance ?

Aryan Chhabra | *An evaluation of the world's largest peacekeeping organization*

In 1945, the world was in turmoil. People from every corner were seen running or hiding to avoid getting killed. Many lost their loved ones and it will be safe to say that never had there been a war with such dire consequences. Any attempt at ceasefire seemed impossible. And then came the birth of the UN: the largest peacekeeping organization on the planet. It was established with the hope of maintaining peace in a world that had seen the horrors of two wars and would do anything to avoid a third. What made it different from any other peacekeeping organization, like the League of Nations was the will to forge an egalitarian society. However, many critics of the UN from all over the world have said that it is failing to do its job. The reason behind such an opinion is the inability of the UN to take a proper course of action when required. Moreover, the veto power given to the so-called 'P5' nations is seen to be undemocratic and the main cause for international inaction on war crimes. Therefore, it becomes imperative to go deeper in this problem and find a solution. That is what this essay will try and do.

UN started the 1990s with high hopes. With the end of the Cold War, the US-USSR rivalry that had for so long paralyzed the Security Council was seen as a thing of the past, supposedly freeing the UN to become more assertive. Bill Clinton talked about giving the United Nations more power and even its own standing military force. It is hard to find any U.S. politician making

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What made it different from any other peacekeeping organization, like the League of Nations was the will to forge an egalitarian society. However, many critics of the UN from all over the world have said that it is failing to do its job.

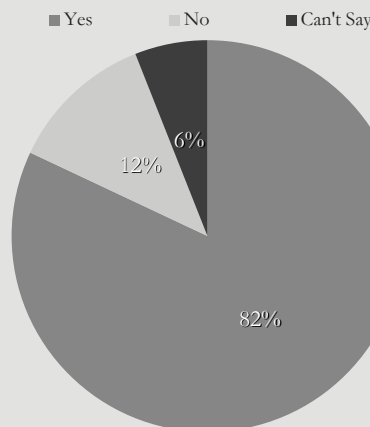
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similar suggestions today. They have been chastened, presumably, by the U.N.'s almost unblemished record of failure when it comes to its peacekeeping missions. The United Nations itself has recently released reports documenting two of its worst stumbles. According to these confessions, U.N. peacekeepers in Rwanda stood by as Hutu slaughtered some 800,000 Tutsi. In Bosnia, the U.N. declared safe areas for Muslims but did nothing to secure them, letting the Serbs slaughter thousands in Srebrenica. The organization's meddling was worse than useless: its blue-helmeted troops were used as hostages by the Serbs to deter a military response from the West. Furthermore, and most disturbingly, some areas where peacekeeping forces had been stationed saw a rise in child prostitution! After all, peacekeeping troops are there to ensure that all the wrongdoing is stopped. That is the reason why many nations plead for support from the UN in times of desperation and war. Unfortunately, this was not the case in Bosnia where soldiers had sexual relationships with children by rewarding them with

VOX POPULI

Is the School hosting too many events at the same time?

It is no secret that time is of the very essence in School. Be it on the sports field or in terms of the vast co-curricular activities the School has to offer, if there is one thing that Doscos fall short of, it is time. And so we decided to poll the entire School community on this very particular question. The results were rather interesting. The entire School community unanimously voted in the affirmative, having realized that a term is not enough to host all these activities. So, they believe that School, in trying to give its students as much exposure to myriad activities is possible, often ends up organizing too many events within too short a time.



candy so as to claim the relationship to be prostitution rather than rape. Senior UN officials exacerbated the problem by refusing to condemn the peacekeepers, fearing that a public humiliation would discourage nations from joining the UN.

This brings me to the next section of the essay - the veto power. A famous man once said "Power corrupts; but absolute power corrupts absolutely." When one takes a look at the situation that the UN created, one cannot help but grin with irony. However, before I begin my analysis, it is necessary to know what a veto is. Veto is the power held by the 5 permanent members of the Security Council (Russia, US, China, France, UK) enabling them to prevent the adoption of any specific resolution. It is exercised when any permanent member casts a negative vote on a draft resolution. Now coming back, it is often seen that if any individual or country gets excessive power it tends to use it for its own advantage.

Therefore, it is indeed inevitable for countries to use this power for the welfare of their economy, often at the expense of some other nation. And many countries have done that numerous times. On July 19, 2012, China and Russia vetoed a resolution to intervene and prevent genocide in Syria. It prevented any international intervention and since the civil war began, an estimated 60,000 civilians have been killed. Commentators have given the reason behind Russia's veto to reassure authoritarian president in the post Soviet space. China's support for Syria has largely been attributed to protect its strategic interests in the Middle East.

So, what can be done to solve this problem? First of all, the power of veto should be taken from the P5 nations. Granted, it was made to make sure that UN does not take any action against its founding members which was one of the lessons from League of Nations. However, merely giving it such humongous power

serves no purpose and should be taken away. Secondly, the UN should have its own individually recruited UN Emergency Peace Service. This force would consist of some 15,000 specially trained persons who would be able to respond quickly to crisis situations whether natural disasters, genocides, or military actions condemned by the UN. This will make the UN more direct in talks and give them an alternative besides negotiation. Thirdly, there should be a constant emphasis on transparency and accountability. The UN should be integral and flexible and it should make sure that situations like the one seen in Bosnia don't arise again in the future. The UN is the biggest peacekeeping organization in the world and to remain effective it needs to change. If it does not change with time, it will become a means for exploiting smaller countries and thus, create an atmosphere of discord and tumult and in doing so defeat the very purpose of its existence.



Are the School's architectural renovations changing its identity?

| Point |

Mrs Purnima Dutta

Every autumn, amidst much nostalgia and affection, old friends congregate at their alma mater, Doon. Every year, it is the same. The same 'as-blue-as-corn flower' skies, the same excited chatter, the festive spirit sweeping across the lawns and fields and bajri of Chandbagh. This continuity is constant. It is this continuity that makes homecoming so pleasurable and comforting. But then there is

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But there is a serious problem here: changes that cause such disquiet have always made me wonder what turn the conversation might have taken if the people discussing these matters happened to be separated by a few decades.

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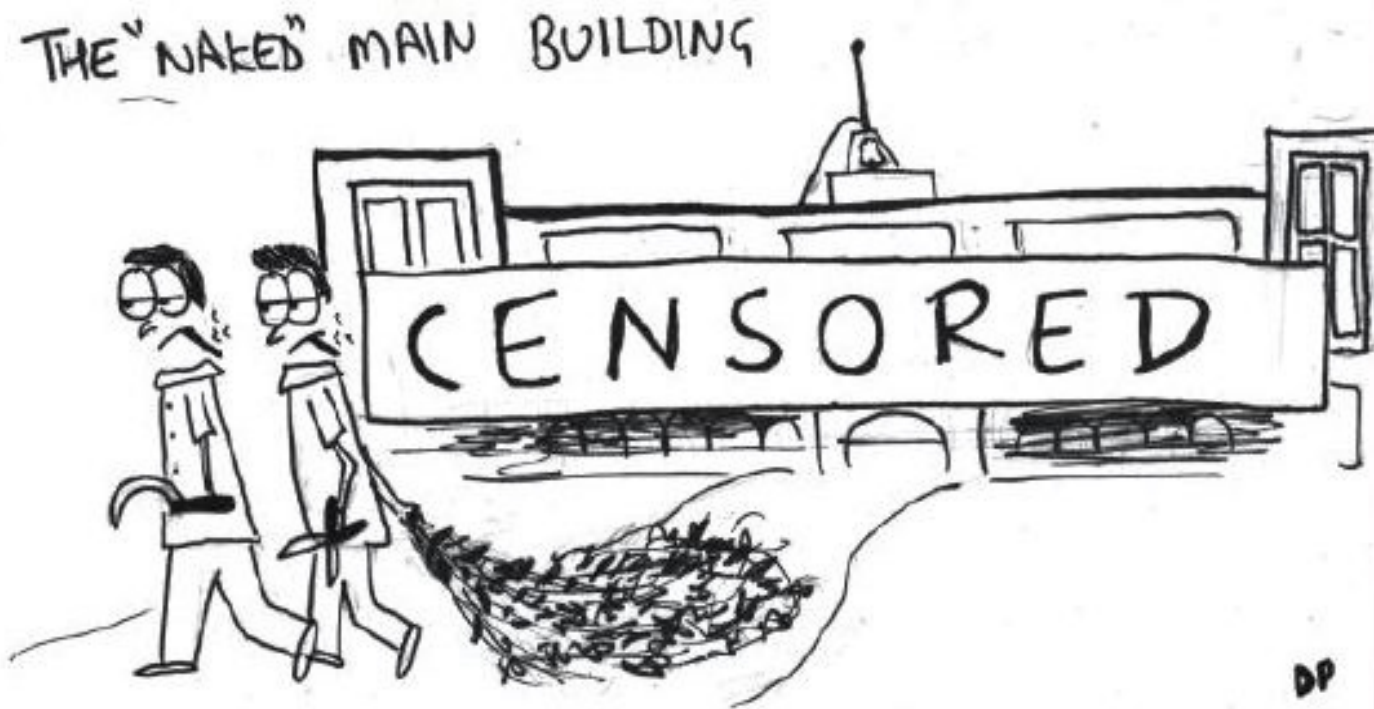
another constant that makes us itchy and we bristle ever time we think of it. That spoilsport constant is change.

Such is the nature of change. While continuity is comforting, change teases and tickles and raises uncomfortable questions in our minds. Perhaps it is because of this, the fact that change bothers us, that we obsess with change so much. And members of the Doon School Community are no exception.

So another unchanging feature that one notices at Chandbagh is the reaction to change. Comments like, “The CDH is not the same anymore” or “Have you noticed how the brick walls of the Main Building have changed?” But there is a serious

problem here: changes that cause such disquiet have always made me wonder what turn the conversation might have taken if the people discussing these matters happened to be separated by a few decades. Say for instance, those who were in School in the 70s and those who studied here in the 90s. What issues around the CDH could the two possibly have in common for there was no CDH in the 70's? Or if a gentleman from the first batch of Doscocs were to discuss the walls of the Main Building with a recent Old Boy, the conversation would be a very curious one indeed!

I am not trying to trivialize the Doscocs' attachment to their School their memories of every stone that they take away with them. In fact, I can quite empathize with their feelings; perhaps that vague sense of loss arises out of a feeling of niggling



| Counter-Point |

Sahir Chaudhary

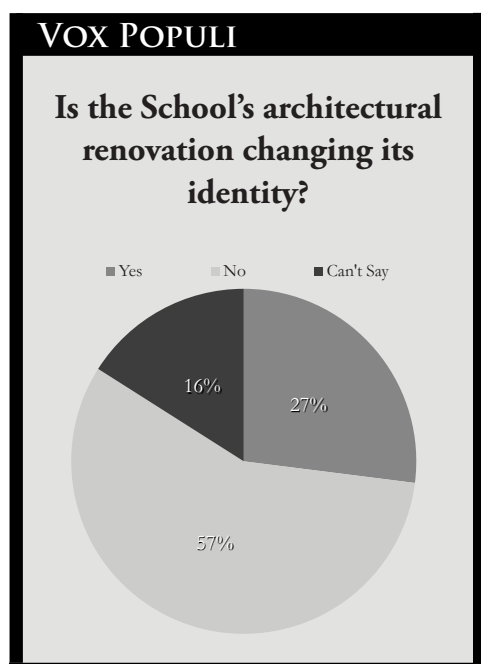
discomfort that one experiences when an object whose image as we see it, and the image that we have fondly nurtured in our minds because of memories associated with it are at odds with each other.

So, in order to arrive at any conclusion on whether the changes in the physical environment in School might lead to an erosion of Old Boys' attachment to School, the questions that need to be raised have to delve deeper. Questions such as, 'what prompted the change?' If the reason is to save a building, or for reasons of security, surely no loyal student, present or past, will argue against the change. If the change appears to be for the sake of change, one might be justifiably miffed at having to pay the price for somebody's whims with having to live with that discomfort at the back of one's mind. But, in a successfully running institution, the latter scenario is very unlikely, and therefore, all the 'problems' related to change might be pre-empted if the visions of those who usher in the change is shared with those who experience the results.

Each year, our School hosts a huge number of guests, and almost every single one of them ends up falling love with our campus". Campus, as a term for the sake of this counterpoint, is the infrastructure of our School, which includes our buildings and huge playing fields, and the very unique environment and atmosphere which Doon has as compared to other boarding schools. By the time we reach SC-Form we do not want to leave this environment because 'it grows on us' and this feeling is a sense of nostalgia, not of a loss of ethos. The point that I'm trying to make is that ethos is not intricately linked with infrastructure. Though it is true that our ethos might be boosted by the infrastructure, it is by no means sustained by the architecture of the place. Also we need to understand that ethos is the ideology of an institution; it is a combination of norms and values which the institution preaches, and therefore the question of architectural renovation affecting the ideology or values of the place is stretching it a bit too thin.

The more specific idea that will form my main argument is that Architecture is essentially a vessel. It is rows of bricks and concrete and marble and wood, arranged in a manner to appease the aesthetic sense of man. Architecture is an art form and like all other variations of art, Architecture has an author—a central identity whose imaginative essence is constructed in the scale of life. However, this author does not have the ownership over his work like other artists. His work is personal but because it has to serve a greater need than that of his own, the translated meaning and purpose of his work is dependent on the residents and or society. So, essentially, all his work is to arrange the materials provided to him in an aesthetically appealing manner to serve the most fundamental of needs—shelter. The ability to interpret and experience his own construct lies not with him. The one function Architecture does serve is that of amplification. It these interpretations and purposes and magnify them to onto a grander scale. Take for example the Circus Maximus in Rome. Arguably the most famous performance venue in the world, is a paradox in itself. It was essentially made for gladiatorial combat but depending on the point of time we refer to, it has been used by the Caesar's for a variety of things. The Circus was just a vessel, and its purpose was decided upon by society at that time. Rome was just an idea manifested in bricks and mortar. If it were not up to the people and the rulers, we would never have remembered the city for its might and societal greatness.

Now I'm not implying that we are the Circus Maximus, but rather that our infrastructure is not the reason behind our ethos. Similarly, any change to this infrastructure, is just altering the vessel. Ultimately, this vessel would be inhabited by our sense of ethos, by our sense of morals. These renovations only serve to highlight what we wish to project. Reiterating my first point, we should not confuse nostalgia with a sense of ethos. Renovations will not change our identity as Doscoc, it'll just alter the memories of a few.



Bluescreens and ‘#Kallu’s

Govind Dhar | *The Memoirs.*

MS DOS, IBM 286 and 386 PCs, pen, paper, glue and sweat. If you told anyone that these were the tools of the editorial trade you'd be laughed out of the presses. In the 1990s, considered 'my day' from here on, computer technology had yet to make our lives easier. Star TV had just crept into India; School had only just upgraded from canned spools of film for the Saturday movie (to the unwieldy Laser Disc systems) and most common rooms still had cassette decks for our general entertainment. Only a few of us had Discmans smuggled into school, while Walkmans still held sway under kambals and in prefects' studies after lights out. There was no such thing as Google, allowing most of us to continue making up ridiculous stories for general amusement, that none could verify. There were Altavista, Yahoo and AOL which were so bad that someone had to invent Google. In the time we went from School to university, all of this would become antique. So before the dawn of this new age, *The Doon School Weekly* subsisted with the aforementioned tools of the trade, in the last moments of technology's dark times, under the proverbial rock. In my day, we had a mighty 32 bits with which to bring out a four-page newsletter, every week. And god it was hard.

There's nothing quite like having no alternative, as an incentive. I still hear from Old Boys who were junior to me at school saying that I'd 'cornered them' or 'jacked them' essays because I thought they were potentially good writers. I got my

own start on *The Weekly* because I wrote a cheesy poem about one of the master's daughters while I was in E-form. Pratik Basu (422 T, 1993) who was on *The Weekly* board saw it and had it printed without my knowledge. Despite being one of my most embarrassing moments at School, it gave me the confidence to keep writing, or at least improve. So I guess it taught me to be a mentor, even if it meant by dubious means. When you have no other alternative for content, you tend to get creative. As editor of *The Rose Bowl*, I have few such tools at my disposal, but thankfully Doscos have become more generous with their time and words as they have mellowed.

Working at *The Weekly* aged 13 ensured I learned pretty quickly what my strengths and weaknesses were. One day I was sent by Nakul Sood (610 J, 1995) to cover an inter-house football match. To me, sport entailed being told to be quiet by my father and uncles during test cricket and football matches at home. So off I went to the main field and tried to make head or tail of what was going on. My report on the match went something like this – "The match started off with Jaipur kicking the ball forward. Then it went to Tata house's side of the field. Then the backs got hold of it and they kicked it back to Jaipur's side..." You can imagine the rest. Nakul did all he could to stop himself from flinging me out of a window. Grumbling audibly, he rewrote a somewhat fictionalized version of what occurred in between that entire ball-passing drivel to

salvage the story. In essence, *The Weekly* taught me to stay away from sports writing.

And then there's jugaad. While formatting the pages, we would often be left with a box here, or a space there, meaning someone had to either come up with a cartoon on the spot, or file another article before we sent everything off to Sandeep Dutt (627 K, 1979) at EBD printers in town. I'm pretty sure this gave rise to the interminable Unquotable Quotes that have appeared through the ages in *The Weekly* and saved our hides on innumerable occasions. Failing that, the whip smart seniors on the board who would find a way of making scathing observations on teachers and headmasters alike, with their cartoons. While it felt dangerously irreverent and rebellious, the caricatures and cartoons of those years taught me that it takes a lot of character on the part of the school staff to allow its students to mock them, and an impressive maturity to take it on the chin without feeling diminished. That sort of freedom of expression is sadly obsolescent these days.

To wit, I once scribbled a fairly innocuous cartoon featuring the legendary Math teacher, Mr Sheel Vohra, attending a Halloween party on campus. On failing to dress up in some sort of frightening garb, and being informed by the headmaster that he'd missed the point of Halloween, Mr Vohra's caricature suggests that he was well aware it was Halloween with his famous "But I

know!” line. The point was that he didn’t need to dress up to frighten people. The master-in-charge of *The Weekly* at the time was unsure about the cartoon, and asked me to get permission from Mr Vohra to print it! When I went to see ‘Bond’, nervous as hell, it seemed he couldn’t care less. I think he said, “Arre print it yaar. What has it got to do with me?” My respect for Mr Vohra only vaulted that day. Another time, I’d scribbled a caricature of Mr Mason in *The Weekly*, soon after his arrival at School. I had given him a nice shiny spot on his head much like on balloons in cartoons of the time. After its distribution at breakfast that Saturday, I bumped into Mr Mason in the main building. He was surrounded by some teaching staff. The HM called on me and to my surprise mentioned how pleased he was with the issue, and the cartoon! A teacher next to him, in a moment of unadulterated sycophancy, remarked “But look at that shiny bald spot he’s given you sir! What about that?” Without missing a beat, Mr Mason replied “Yes, well it’s my shiny bald spot and I’m rather happy with it.”

If I may borrow from my day and today, that would go down as ‘#kallu’.

If anything, *The Weekly* taught me not to take myself too seriously either as part of a team, or when I felt hugely self-important as an editor. Years later, when I was appointed editor of a fantastic magazine in Delhi (The Robb Report), my time at the School magazine helped me create a collegiate atmosphere with my board and my peers. While I was told that the media game was very much about keeping people in their place if one hoped to rise, I decided instead to take my board and my peers with me.

Eventually, I gave up my job at the august magazine and now freelance exclusively as a writer. Freelancing is a tough gig, but my style of running a magazine *The Weekly*-way, taught me pretty quickly how to build a team, and create goodwill that lasted long after my departure from a company. That goodwill has helped me sustain a career in writing, and I now have the freedom to pick and choose whether I want to write about theatre or music, beer and Michelin restaurants, or far-flung beach destinations in the Mediterranean. And whatever anyone tells you, that sort of goodwill is hard to come by.

“

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Editor’s Note: Mr Govind Dhar was the Editor-in-Chief of The Weekly in 1996. He went on to study Politics in the University of Bristol, and is currently the Editor-in-Chief of The Rose Bowl, The Doon School’s alumni publication. He lives in Colombo and is the former editor of Robb Report India. His writing credits include the BBC, Wall Street Journal, Huffington Post, Rolling Stone, Conde Nast Traveller and GQ.

Giving Up

Ritik Chamola

I can see the sunrise from here. I haven’t been happy in over a decade, but who keeps count? People come and go throughout my life, but none want to stay. They all tell me they are jealous of my ‘perpetual happiness’. It gives me a pleasant feeling to know that my mask, my fake smile fools all those I meet, not a happy feeling, though. I haven’t felt happy since my wife died. This game of deception does, in some twisted way, give me pleasure. It’s all a game to me, fooling the gullible.

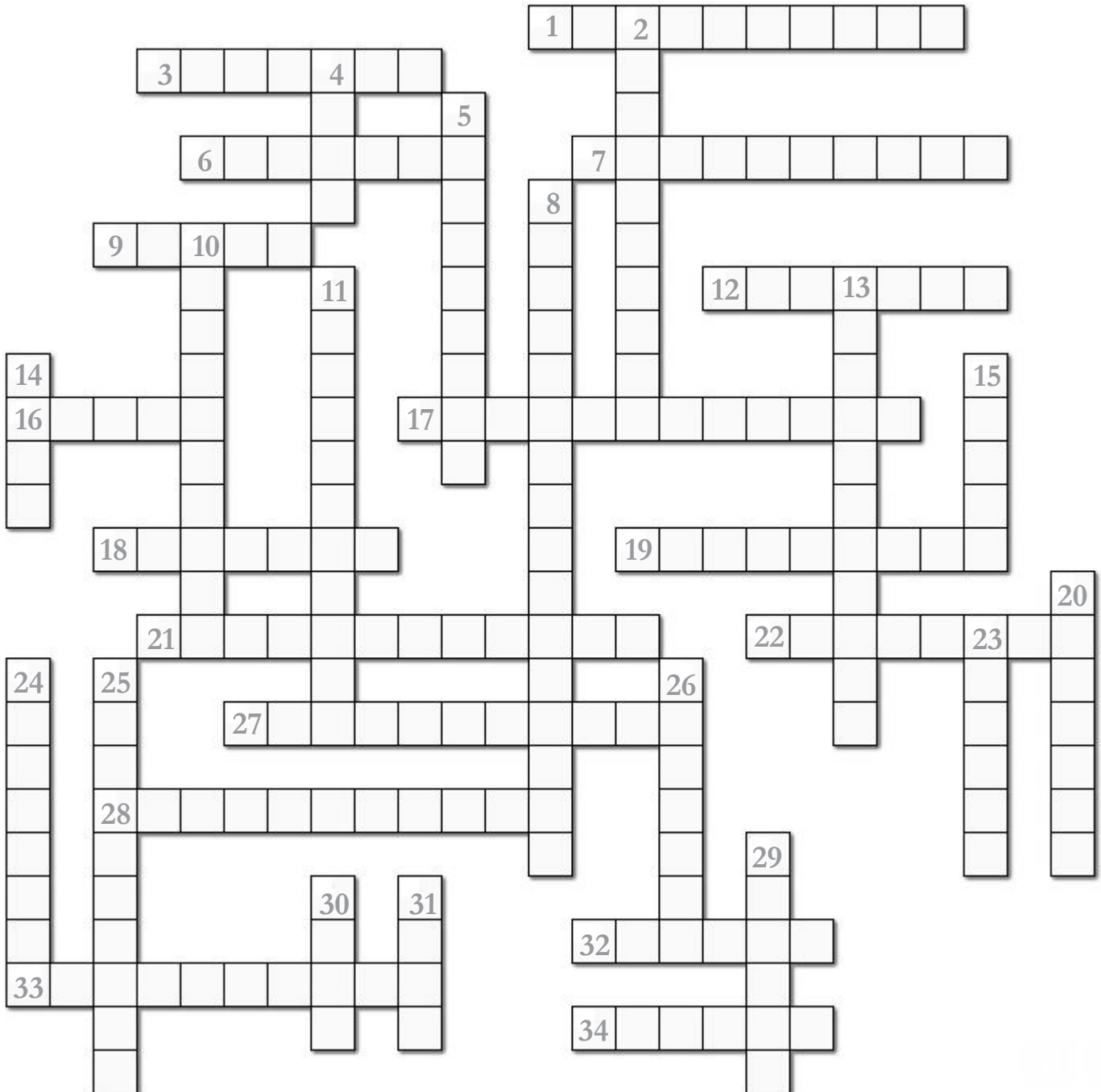
Looking back on these thoughts, I compare them to the thoughts of others. Next to a sociopath, I wouldn’t be seen as too horrible a person, but compared to a ‘normal’ or ‘average’ person, it’s a different story. People who do get to know me see me without my mask, without any veil to conceal my inner demons. Needless to say, they don’t stick around for long. I can’t stay like this any longer - sad, lonely and depressed. My mask won’t survive all the wear and tear it has been through. It would be nice to give up, to succumb to eternal sleep. It’s not like anybody would miss me.

I told someone ‘close’ to me what I was feeling. They don’t understand. I get that. They don’t need to. And it’s only now, on this roof, that I feel clarity and peace.

It is now that I finally see the beauty in a sunrise. Now, I will never have to please others, never have to have to hide again. And with that, I set myself free.

The Cruciverbalist's Corner

Words you never knew existed



Clues

Across

1. The lights you see when you close your eyes and press your hands to them.
3. The *na na nas* and *la la las* in song lyrics that don't have any meaning.
6. The metal part at the end of a pencil.
7. Unreadable handwriting.
9. The fleshy thing around the neck of a turkey.
12. The cry of a newborn baby.
16. The plastic coating on a shoe-lace.
17. Butterflies in your stomach.
18. The wired cage that holds the cork in a bottle of champagne.
19. Silent letters.
21. To throw out a window.
27. A *you are here* sign.
28. That *pins and needles* feeling.
32. The loop on a belt that keeps the end in place after it has passed through the buckle.
33. Misheard song lyrics.

34. The strip separating window panes.

Down

2. The day after tomorrow.
4. The foam on a beer.
5. The way it smells outside after rain.
8. The look shared by two people who both hope the other will offer to do something that they both want but aren't willing to do.
10. The pound (#) button on a telephone.
11. The time you run around cleaning frantically right before company comes over.
13. What it's called when you combine a question mark with an exclamation point.
14. The cardboard sleeve on a coffee cup.
15. The prongs on a fork.
20. The lines on the inside of your wrist.

22. The space between your eye-brows.
23. The white, crescent shaped part of the nail.
24. The groove located just below the nose and above the middle of the lips.
25. That sick feeling you get after eating or drinking too much.
26. The armhole in most clothing
29. The strip separating window panes.
30. The side opposite the hammer's striking side.
31. The bottom of a wine bottle.

24. Philtium
25. Crapulence
26. Armscye
29. Tmesis
30. Peen
31. Punt

2. Overmorrow
4. Barm
5. petrichor
8. Mamihlapinatapai
10. Octothorpe
11. Scurryfung
13. Interrobang
14. Zarf
15. Tines
20. Rasceca
22. Ghabella
23. Lunule

Down

28. Paresthesia
32. Keeper
33. Mondegreen
34. Muntin

Answers

1. Phosphene
3. Vocabale
6. Ferrule
7. Griffo-nage
9. Snood
12. Vagitus
16. Aglet
17. Collywobles
18. Agraffe
19. Aphthongs
21. Defenestrate
27. Ideolocator

(Information sourced from buzzfeed.com)



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Printed by: The English Book Depot, 15 Rajpur Road, Dehradun, Uttarakhand– 248009, India.

Published by: PK Nair, The Doon School, Dehradun.

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