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<b>REGULARS</b>	<b>BIDDING</b>	<b>SOCIAL SERVICE</b>	<b>DOONSPEAK</b>
2	ADIEU 2	3	4

# Goodbye, Dr. Bajpai

*The Doon School Weekly interviewed Dr. Kanti Bajpai, the outgoing Headmaster*

**The Doon School Weekly (DSW):** When you left school after your S-form (which was, then, the equivalent of Sc Form), did you aspire to be back as an HM?

**Kanti Prasad Bajpai (KPB):** No; when I was in my early forties, the thought crossed my mind once or twice. I thought it would be great. Any Dosco will find it very hard to resist the call of his old school. We all like to think that we can come back to clean everything up that we had felt needed to be. I thought it was a leisurely job, something to do just before retirement in the later years (50 – 60). How wrong I was! Karan Thapar told me after a TV interview that my name was doing the rounds as potential Headmaster. I was busy with my teaching career and was not sure I wanted to be HM. Nevertheless, I said I would consider throwing my hat in the ring. The next time I heard about it, the talk with Karan had slipped out of my mind. At that time, a Dosco's parent informed me that my name was doing the rounds. After this, a Dosco in a headhunting firm called me. And then there were interviews with the Board of Governors, and so on...

**DSW:** Did you consider becoming Headmaster or were you certain that, once the offer was made, you would accept?

**KPB:** Of course, I did consider it very deeply. Both my children were well-settled at the Sriram School, and my extended family lived in New Delhi. I feared a lot of opposition from my family. My father thought I had established myself as an academic and TV commentator, and my wife preferred to stay in Delhi, although later she came to love Dehradun. But when your old school calls you, it is very difficult to say 'no', especially as Headmaster.

**DSW:** In your speech at the farewell dinner you spoke about the role of teachers in a student's life. Can you recall any such mentors from your school or university days?

**KPB:** Yes, I remember several. I remember Miss Ellis, in England. She was a very influential teacher in my life. I remember Father Chandy at St. Xavier's. He had a strict code of discipline but taught us to be considerate of others. Mr. O.P. Malhotra taught Maths at Doon, was the Housemaster of Tata House, and gave us (the prefects) a long rope to run the House. Mr. Vohra, though young at the time, was a profound influence and was the perfect public school master. My first Headmaster, Chris Miller, took big decisions and experimented a lot, and had a great sense of humour. Although I was only in School in the early years of his Headmastership, I considered Colonel Eric Simeon to be tremendously dedicated to the boys. Mr. C.K. Dixit was very unassuming, quick-witted and cheerful. He taught me the Morse Code in between breakfast and Assembly in the HAM radio STA. Mr. Kandhari a huge help to me in the *Weekly* and was a brilliant master-in-charge.

**DSW:** To be more specific about modernising the School, do you think that introducing all these publications has helped?

**KPB:** Some masters think they have had a negative impact. There has been a huge increase in competition between the publications and they are acting as vehicles for the expression of opinion which the *Weekly* could not entirely deal with, as it was the sole publication. Publications have increased the public space for boys and I think they have had a positive impact. That is not to deny that too many publications can have negative impacts, especially on quality.

**DSW:** Do you regret any decision you made during your tenure?

**KPB:** Of course I regret some decisions! However, I do not regret any disciplinary actions I took. I do not regret the suspensions and expulsions, as these were decisions taken after a great deal of thought. One of the things I do regret is the delay in building Jaipur House and the Art School. The Art School has become quite a saga! What I regret the most is losing my temper, especially during the last two years. I am not really a school master, I don't have the patience. The next Headmaster will need to do a bit of a repair job!

**DSW:** Do you think that DoscOs, as all-rounders, will be successful in an increasingly specialised workplace environment?

**KPB:** As I have said before, DoscOs may or may not be Nobel Prize winners, but they are definitely great managers. Specialists get you into trouble. The 60s and 70s saw the cult of specialisation. It is the specialists who have caused the present global meltdown! I would feel much more comfortable with the all-rounder Dosco than

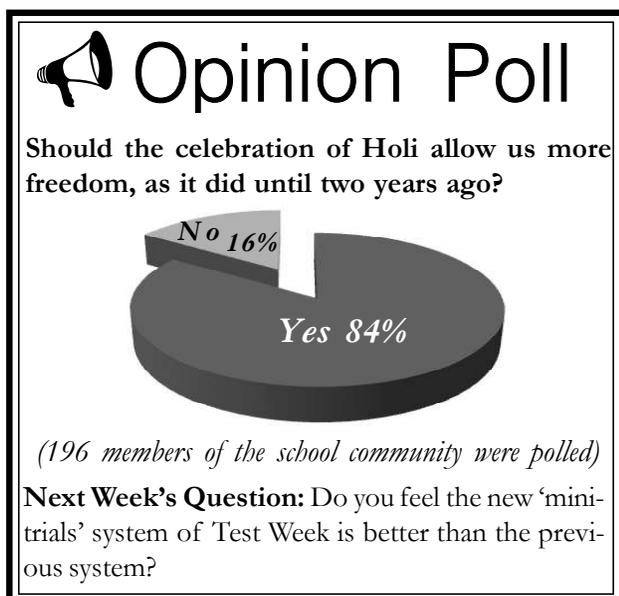
*(contd. on page 4)*

## DANCE PERFORMANCE

The **Bhoomika Dance Ensemble** performed for the School in the Rose Bowl on the eve of Holi, March 10. A report will run in the next issue.

## KITCHEN KING

Akash Agarwal Binrajka has been appointed **Secretary** of the **Mess Committee** for the forthcoming year. Congratulations!



## Unquotable Quotes

*When you standing in line you learn to standing in line.*

**MLJ**, standing ovation.

*I will shot down the notes.*

**AKM**, Wild Wild West.

*That was kind of kind.*

**Apurv Agarwal**, tender-hearted.

*Don't try to smart, my dear friend.*

**MLJ**, not to be outsmarted.

*Believe you in me.*

**SKD**, we believe.

*All prefects should meet the School Council.*

**Aashray Patel** conducts proceedings.

*The founder should return it to the owner at the earliest.*

**Aashray Patel** mans the LPO.

*I will not tolerate any sort of discipline.*

**SSM**, the anarchist.

*You baded it?*

**Pranit Verma** finds what he is looking for.

*Now, we have the last performance of tonight's evening.*

**Shrey Gaurishankar**, Master of Ceremonies.

*Go wear a shirt that shuts itself.*

**PBR** admonishes.

*Point of personal order!*

**Rahil Badhwar**, best delegate.

*I'm not as dumbest as I look!*

**Anuj Bhatia**, maybe.

*Just I take to HM.*

**AKS** just takes action.

*Remove it out.*

**Pranjal Singh** is now really sick.

*I will regurgigate on you.*

**Pranjal Singh's** verbal outpouring.

## School Captain's Speech

*An excerpt from **Sriyash Kishorepuria's** speech at the School's farewell dinner for Headmaster, **Dr. Bajpai**, held on March 9*

We are here today to bid farewell to Dr. Kanti Prasad Bajpai and it seems an appropriate occasion to share with you a few thoughts about him.

Dr. Bajpai understood the value of tradition but he understood equally, the need for change. This made him seem at times rather hard to understand, both in the way he functioned as a Headmaster and in his persona. During his tenure, a YC was given on an average of one in every four days. Yet, this apparent strictness went hand-in-hand with an informal and highly approachable manner in his dealings with us on an individual basis. Also, his serious demeanour hid an ex-Dosco with a lively sense of wit and humour, and an irrepressible desire to dance. The bottom line is that Dr. Bajpai has had the daunting task of being the Headmaster of 500 Doscos with all the skill and versatility such a task entails.

We all have our own KPB stories to remember. My favourite one is when, at a house feast, KPB pointed at SJB's black T-shirt and said, "That is so Delhi TGIF on a Thursday afternoon." He then pointed to his own black shirt and said, "Now, *this* is hot."

I believe that in him we had a Headmaster with vision. His achievements and the changes he made all point to that. It was this vision that made him rebuild and yet preserve the heritage of this School. This is evident in the construction of Foot, Martyn, and Jaipur Houses. Though we had to, and still have to, bear with those green barricades, the School is looking astonishingly beautiful and it is a pleasure to live on this campus today. He understood the urgent need for us to enter the 21st century along with the rest of the world. The introduction of appropriate technology was another such step, as was the introduction of the IB. Without such measures The Doon School could have become an anachronism in the world of education.

In Dr. Bajpai we have had a Headmaster who has made us aware of the privilege of being a Dosco and of the responsibility of being one. We have, each one of us, in some way, even if in different ways, been influenced by him, in these, our formative years. It is hard to believe that he will soon be a part of our memories and a black-and-white photograph in the distinguished gallery of such portraits, hanging outside the Headmaster's office.

Sir, it has been an honour to have been elected School Captain and functioned as one, for a period under your guidance. I speak on behalf of the School when I say that we will cherish the time you spent with us and wish you the very best for the future. As Chandbagh will always be a part of my life, so, too, I am sure, will it be a part of yours.

# Spreading the Light

*Tarang Khurana and Aditi Joshi report on the inauguration of the Doon Gyanoday Vatika, a slum school adopted by the School*

“Self help is best help” were the words of Neha, a student of Doon Gyanoday Vatika, when KPB inaugurated the Vatika. Located at Balbir Road in Nai Basti, the Doon Gyanoday Vatika is a slum school which was formally inaugurated on Friday, February 27. Work on the Vatika began last year and the school was informally inaugurated on July 25, 2008. The school started with five children and today the numbers have risen to fifty-four. Established under the Gyanoday Trust run by Old Boy Avinash Alag (ex-160H ‘84), the Doon Gyanoday Vatika follows 22 such vaticas already established in Meerut.

Ritu Bahot and Beena Bahot are teachers at this Vatika, and are from the local community. The school serves primarily as a place where children come after their daily school hours to finish their homework, learn new skills and improve upon old ones. Ranging from karate to crochet-work, dramatics to stitching, the students of this school learn to effectively nurture a skill that helps in their overall development. Music and soft-toy production are also activities, that are to be introduced at this school. Recently, they also celebrated their first sports meet.

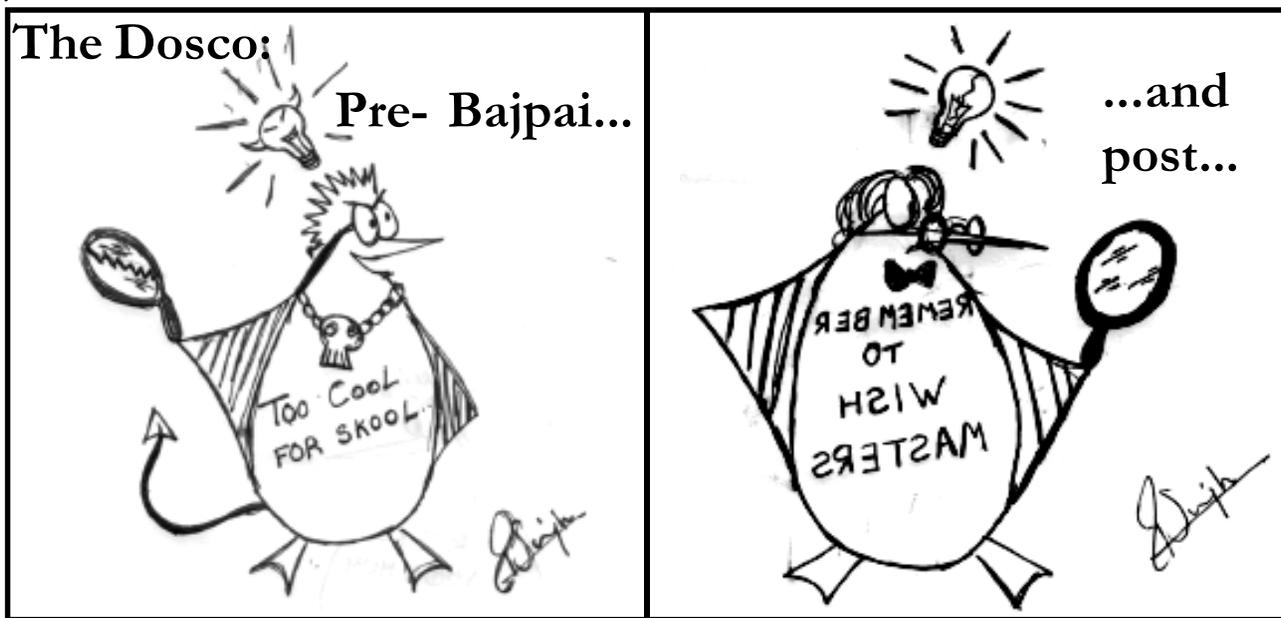
The inauguration of the Vatika was attended by KPB, Avinash Alag and Raj Kumar along with the teachers and students of Doon, of whom VKL, SRT, MAK, PGI, RLR, PVD and MIA are regular visitors. The students of the Vatika started the programme with a welcome song and a few chain games that literally left the audience in knots! A Punjabi dance and a short skit on the importance of education followed next. It was truly amazing to see how the children derived happiness from the simplest of things and always saw the glass as being half-full. With ambitions of becoming doctors, engineers and army-men, the children of the Vatika became guiding spirits to us Doscocs, who couldn’t help but admire their courage and enthusiasm.

After the performances, Avinash Alag spoke to the gathering and informed the children of the importance and value of education and how it will help them to gain confidence and respect. KPB also spoke and thanked the Gyanoday Trust and the people for entrusting the School with this project. MCJ thanked the Headmaster for taking an initiative in starting this new service and thanked the people for letting their children come here. We summed up the proceedings, thanking the local people for their cooperation over the past year with a promise to continue working towards the development of the Vatika.

While interacting with the students and their parents, we found ways in which we can improve the facilities and how they feel about this venture. Sudha Dev, grandmother of two five-year olds said that she is very happy with the opening of the Vatika. Now, her children not only study but also learn other crafts and activities. Babita, mother of Neha, a class seven student, couldn’t have been happier. Her daughter has gained confidence since joining this Vatika. Even though she attends a day school, she comes here every evening to do her homework and solve her problems. She says that Neha, after having started attending these classes, now interacts with the other children freely and has overcome her shyness in interacting with people.

The Doon School further plans to introduce computers as a learning aid and provide the Vatika with the basic technical knowhow. Other plans include the improvement of health and hygiene conditions and providing entertainment via televisions and indoor games. Also, keeping in mind the current environmental crisis, it plans for rainwater harvesting, landscaping and tree plantation in areas surrounding the Vatika. The School plans to promote more and more students for formal education through sponsorship and to study in the Panchayat Ghar school in Doon.

The families here are very happy with the work of Doon Gyanoday Vatika, and would really appreciate it if the School could introduce some more art and craft activities and teach the children some sports. This collaborative venture by two institutions is an example of how working together can lighten the hardships of the less fortunate. We feel that if there is anything we can believe in, along with the children of the slum school, it is what Walt Disney said, “If you can dream it, you can do it”.



(contd. from Page 1)

the specialist who knows it all. Doscocs have always been great team players, and can lead people because they are all-rounders and can see the link between things which the specialist cannot.

**DSW: You once said that in your time the library was the hotspot of the School – but we see that students today don't read and write as much or as well as they should. Why do you feel this has happened?**

**KPB:** The fault is not theirs. It is an electronic era today and the world lives on the visual media. I feel that every age has its medium; in ours it was books, but now people prefer to read everything off the Net.

**DSW: You've also spoken about the 'dumbing down' of education. Could you elaborate on this and also tell us how it can be remedied?**

**KPB:** In India, we see that this is most evident in the Board examinations because these are marked so mechanically. Take the language exams. Markers do not look at grammar, spelling or writing style anymore. They only check to see if certain points have been covered in an answer and award marks accordingly. Perhaps this is a good thing, because it prevents language facility, particularly English, from becoming elitist. The Government is sensitive to public opinion, and has probably acted in to 'dumb down' English and other languages.

**DSW: Do you feel that the School can aim to become exclusively IB-affiliated?**

**KPB:** The IB issue is complicated. It would be a very complex process for the entire School to shift to IB from ICSE, at this point. The idea behind shifting from the ICSE to IB is to bring about an intellectual shift. It was not done to help students go abroad, but rather, to bring about an intellectual shift. Anyway, fifty percent of Doscocs were going for further education abroad, even without the IB. The IB suits the School. It suits 'Argumentative Doscoc'! At some point the School will probably have to choose between one or the other exam system.

**DSW: What made you decide to accept the invitation to teach in Oxford University?**

**KPB:** I had been out of practice, professionally, and I thought it was time to get back to the classroom. I want to go back and do research and teach – and no more administration!



- A warrior. – Siddharth Bathla
- Classy, cool, candid and cutting-edge. – PRC
- Seven-in-one – Rayhaan Imam
- A Headmaster to remember – Jai Kairon
- Articulate – GSS
- One of our best Headmasters – Rajdeep DeoBhanj
- A Headmaster who did more than just change – Sumaer Sandhu
- A revolutionary – Shawn Kapur
- A man who was disliked by some, loved by the rest but will be missed by all – Jayavardhan Singh
- A style icon – Shubham Aggarwal
- A person with plenty of options – ASH
- A sharp dresser – Nikhil Sinha
- Very difficult to imitate in the S-form entertainment – Govind Singh
- A person I admired for his liberal qualities and sense of humour – PDT
- The personification of stern and effective leadership – Akash Agarwal
- A torchbearer – Lakshit Joshi
- A socialite person – Prahlad Singh
- Our loss and Oxford's gain. – Vivek Santayana
- An academician – STB
- A 'solemn' man – Jayant Mukhopadhaya
- A fine mind – PCH

## CAREER CALL

The Careers' noticeboard will feature **Statistics** as a career this week. All boys interested must look it up.



## WordSearch

*Arjun Parmar*

*Find below the surnames of all the Headmasters Doon has had till date*

R	E	L	L	I	M	G	E	H	F	I
I	A	V	W	R	M	A	R	T	Y	N
A	Q	J	W	S	D	T	C	T	R	M
P	Z	T	A	M	A	S	O	N	F	B
J	R	O	E	L	L	I	M	A	R	T
A	B	O	K	V	I	Z	S	Q	W	P
B	F	F	Y	X	M	W	N	A	L	F
I	E	N	O	E	M	I	S	R	D	O
D	P	T	X	U	Y	V	O	S	P	O
I	N	A	D	N	A	H	C	M	A	R
Q	F	U	V	C	S	E	Y	I	N	C

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