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The Doon School WEEKLY

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Tradition, Security and Decay

Mr Matthew Raggett responds to the article 'Tradition Endangered', printed in Issue 2457.

After reading the article 'Tradition Endangered' in last week's *Weekly* I ran up to the top floor of the Main Building to see whether something terrible had happened that I missed. I was looking for something disastrous, a miserable failure or an act of destruction. Fortunately, I found that what may be an opinion was not reflected in the reality of the newly renovated classrooms.

I agree that the austerity of the classrooms of old has been banished from the top floor. Certainly those were the rooms that people passing out from School had sat in for years, but our primary focus is education and not the provision of austerity and tradition. From the perspective of an educator the classrooms of old, whilst undoubtedly places of learning, were no longer fit for purpose. Three solid rows of heavy desks, a teacher's desk the size of a dining table and an armchair do not make for great teaching and learning. What they do is prescribe a dominant style of delivery and almost guarantee that the students don't get the feedback they need to improve from their teacher, because the teacher cannot sit next to them or see what they are doing.

My experience of visiting classrooms here and around the world is that we need to do as much as we can with our classroom arrangement, furniture and infrastructure to help lessons become more student-centred, collaborative and interactive. We also need to make it possible for a teacher to be mobile and be able to choose a desk arrangement that suits the activity one has planned. Rows work fine if all you want to do is transmit content and have students listen to teachers, but that is not what great teaching and learning looks like.

The new classrooms are similar to the model classrooms created last year in their carpeting (fire safe, it's a school after all), acoustic panelling (so that you can hear not only the teachers but also each other without needing a microphone) and electrical infrastructure (LED lighting, projector, speakers and classroom computer). We learned some lessons from those prototype classrooms that have improved the final version; the choice of having manual blinds and less pattern in the carpet for example. The furniture is light enough to be moved easily but robust enough to sit on and the chairs are comfortable enough to use for an hour, can roll on the carpet and can be stacked to make space for classroom activity.

The architect who has been working with us on this project, as well as on the Hyderabad and Kashmir House renovations and the rebuilding of the old MDR; has studied and worked in the UK and India; and has a global reputation for her work and shares in the recognition we received from UNESCO for the heritage conservation on the Main Building. Her particular strength is meeting the needs of our students and staff whilst preserving the character and integrity of the beautiful buildings that we live and work in. In the boarding houses themselves, we are aiming to develop the well-being of boys by giving them a little more space and privacy whilst updating the rooms to provide the light, electricity and storage they need.

I believe that one of the jobs of any educational institution is to develop in its students the capacity to ask good questions, examine the evidence and seek continuous improvement. This has to apply to everything that we do as well, and tradition can sometimes get in the way of doing that. As Jiddu Krishnamurti, an educationist and philosopher said, "Tradition becomes our security, and when the mind is secure it is in decay."

“Three solid rows of heavy desks, a teacher's desk the size of a dining table and an armchair do not make for great teaching and learning.”



Regulars

IAYP

The following students have been awarded the **Duke of Edinburgh's International Award** in their respective levels:

Bronze:

Pragnay Nevatia

Vansh Gupta

Ishaan Goenka

Vijayaditya Singh Rathore

Ayushmaan Narayan

Silver:

Devansh Mittal

Gold:

Ashwath Madhok

Congratulations!

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

Your knowledge is badder than mine.

JKA, speak for yourself.

I took 5 balls in 5 wickets.

Suryansh Kainthola, memorable indeed!

We had a village in the club.

MHS, making new discoveries.

I came ranning.

Krish Aggarwal, runs Changes.

How dare you say me!

Anirudh Bazari, is angry.

Who is Hindi Public Speaking?

Adit Chatterjee, averse to English.

Around the World in 80 Words

Over 3000 families lost their homes due to a fire at a shantytown in The Philippines's capital, Manila. Meanwhile, a 6.6 magnitude earthquake hit the coast of Balochistan in Pakistan last Wednesday. A suicide bombing outside the Afghan Supreme Court in Kabul led to the death of twenty people. Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law that de-criminalizes some forms of domestic violence and abuse. Over 40 people were injured when six tornadoes raged through parts of Louisiana last Tuesday.

"Blessed are the hearts that can bend; they shall never be broken."

-Albert Camus

Appointments

The following have been appointed as **Boys-in-Charge of Public Speaking Competitions** for the year 2017:

English Public Speaking: Salman Mallick

Hindi Public Speaking: Mihir Gupta

The following boys have been appointed to positions within the **Music Department:**

School Music Captain: Angad Singh Trehan

School Orchestra Leader: Raghav Bagri

School Popular Band Leader and Trinity

Examinations Boy-in-Charge: Zoraver Mehta

School Choir Leader: Tanishk Saha

School Percussion Leader: Prabhav Maheshwari

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

The Elocutionists

Advaita Sood, Arav Goel and Lorcan Conlon have been awarded a **Distinction** in **Grade 3** of the **Trinity College, London Speech and Drama** examinations.

Well done!

Moving Pictures

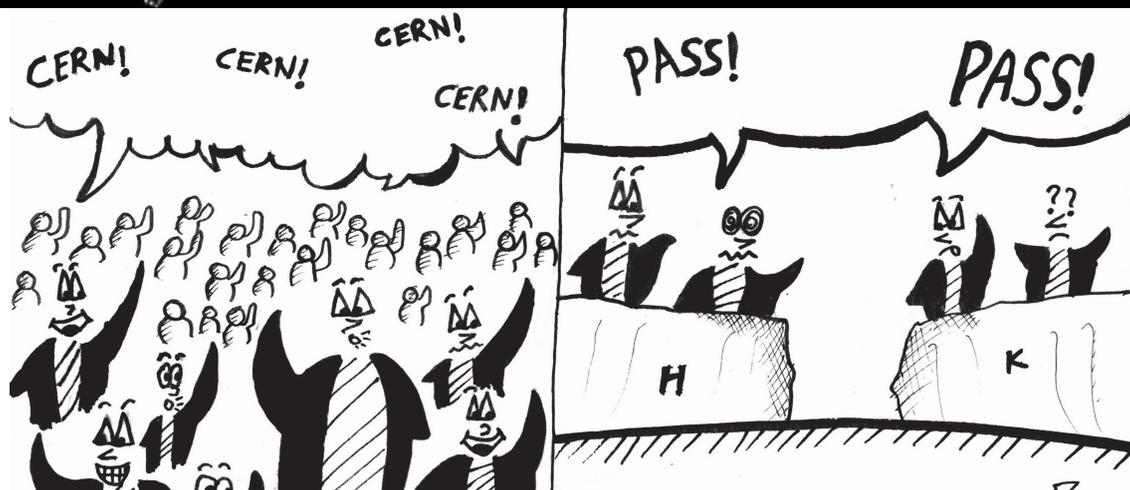
A film, *Paakbaand*, produced by Akshat Jha, was recently endorsed and promoted by the **'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao'** programme of the **Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India**, and can be viewed on its social media handles. Additionally, Akshat's film was personally commended by **Union Cabinet Minister Maneka Gandhi**.

Congratulations!

Dosco Doodle

Collusion or Chance?

Pratham Bansal



Sweeping the States

Kushagra Kar *comments on the Punjab, Goa and Uttarakhand elections.*

February 2017 marks the beginning of the reshuffling of seven State Legislatures. People in Punjab and Goa have already cast their votes, and Uttarakhand is set to do the same next Tuesday. Though the Uttar Pradesh elections are shaping up to be quite a fight, these polls and the campaigning did showcase Indian politics at its best.

The polls began on February 4, with the people of Punjab and Goa heading to the booths. The ruling coalition of Punjab, Shiromani Akali Dal-Bharatiya Janata (SAD-BJP) coalition, was elected back in 2012 with Parkash Singh Badal as the Chief Minister. The SAD-BJP alliance has once again propped Badal as their candidate, but this time, his victory seems unlikely.

The opposition has put up a stiff competition, with Amarinder Singh from the Indian National Congress (INC) and Bhagwant Mann from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) contesting on strong ground. Over the course of the campaign,



prominent Congress leaders such as Rahul Gandhi held rallies in various places across Punjab, with the sole purpose of denigrating the BJP name. Quoting Congress Vice-President Rahul Gandhi at a rally in Majitha, “... PM says he would not tolerate corruption, but is seen sharing the stage with Badals, who have been indulging in corruption all along and made a mess of the state.”

With the NDA alliance weakened by the Congress onslaught, the AAP’s Bhagwant Mann was able to make an easy entry into the race. Since this is the first time the AAP has contested in Punjab, promises and assurances did not have a negative precedent to fight against and were happily accepted by the public. Mann’s ‘wild card’ entry has gathered considerable support in the few months since the AAP’s announcement to contest in Punjab. With a 78% voter turnout, it is tough to say who will triumph, but it is clear that the results could mark a tectonic shift in Punjab politics.

Down south, the Goa elections bear a great deal of similarity to Punjab, with the fresh face of the AAP and the progressive strategy of both the Congress and the BJP. The reflective tendency is not a new phenomenon. With the possibility of a strong grounding in the AAP, who have resorted to recalling old glory days with no

“ The two boring grandfathers of Indian politics would do well to stop reminiscing and start working if they want to win. ”

actual arguments is counterproductive. Essentially just comparing their performances when they were in power, the Congress and the BJP steam blindly ahead, assuming they are the only two players in the race. In addition to this, neither party has declared a Chief Ministerial candidate, with the only possibility so far being Manohar Parrikar as the BJP candidate. The AAP is taking advantage of this, and has pro-actively declared Elvis Gomes as its candidate. The party has since gained considerable momentum, gathering a lot of support from amongst the Christian population as well as people from lower sections of society. The AAP is working hard to counter any possible negative image generated by their work in Delhi, and the two

boring grandfathers of Indian politics would do well to stop reminiscing and start working if they want to win.

Uttarakhand’s campaigning is in full swing, with hard-hitters in battle mode. The Prime Minister has made appearances around the state, with the hope of promoting his own party’s nominee, Ajay Bhatt. The BJP already finds itself at a natural advantage due to President’s rule imposed on the state, not to mention that fact that the difference of seats between Congress in BJP in 2012 was one; a small gap to bridge. The main issues in the state are of unemployment and underdevelopment. With largest single source of income and employment, religious tourism, being unable to sustain the state, it has been suffering an economic backlash. The hilly region, which account for most of the state, have had minimal development in the past five years; the result being mass migrations out of the state.

As with any election, it is difficult to predict the results. Despite preelection developments, one cannot fully judge the general sentiment of the people once they enter the booths. While it is evident that some parties have an advantage over others in their respective states, it is inevitable that the results may differ from the predictions. For

(Contd. overleaf)

(Contd. from previous page)

what it's worth though, the AAP has fought a hard campaign, and this is clear from the support it has garnered in Punjab and Goa. The fact that the BJP has a genuine chance of losing these elections proves that the people have had enough of them. Moreover, the resurgence of Congress points towards a general approval of their methods over the BJP's. Their head on battle in Uttarakhand might stand testament to the slow removal of BJP power in the States.



The new system of Sunday Brunches is arguably the most profound change in to our weekly schedule in recent times. In view of its significance, the Weekly spoke to members across our community to gauge the responses to this measure, a few of which have been mentioned below.

“The idea of serving brunch was appreciated by everyone. The boys were fulfilled and relaxed. The time duration was also sufficient. Some of the juniors even came twice and they enjoyed a lot. The quality of the food was excellent and the credit goes to Mr Makhija and his team.”
- Ms Ranjit Kaur

“Sunday Brunch was a great experience. Having the luxury of waking up late was really appreciated. The food was excellent as well. It had the feel of the type of Sunday we usually spend at home. I really liked the idea of it and hope it will be a permanent feature in School.”
- Saksham Makin

“Unlike most people I have spoken to, brunch wasn't such a great idea for me. Frankly, it goes against the School ethos and the manner in which the School was supposed to function. Agreed that it may allow us to relax more on Sundays, but is that really the direction we should be headed in? We are meant to live Spartan lives, as was the intent of our founder.”
- Stanzin Namgyal

“Brunch was a great success; the CDH dazzled all of us with its neat arrangement and variety of food. Being able to sleep on Sunday morning was welcomed by us all. This Brunch was a success however if the CDH could change the menu every Sunday, then it would be a true achievement for Mr. Makhija and his team.”
- Aarnav Sethy

“It was rather odd seeing the CDH close to deserted at 'brunch' but the liberty handed to us in terms of food choice and seating was something pleasant about the experience. Although, Saturday nights in the future may be crammed with even more nocturnal goings-on.”
- Armaan Verma

“The brunch was a great incorporation to the system. I really liked its flexibility in terms of its timing and its choice of food. A bearer I spoke to recently, told me that it was easier to organize and manage the brunch as compared to the normal breakfast, hence being a better option for the CDH staff as well! On the whole I felt it was a terrific experience.”
- Rishabh Goel

“Firstly, off the bat, the brunch was really refreshing, for the students as well as us House Masters. Despite the fact that the rather enthusiastic few didn't have to get up early led to some disturbances in the house at night, in my opinion this is a positive change. Positive as it's a good break from School's monotony and it was lively to see DoscOs living without their general external stimulus (the bell). Whatever was served, our boys really liked but, I did feel that the meal was too breakfast oriented rather than a brunch. Notwithstanding, it can always improve and it is a good step forward in promoting self-reliance amongst our students.”
- Dr Vidukesh Vimal

“I really liked the concept of a Sunday Brunch, which gives us more time to sleep and relax. Sunday is the only unstructured day of the week, and the brunch just adds to its flexibility.”
- Karthik Subbiah

“I think that the introduction of a Brunch buffet on Sunday is great. It's good that we are given more time to sleep and time to relax without having being rushed for meals as we usually were. My favourite part about it is that we can come back as many times as we want, so that we don't have to struggle with hunger on Sunday, an issue I commonly face. It's also nice that they have added a few new dishes. I'm looking forward to more leisurely Sundays!”
- Rahul Singh

| Humour |

Doon's Romeos

Omar Chishti

Disclaimer: All exaggerated references and situations in this piece may or may not be based on real life incidents. Read at your own risk.

“Young men’s love then lies not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.” - William Shakespeare

We entered Chandbagh with the expectation that violations of Section 377 aside, there wouldn’t be any scope for romance in this unisexual community. Instead, we soon learnt that from the temple of Ajmer to the home science lab of Dalanwala, when it comes to love, Doscos are known to be a notoriously polarised and prodigious lot. We live with a simple ego soothing mantra, “The fairer sex outside our walls falls into two camps: the kind who adore Doscos, and the kind who don’t have any taste.” We range from diehard Romeos on one end of the spectrum to scandalous Casanovas on the other, with few falling in between. Analogous to the digital world love lives in for us, there’s no knowing which kind of binary a given Dosco might be, and no predicting when he will snap from one to the other.

There are those who fall in (and out of) love faster than light, effectively before first sight. There are those who delicately juggle simultaneous escapades in any number of our rather incestuously named ‘sister schools’. There are those whose love life exists in snapshots from DSMUN to DSMUN, with extended hibernations (and short-term gym sessions) in between. There are even those of alternate inclinations who wait till college to come out of the closet. A Dosco’s love is blind to any number of parameters, particularly those of distance and age (the latter trend might prove worrying if carried into adulthood).

If teachers noticed a dip in the academic performance of artistic juniors over the past two weeks, they need look no further than the tonnage of Valentine’s Day letters which have been dispatched through the boarding school postal network with an efficiency and scale which could leave federal competition trembling in awe. A quick analysis of these letters over the years would reveal a peculiar constancy of the addressee’s names, while the authors change almost as fast as Doon’s daily schedule. This pattern is explained by the idiosyncratic Dosco habit of falling in love, as we do all other things, together. Truly fascinating that with only a handful of choice names one can construct the full dating history of entire batches, with convoluted quirks of concurrence and repetitions which defy all logic.

Competitive bastions of boys’ schools less favoured by Cupid’s arrows often try to figure out the secret

of Dosco prowess in this arena; no consensus has yet been established. If they do get their hands on this issue, they need wonder no more. Unlike our competition, we can work just like our targets - In teams (cliques?) of extensive wing men, conversations screen-shot, shared and analysed down to the minutiae. With an arsenal of tools ranging from the calculus of reply timings and extrapolations based on past conversations to carefully tailored comments and an arsenal of ‘friend of friend’ connections, there’s absolutely no heart a Dosco can’t melt given a bit of time. Don’t stress if you didn’t relate to any of this and shall treat the 14th as just another day in the calendar, good things come to those who wait (and the wait for our first Socials is almost over).

New Beginnings

The Doon School Weekly *recently interviewed the new Oberoi House Dame, Ms Kamal Kapoor.*

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Could you tell us a little about yourself?

Kamal Kapoor (KML): My name is Kamal Kapoor. I was born to an Army family and studied at the Punjab Public School, Nabha. Thereafter, I went on to study Public Administration at college. Additionally, I have a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in education and taught for a while. Right now, I’m married to a Police officer and have two grown up sons.

DSW: What work did you do with adolescents before coming to Doon?

KML: I was working with a company that arranged educational tours to NASA, thus I was handling kids from grades six through twelve. Besides that, this is a new field for me.

DSW: What was the volunteering work you did overseas?

KML: My husband worked in Kosovo for one year and was involved with UN missions. Additionally, I worked as a counsellor and later in the same area in the women’s Cell. These are the areas where I did all my voluntary services.

DSW: What made you apply for this job?

KML: Honestly, I did it for my children. Additionally, I also want to connect with the kids. I want to contribute, not as a mother, but to other boys as well, and being a House Dame is a great way to do so. I want to take care of them because I truly believe that studying should not be restricted to the classrooms, and moulding them into fine human beings is influenced by pastoral aspects too. It is here that I believe one can make a difference. Also, having been to a boarding school myself, I know that the saying ‘sharing is caring’, though clichéd, is important, and will use that as my guiding ideology.

The Week Gone By

Omar Chishti

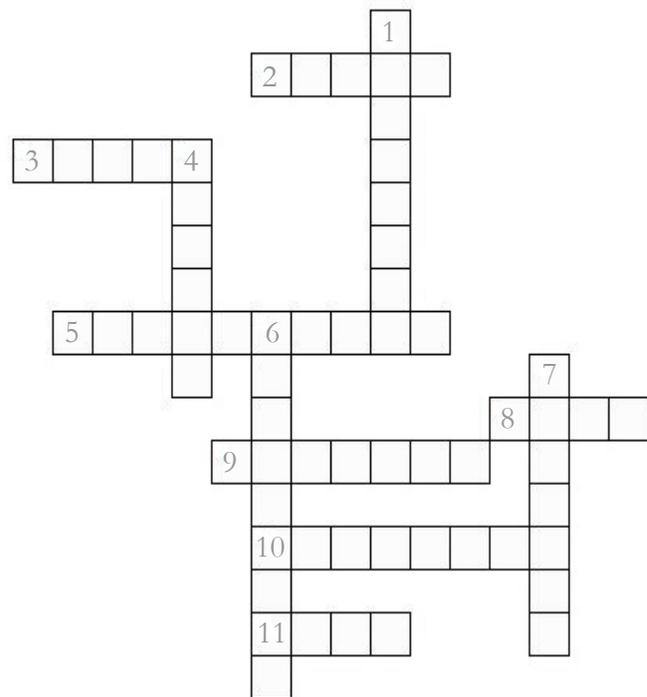
A motley assortment of extremely unlikely seniors developed a sudden spiritual streak over the past weekend and attended an address by HH the Dalai Lama in Delhi. As they pondered existential questions and reached a higher plane of existence, Chandbagh intriguingly observed its first Sunday brunch. The CDH surpassed expectations with the laying out of mountains of sausages, eggs, South Indian, vegetables and pitchers of cold coffee, which left many unable to eat during their outings.

The Senior Inter-House Cricket Competition began on Monday after a mere two weeks of practices. Despite the same, the games have been thrilling displays of intense competition, with almost astounding multi-wicket hauls, thrilling knocks and unbelievable comebacks. With the Hyderabad juggernaut steam rolling past all competition, 2017 may just prove to be a Grand Slam year. The long overdue Inter-House Quiz Competition took place on Monday evening and was full of unexpected twists and turns till the very end. The controversial tie breaker continues to weigh on everyone's minds, but prudence requires my silence on the matter. Completely unrelated to the matter, in the first London Marathon in 1981 two runners arrived at the final stretch of the race neck to neck. They decided to hold hands and cross the finishing line together. The rest, as they say, is history. The last major appointment to be made for the batch of '18 was concluded by an evening vote on Wednesday, with our Editor-in-Chief inheriting all of our ex-Editor-in-Chief's duties. May he prove as able a match as his predecessor for the Debating-Weekly-School Council triumvirate. Meanwhile, the mild earthquake on Monday tested the fresh prefects' managerial credentials, their main problem being the hordes of blissfully ignorant students insisting "It's only a drill, *chill yaar*".

In other news, the School community has been abuzz over the past few days with the fate of the April break instated last year. Funny how something we never even imagined for four years could suddenly become such an indispensable feature of the calendar in a couple of short spring weeks, warranting serious talk of riots and 'bandhs' and what not.

Crossword

Countries and Culture



Note: The 9th answer uses the country's alternate name.

Across

2. Known as the 'Land of the Rising Sun'.
3. The Suez Canal lies in _____.
5. Birth place of Babur, the first Mughal emperor.
8. Country where the Incan Empire was once situated.
9. Renowned artist Rembrandt van Rijn came from this country.
10. Follows a calendar which is about seven years behind the mainstream Gregorian calendar.
11. This country was formerly known as Persia.

Down

1. Angkor Wat, the world's largest religious monument, lies in this nation.
4. The seat of the Eastern Orthodox Church.
6. The world's largest producer of palm oil.
7. Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' was set in this country.

Answers to This Week's Crossword	
Across	Down
1. Cambodia	1. Holland
2. Japan	2. Egypt
3. Egypt	3. Ethiopia
4. Turkey	4. Turkey
5. Uzbekistan	5. Iran
6. Indonesia	6. Indonesia
7. Denmark	7. Denmark
8. Peru	8. Peru

Source: <http://worksheets.theteacherscorner.net/make-your-own/crossword/>

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