



Established in 1936  
**The Doon School**  
**WEEKLY**

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under the scanner  
**INDIA**

*Through **India Under the Scanner**, The Doon School Weekly attempts to identify India's shortcomings and where it is in need of improvement, as it looks to grow as a force in the world. We hope this will stimulate debate and attract interest on how much progress is still required from India as a nation.*

## Don't Say We Didn't Tell You!

*Dhruv Velloor analyses the shortcomings within the Indian system that led to the Mumbai attacks.*

After what has happened, we need to assure ourselves of one thing: what happened on 26/11 cannot be viewed as either shocking or a great surprise. It is not shocking that a group of heavily armed and technologically equipped *fidayeen* were able to travel unchecked from Pakistan to Mumbai or be able to live in India for months without arousing suspicion. It is not shocking that they were able to launch attacks on Mumbai's most famous and frequented areas or that many were killed during these attacks. India is plagued by a fragile security situation that allows terrorists and other radicals to do their worst, and we cannot be satisfied with the people who allowed this to happen to us. Because this has happened enough times, and this time, don't say that we didn't tell you.

**Intelligence** – We can thank a number of ignorant people for the carnage of the Mumbai attacks. However, the greatest failure was that of the RAW and IB. As the first line of defence, it was their responsibility to notify the police and army of any threat. Despite so many warnings of an imminent attack, they chose to value red tape more than innocent blood. Information was considered 'unactionable', and it was left at that. For example, there are thousands of unclaimed, unidentified boats on Indian shores, one of which was used to ferry the terrorists to Mumbai. India still lacks an effective intelligence response system where the armed and police forces can work to mitigate any security threats.

**Military** – An underprepared military is an unusable military. Let's hope that the Mumbai attacks were a lesson well-learned for the armed forces. I am sure that no one can expect a police force wielding lathis to bring about any kind of resolution when and where terrorists are involved. To cap it, the stationing of commandos in only one place in India proved to be a strategic disaster. For while Delhi faced a commando population explosion with the purpose of acting as Z level security for VIPs, they were in short supply in India's financial capital.

**Media** – Before the media (news channels in particular) begins to point the accusing finger, they should first look in the mirror. Carelessly conveying escapee and commando movements to terrorists watching TV does not seem like anyone's idea of how to help out, and the terrorists were all too happy to slaughter a few more to promote their 'cause'. The media should remember that the pursuit of news is not an excuse for indiscretion, and that senseless sensationalism does not pay nobly, even if it does pay well.

**Pakistan** – Just what, exactly, are we supposed to achieve when requests to clamp down on terrorism are met with obstinacy across the border? War? Cessation of trading and cultural activities? What do we do when Pakistan refuses to cooperate with the USA, saying that it only needs China? And why does Pakistan fail to acknowledge that terrorists train in camps on its soil, when it is so obvious? For now, India seems helpless to do anything, should Pakistan, with its weak government and all-controlling military and spy agencies, continue to do nothing to counter the LeT and other organisations within its territory.

**General Security** – Now let's be realistic – we can't blame everything on someone or the other. The common citizen needs to do something too. Security may have been beefed up after 26/11, but it still does not pass muster. It won't until guards figure out what bombs look like, we see more policemen on the streets (not merely focusing on filling their pockets while on their beat) and we understand how to deal with it at our own level. As citizens of a democracy, we must accept our responsibility in this social contract.

All this just goes to show where our problems lie in terms of national security. And though terrorism is a serious threat, we should realise that it can be stopped (just look at what the USA has done post 9/11). Now that the problems have been identified, we need to work out the solution quickly, and (to borrow a phrase from Barack Obama's inaugural speech) "pick ourselves up and dust ourselves off".

## Regulars

### APPOINTMENTS '09

Art Society appointments are as follows:

**Secretary:** Piyush Gupta

**STA-in-Charge:** Ranjai Singh Sodhi

**SUPW-in-Charge:** Pranit Verma

**Editors-in-Chief (Art Magazine):** Amarinder Singh Sodhi and Nikhil Sardana.

Tarang Khurana and Aditi Joshi have been appointed **School Social Service Secretaries.**

Ritvik Kothiwal has been appointed **Editor-in-Chief** of the **Doon School List.**

Sagar Agarwal, Ayaan Patel and Ashutosh Kumar Singh have been appointed **Boys-in-Charge** of the **Boys Bank and Tuck Shop SUPW.**

Ayaan Patel has been appointed **Boy-in-Charge** of the **IAYP.**

Yojit Mehra has been appointed **School Chess Captain.**

Ashutosh Kejriwal has been appointed **School Table Tennis Captain.**

Jayvardhan Singh has been appointed **Secretary** of the **Quiz Society.**

We them a fruitful tenure.

### BLAZERS

Sriyash Kishorepuria, Piyush Gupta, Saurav Mediratta and Aaditya Vicram Gupta have been awarded the **Scholar's Blazer.** Congratulations!

### NEW STA

**Dominoes**, the challenging indoor game, is being offered as a new STA in School from this term on.

## The WHO?

*Who was Franklin D. Roosevelt?*

*The Director of Slumdog Millionaire* – Uma Shankar Goswami

*The President of Russia* – Yash Agarwal

*Someone in the Second World War* – Shivank Singh

*A poet...no, a scientist* – Parth Gupta

*T S Eliot's brother:* – Dhruv Aggarwal

*He was the President of the USA from 1933 to 1945.*



## Opinion Poll

Do you think the so-called 'pub-and-mall culture' goes against Indian traditions?

Yes 12%

No 88%

(364 members of the school community were polled)

**Next Week's Question:** Is Valentine's Day of any significance to you?

## | Poetry |

### Sins

*Shashank Peshawaria*

In the evening, when you had left,  
When you were still in my heart,  
They came.

They sang of all your sins;  
Why you deserved punishment  
And blame.

At each complaint they threw,  
At every sin they named,

For you my fondness slowly grew;  
I felt much less ashamed.

When those who had no eyes departed,  
Out my happy laughter darted.

Your crime had made me love you more.  
I heard your tread on the floor.

I sensed the approach of your joyous feet.  
You came inside and took your seat.

\* \* \*

## Unquotable Quotes

*Are you button-challenged?*

**KPB**, on proper attire.

*My copy is New Year.*

**Shashvat Dhandhanian**, new pinch.

*Why are you growing so short?*

**Sumaer Sandhu**, feeling tall.

*Stop cutting the Main Field.*

**Nilesh Agarwal** reprimands.

*You stick your tongue in your mouth.*

**Sarthak Singh** puts things where they belong.

*Hello, intellect!*

**Nikhil Sardana**, the next generation brain.

*My paper is leaking!*

**Shreyvardhan Swaroop** raises the alarm.

*I can't coordinate my leg and my foot.*

**Abhishek Gupta**, the 'un-coord'.

*One more word and slap!*

**Pranjal Singh's** chappal strikes back.

*When did I said that?*

**Pranjal Singh's** short-term memory lapse.

*It's nahi coming*

**Shashank Peshawaria**, bilingual.

*Take it up a press-up position.*

**Harnaresh Singh** takes punitive measures.

*At what point in stage did you ask her out?*

**Rachit Malik**, Love Guru.

*I am pride of you.*

**Shubham Agarwal** congratulates.

*He tried to suicide me.*

**Divij Buddhiraja** whines.

*Who is talking about Kelly and Sheats?*

**PCH** takes poetic licence.

*So many newses has happened.*

**STB** is up-to-date.

*He installed Cagemaker on the laptop.*

**Vivek Santayana**, tech-savvy.

# Animal Form

*Vivek Santayana sheds light on the practice of being bullied by your own form mates*

If it wasn't for these eleven days between my birthday and the cut-off date, I might have been in a different form altogether. But I have no right to complain. There are a handful of people I know who are excruciatingly closer to the cut-off than I am. I joined school as any average D former who was at the right place at the right time to make some friends. That was D form, a time when some of us couldn't even spell 'politics'. You could call it a primitive society. 'Might is Right' held true in the crudest sense and those were the more prominent figures in our form. I didn't have the physique to dare, leave alone the daring, to defy. Everything, right from the ownership of an umbrella to the unsettled score, was settled in the most immature of ways. Yet, all you wanted to do was 'fit in'. I was so afraid of being an outcast that I didn't dare divulge that I liked the Beatles till C form, and then, too, which itself happened by accident. Soon enough, lines began drawing themselves. If it weren't an outright impossibility, there would have been more gangs than students in a form.

It is really interesting to see how gangs are formed. We wanted to be accepted by the company we kept. Soon enough, a group of us would always be walking together between classes or to the CDH. Maybe it was due to habit; we have remained clannish and prefer to go with the same people for private outings. We hang around with the same crowd all the time. But there is a very appalling degree of immiscibility between such groups. What starts out as a friends' circle becomes nothing but a herd. Soon, someone emerges as the arbiter. Another interesting instinctive herding pattern is when the weakling reduces himself to a shadow of someone stronger, someone who can be his Big Brother.

Divisions aren't where the problems end. It is a sad reality that might has always been right. We cannot tolerate being equal in its true sense. We are a fiercely competitive race. Our identity depends on our *aukaat* (a word that has unfortunately entered the Dosco lexicon). Most of us really have no choice but to be servile, be subjugated and become inferior to our own form-mates. There are some of us who have been bullied far worse by our own form-mates than we have been by anyone else. I always define a form as the most undemocratic denomination of the school. I don't know whether this is right or not. Being bullied by seniors is understandable; being bullied by juniors (in your ScL form), a matter of karma; but being bullied by form-mates: preposterous!

Forget about it being preposterous, it is downright cruel. Being bullied by a senior is acceptable. You learn to take it. He won't be there for long, either. And yes, he is superior because he is older and bigger than you. It's

all a matter of time. His ScL form will come soon enough and his withdrawal symptoms will get the better of him. But as far as form-mates are concerned, you will spend all your school life with them. You confide in them, you interact with them the most. They are your room mates. You will be at their mercy a few minutes before lights-out and after. Being bullied by them will crush your self-esteem. Being boycotted makes you feel like an outcast. You regret being what you are because you don't fit in. Soon, you will be so used to self-pity that, like a character in a Kafkaesque novel, you will be in search of a crime to fit the punishment. You will be reduced to a defenceless wimp who cannot even hope to stand up for himself, which, in reality, is just another opportunity for someone else to pick on you even more. The abysmal nothingness your own identity can become is a staggering reality.



So maybe it's just harsh reality, the wimp is always picked on. But we're still part of one form. We are *supposed* to be equal. We're *supposed* to be united. Honestly, form unity only means taking the blame with the rest of the form for something which you weren't even remotely involved in.

No form is united. But everything depends on your standing in school (more often, your performance on the sports field). The question is, why? Why is it that some of us aren't strong enough to be right? Although it doesn't turn into a brawl over an issue, most of us say nothing in our defence because we have been crushed in earlier years.

I still believe that, being mature individuals, our resolutions shouldn't depend on strength. There is no 'mutual understanding' in its true sense. Mutuality is always one-sided. The wimp will continue to be picked on. People will always take advantage of someone's inability (which is often passed off as unwillingness) to retaliate. But school requires us to live with one another as equals. We are supposed to be peers.

I wonder if the saying "No one can subjugate you without your consent" still holds true. Maybe, all this really happens because we allow ourselves to be subjugated. There really is no other reason for most of us to be inferior. We are all pretty much the same age and we are all absolutely unique. We all have our idiosyncratic tastes, opinions and agendas. If it really is our consent that makes us fall prey to this system, it would be simple enough to refrain from consenting. But somehow, we find our standing in the form defined. By whom or what or when, we don't know. No one incident or no one series of incidents can be responsible for such inequalities. But, I guess, we really have no option apart from consenting. After all, all form mates are equal, but some are more equal than others.

# Staffspeak

The Doon School Weekly interviews the new teachers, *Debosree Samanta Roy and Mohd. Istemdad Ali*

**The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Tell us something about yourself.**

**Debosree Samanta Roy (DSY):** I was born and brought up in Jamshedpur, and did my Master's degree at the Kalyani University in West Bengal. I have been involved in research related to environmental science and ecology. I then went to the University of Kansas, in the USA, and did a second Master's degree in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. I love painting and making sculptures in my free time. I enjoy writing, especially poetry, and do it more for myself than to show anyone. In addition to this, I have learnt classical Indian dance.

**DSW: What motivated you to come and teach here?**

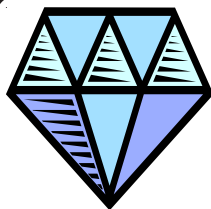
**DSY:** I taught a group of students who were pursuing their Bachelors' degree at the University of Kansas. I found that I liked the students' company, and the exchange of knowledge that took place in a classroom. This motivated me to teach, and though I had many other occupations to choose from, I decided on teaching. I then chose The Doon School as I felt it was a great institution and would give me a chance to exercise liberty of thought and expression, as well as innovation.

**DSW: Would you like to continue to teach, and if so, for how long?**

**DSY:** That's a difficult question, but I think that I would like to stick with teaching as of now. I would like to use my skill and experience as a researcher to motivate students towards scientific research. I would like to integrate my motivation as a researcher in the classroom to help students open up their minds, which can be done by giving them an orientation towards scientific research.

**DSW: What are your views on the Indian system of education, and how it can be improved?**

**DSY:** The Indian system of education does have limitations. There is a vast difference between the system here and that in the US. In science, I found that the undergraduate student in the US is more exposed to the developments in his field. Even in the matter of school education, students here are more interested in finishing their syllabus than in getting actual exposure. I feel there should be more trips to places such as the FRI, which can give a broader insight into their work, and disclose their long-term applications to the students.



## CAREER CALL

The Careers' Notice Board will feature **Gemology** as a career this week. All aspiring lapidaries should look it up.

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**DSW: Tell us something about your schooling.**

**Mohd. Istemdad Ali (MIA):** I did my schooling from St. Xavier's Collegiate School, Kolkata, and graduated in Economics from St. Xavier's College, Kolkata. I got my Master's in Economics from Calcutta University. In school, I was a part of the school cricket and football teams. I also ran and my record stands at 11.78 seconds in the 100 metres category. I am also a black belt in karate.

**DSW: What about your past career?**

**MIA:** After my graduation in 2000, I joined St. Paul's School, Darjeeling, in 2003. I have taught there for six academic years and I learnt a lot there. I was the Master-in-Charge of cricket for six years, and I will be coaching the juniors at Doon too. My hobby there, what you call STA here, was Persian calligraphy.

**DSW: Why teaching as a career?**

**MIA:** Both my parents were teachers. My father was a college professor and my mother taught at a government school. The environment at home was therefore conducive to an academic life.

**DSW: Do you think it is good for a boy to grow up in a residential school?**

**MIA:** Residential schools do make students tougher most of the time but sometimes also insensitive. This only happens when a boy gets a grudge when he is sent to a boarding school. But this is seldom the case.

**DSW: Do you think that seniors should behave more responsibly toward juniors?**

**MIA:** Of course, I feel the responsibilities rest on the shoulders of the seniors. They should not get their personal egos into school matters. Without the cooperation of the seniors, a school will have difficulty in functioning effectively. The success of a school is due in part to the good seniors present in school. What I feel is that seniors should be acting like elder brothers to their juniors; this is how the senior-junior relationship will improve.

## You are the One

Jayavardhan Singh

The sun shines brightly in the sky,  
The sparrows in the air pass us by,  
Then comes night, without the sun,  
And yet you bring light – you are the one.

I look at you and night turns to day,  
I look at you and my sorrows fade away,  
And at the end, when some is lost and some is won,  
I look at you and know – you are the one.

Now I'm *kicked*, for I have written poetry which beats  
Shelley, Wordsworth and even Keats!  
So trash all this and let's have fun,  
And, oh, I forgot – you're still the one!