An open bracket signifies perpetuity, a belief held by the Weekly, and relevant to a sixty-year old nation poised to dominate the global arena.


Just outside my House, the stage is set again for the Founder’s Day festivities and with it, the beginning of the end. As the signing-off comes closer, my last Weekly takes the form of a Founder’s Day Special. If I were to do a quick recount, the year that was, was a series of experiments – in content, organization, perspective, and vision. I remember, as a B former, writing a letter to the Weekly citing poor visual appeal as a reason for its dwindling readership. And I also remember, a short editorial note that supplemented this letter, which read: “Shikhar, we agree with you entirely. Looking good is an essential part of being read and we at the Weekly fully well realize that. Since the new board took over last Founder’s, there has been a conscious effort in improving the looks of the publication. We have tried new fonts, headers, and graphics. But if you feel we haven’t been experimenting enough, don’t worry because a lot more is on the way. We don’t want too much change too fast, now do we? When it comes to the first page, we have already got a team to design a new masthead and you will, in all probability, see it in the first issue next term. Constructive inputs like yours go a long way in improving our publication. Thanks again” (Issue No. 2056). And of course, the masthead, fonts, heading and layout have remained unchanged in the name of ‘continuity’. As an outsider, I felt highly disillusioned with these empty promises and thus decided (rather reluctantly!) to give the Weekly an entrance test. As a member on-board, I was a part of the ‘criticize-it-all’ group and remained so till the day the tables were turned on me. It’s been one year since I’ve defended scathing allegations against this publication: “Isn’t it merely a puppet?”; “It’s censored, yaar!”; “No Roving Eye?” [disappointed]; “Your polls are concocted.” And it’s true that uneasy lies the head that wears the crown, for change is difficult to manifest and it takes more than a visionary to break from the traditional mould. In the year gone by, my efforts have been directed towards living those changes in the Weekly that I had envisioned in my junior forms. And of course, a naïve D former on the Martyn and Foot House tables would dismiss me, as I had done, five years ago. The ride has been bumpy, but satisfying in the sense that drastic changes may not have occurred but my sincere efforts were directed towards improving readability and appeal, given the constraints. Mahatma Gandhi once said, “Be the change you want to see in the world.”

In the past year, my priority has been to increase involvement from the school community in publications. Thus, at the outset a more efficient and accountable feedback system was attempted at. Since Opinion Polls were received cynically, they were computerized to increase accuracy and transparency. The publication also produced its Code of Ethics that would serve as a guide to ‘responsible journalism’. This term, the Weekly introduced a Guest Editor each month to bring in fresh perspectives and creative skills. The series on ‘India’s Tryst With Destiny’ attempted to engage with the India that is outside Chandbagh and address issues that should affect us all. With these words, I present to you our Founder’s Day issue, one of the many experiments this year. Enjoy the read and do send in valuable criticism, for there is always room for improvement.
No fullstops in The Doon School Weekly

PROVIDING A LITERARY PLATFORM SINCE 1936
Freedom and War: 1947 and 1962

When India became independent in August 1947, who would have thought that it would be plunged into war and conflict with its two biggest neighbours—Pakistan and China? Within months of Independence, Indian troops were fighting Pakistani troops in Kashmir. A decade and a half after becoming a free country, India was at war with China.

India’s nationalist leaders had dreamed of a peaceful future for the new nation. Instead, India was to experience the horrors of Partition and the dangers of war.

In October 1947, India and Pakistan were at war, over Kashmir. Kashmir, along with the princely states of Hyderabad and Junagadh, had not been able to make up its mind which country to accede to at Partition. The Maharajah of Kashmir was Hindu, the majority of the population was Muslim. By the logic of Partition, Kashmir should perhaps have gone to Pakistan as a Muslim majority state. Hari Singh hoped, however, to remain independent of both India and Pakistan. Sheikh Abdullah, an increasingly powerful Kashmiri leader, inclined to India, partly out of friendship with Nehru and partly out of a calculation that India would be better for Kashmir. Abdullah wanted to rid the state of monarchical rule or at least to reduce the monarchy to a figurehead.

In October 1947, ‘raiders’ from Pakistan attacked the state. Hari Singh’s forces were quickly overcome by a combination of Pashtun tribals and Pakistani military personnel. When the Maharajah asked for military help from India, Nehru quickly agreed. Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession to India on October 26, 1947. Indian troops arrived in Srinagar as the city was about to fall. Over the next several months, the Indian Army beat back the raiders and took two-thirds of the state. On January 1, 1949, Nehru agreed to a UN ceasefire call. India and Pakistan have disagreed and fought over Kashmir ever since.

In August 1947, China was still in the throes of a massive civil war. About the time India and Pakistan were agreeing to a ceasefire in Kashmir, the Chinese Communists led by Mao Zedong were defeating the Chinese Nationalist Party and taking control of China. India was quick to recognize the new Communist government in Beijing. The two Asian giants established diplomatic relations. India championed Communist China’s case in the UN, insisting that Mao’s government take over China’s seat as a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council. The leaders of the two countries met and vowed to cooperate and to work for peace. New Delhi supported Beijing’s contention that Tibet was an integral part of China.

Despite this positive beginning, in September 1962 the two countries were at war, over a three thousand mile front. Chinese forces quickly overran Indian positions in Aksai Chin, in the middle sector of the border, and in the northeast in Arunachal Pradesh. Then, suddenly, just as it seemed they might sweep down into the Indian plains, in November, the Chinese declared a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew their forces to 20 kilometres behind the line of control as it had existed on November 7, 1959.

The McMahon Line had demarcated the frontier between India and China, going back to British days. When they came to power in 1949, the Chinese made it clear that they did not accept India’s interpretation of the border based on the McMahon Line. The Line, they claimed, was forced on them during colonial times, and was not legitimate. The two countries began to negotiate over the border dispute in the early 1950s, without much success. China claimed the Aksai Chin, a largely deserted area of land, near Ladakh. Without India’s knowledge, the Chinese built a road through it to connect their Xinjiang Province to Tibet. China also claimed what is now called Arunachal Pradesh.

By the late 1950s, New Delhi was aware that relations with China were heating up. A series of border incidents occurred between 1959 and 1961. Nehru eventually lost his patience with Chinese incursions into what he considered Indian territory. He famously asked the Indian Army to throw the Chinese out. In September 1962, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) attacked Indian positions in strength and inflicted a heavy defeat before withdrawing.

Sixty years after the first Kashmir war, and forty-five years after the war with China, India is still locked in a dispute with its two neighbours. Both disputes seem intractable, though New Delhi continues to seek a peaceful settlement. As we reflect on our successes as a nation, let us give thought also to two of our most consequential failures. Perhaps another generation of leaders in India will have the creativity and will to fashion an agreement that satisfies the interests of all three countries and finally brings peace to southern Asia.
pros & cons

Indian Education

The Indian education system is not working

Voltaire had once said, “I may not agree with what you say, but I will till death, defend your right to say it.” A democracy is incomplete without the freedom of speech and expression. Today, sixty years after Independence, having grappled with social and economic problems, having added new dimensions to the boundaries of democracy, India is considered to have a fairly decent track record where civil liberties and human rights are concerned. After our tried and tested values, fundamental rights and diverse cultures, have all managed to stand the test of time, do we really need to tamper with our guiding force—our democracy?

The idea behind the introduction of student union elections in colleges was to instill a sense of democracy and leadership in our youth so that they could lead the country in future. In order to inculcate in them the ability to express themselves, to instill in them the courage to question, students were provided a medium through which their voices could be carried to the higher echelons of administration. The process of electing their representatives would also give them an idea of the actual mechanism of democracy existing in the country. Now, just because a few student leaders have taken the law for a ride, should we do away with the whole setup? When our politicians indulge in corruption and red-tapism do we stop holding elections? Instead of abandoning the idea of student elections, we should clean the procedure, banning the anti-social elements from being a part of it and monitoring its functioning and effectiveness from the students’ point of view.

Clipping the wings of our youth by preventing them from having a government of their own in colleges would be the murder of democracy. Democracy, as we perceive it today, is a very profound concept, which is so diverse and dynamic that new facets to it emerge every day in our trysts with it. It has its faults and shortcomings and they have to be rectified. The solution is not to shun the system but to take steps to improve it by pruning and cleansing whenever and wherever required. If student union leaders do not meddle with local politics and actually focus on improving the college lives of students, only then will the purpose of these unions be served. If the college administration regulates elections and monitors the working of the student body, the procedure would no longer be a mere political gimmick. Tight supervision by the police and regular checks by the courts of law will ensure discipline amongst the leaders.

The fact that many student leaders have been a nuisance cannot be denied. Crime has become an almost inseparable component of a student leader’s life, bringing dishonour and disrepute to the whole system of student unions. Funding received from national level parties fuels the menace. At the same time, it is also true that many of our respected politicians today have risen to power via these same student unions. College elections are crucial for any democratic country’s survival. Suppression of student rights will simply make a mockery of the nation’s democracy. College elections and the functioning of student unions in our country need serious reforms. The process must definitely be distanced from crime, local politics, rigging and corruption but that in no way undermines the need to have student elections in the country. To light the torch of development, we need to have enlightened leaders who have to be groomed at the college level itself.

(Kaustubh Verma)

Youth politics is an important stepping stone

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In 1989 at Tiananmen Square (Beijing), 1,00,000 students staged a protest in front of the Great Hall of People, demanding democratic rights. The Government accused the protestors of “plotting civil unrest”.

|Student Politics|

Youth politics is an important stepping stone

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(Kaustubh Verma)

|Indian Education|

The Indian education system is not working

It’s been sixty years since India became independent. Though the country has achieved much during this period, it faces a huge challenge – to provide an inclusive education infrastructure for the teeming millions. I agree that it is not fair to say that the government is not doing much about this problem. In fact,
in 2002-03, an estimated 82% of children in the age group of 6-14 were enrolled in school. The government hopes to bring this figure up to 100% by the end of this decade. This may sound very encouraging, but in reality, the Indian education system is riddled with problems. One of the biggest problems is the emphasis laid on learning by rote. Students are required to regurgitate on paper what they have studied in the past year in a two or three hour examination. I feel that this is not education, but just a test of memory.

Another problem in the system is the sheer number of Boards which exist – CISCE, CBSE, IB and SSLC. They all have varying degrees of difficulty, though it is not easy to say outright which Board is tougher. Complaints come in from all corners, and especially from the State Boards, with students saying that students from other Boards find it easier to find admission in colleges. More troubles crop up in the multi-Board system, as there may be a number of errors in certain textbooks, particularly, again, in those of the State Boards.

A more recent problem is that of reservations, which has been heavily criticised. Reservations are made with the justification that they help provide equal opportunities to everybody by redressing traditional social injustices. Yet, it is resented, because it has been argued that reservation does not help much with regard to equal opportunities, but actually denies merit. Reservations have already started causing rifts in society.

In India, corruption is also a rampant problem. Bribery, nepotism and power-play mean that seats can be sold for certain prices or for certain special favours. When we look at all these problems in the system, can we really keep our faith in the system of education? In my opinion, the system must be reformed, because making people literate in the way it is currently going will not have the better effect it can have if radical reforms are introduced.

(Shaurya Kuthiala)

Abhaas Shah

**Observations**

**Education**

**Several times this batch cannot help but feel like guinea pigs**

After six months of observation, speculation, and in several cases, experience, most of the school community has roughly formulated its opinion on the recently incorporated International Baccalaureate (IB) board, which, one may surmise, has been one of the greatest challenges School has ever taken up. A batch of twenty-three rather ‘adventurous’ individuals have set out on this voyage, and though some retain their vigour and excitement, and others their focus and dedication, almost all are awed by the prospects of this venture. Most students who have joined IB have done so to improve their placements abroad, where they are bent on going.

It is inevitable that all criticism in this regard is directed towards the School and not the IB system, for, as most would say, how can an ‘internationally-acclaimed’ system be at all flawed? Masters and students alike, when frustrated (which is quite often), direct their anger at the inadequacy of the school infrastructure and schedule; where there never seems to be enough time spared to the student to do the required work. Let alone the ‘background reading’ and ‘extra home work’ that is required of them, even basic assignments, laboratory reports and case studies are not completed and submitted on time. After a point, teachers have to stop excusing them from late submissions on the pretext of being busy doing other essential school activities. It all finally boils down to being told that IB was a choice and that if one wishes to pursue it, other activities must be dropped, which students are reluctant to do. ‘Prioritize!’ is the word.

Several times, this batch cannot help but feel like guinea pigs (at their own will, of course). If this experiment turns out to be successful, then the product will be confidently launched. If not, then…… (I hate to think of it).

The issue of laptops, though having been stressed upon enough times, must be mentioned. It will serve the vital purpose of allowing students to do their work wherever they may be on campus, which other students, who give handwritten assignments, have the privilege of doing. It is a simple and emphatic transition from writing to typing. The reluctance on school’s part, though understandable and logical, must eventually be overcome. The complaints are not restricted to the ones involved only. Others too are often heard to say that unwarranted whining is taking place and that IB is being made too big a deal of, quite contrary to what an IB student feels. After all, it is in human nature to find fault!

However, full appreciation and credit to the School must not be withheld for their initiative, perseverance and constant effort to improve the situation for IB students. The school has not hesitated in making exception after exception for the progress of IB. It is only the teachers’ spirit and energy which keeps the students active and ‘charged-up’.

A standard question which is always asked is, “Is IB tough?” and I cannot help but shrug and say that “It will be another year before I can figure that out.”
Where is our Hero?

The Times of India recently published an article which presented very strong opinions about the corporatization of popular music today. A subhead in the article tried to open the readers’ eyes to the fact that music no longer produces legends and icons, and that over the years, music has witnessed a constant degradation of ‘meaning’. What caught my eye was the grid-collage of faces that accompanied the article: Mick Jagger, John Lennon, and Jim Morrison. Was it just sheer coincidence that all these faces are products of the sixties? Well, of course there was the face of Madonna, but weren’t we talking about legends?

Pop music is a different ball game altogether, one half of which is monopolized by Michael Jackson and Prince. I will restrict my argument to rock music. In the sixties, there emerged a four man outfit in Liverpool: The Beatles, who were immediately followed by bolder acts, namely The Doors, Jimi Hendrix and The Rolling Stones, all of whom are included in the category of ‘music heroes’. This was an era when the gramophones were fuelled by a myopic combination of sound, the most prominent artiste of the time being Elvis Presley, and the British reply to Afro-American blues came in the form of rock n’ roll, a genre that would soon become an independent culture. It was here that businessmen woke up to the tremendous market potential of rock and gradually, recording firms sprang up and an artiste’s rendezvous with the studio became a regular routine. Records were never a medium of propaganda of rock music. That was the task of the concerts. A band would start playing at small downtown pubs and as their fans grew in number, so did their performance arenas and musicality.

By the mid-seventies, Led Zeppelin and Cream had come into the picture, The Beatles were on the verge of breaking up and Morrison and Hendrix were dead. In just more than a decade, rock had become infamous for the crash-and-burn lifestyles led by its propagators and it seemed as if the ‘music’ was taking a back-seat. This resulted in the growth of the underground music sector and led to the birth of two offsprings of rock, the mention of whose names generated looks of disgust on most of our faces: punk rock and heavy metal. And this was just the beginning. Slowly, rock branched out into more sub-genres, each developing its own set of followers, and it was somewhere in this chaos that our hero got lost.

The sixties were turbulent times. The US had infiltrated Vietnam, Fidel Castro and his accomplice, the man of the T-shirt, Che Guevara, were stirring up a revolution in Latin America; France was exploding with student revolts and Ayub Khan was the reigning tyrant in Pakistan. It has been historically proved that when distraught, man looks towards religion and the supernatural for hope and inspiration. The sixties saw the birth of Superman and his kin of superheroes, and the G.I.Joe comic series. Similarly, music witnessed the first Woodstock festival and its own set of heroes who have been mentioned above.

I am not implying that due to the lack of cause in the post-sixties world, music has suffered. I am also not saying that the music lost out to other parts of popular culture. There has never been a lack of cause. Nor has there been a lack of good music. For every cause there is a rebel and each rebel has his follower and as society has matured, each individual has related himself to a specific cause and worshipped the relevant hero. The anti-establishment and anti-government teenage groups in 70s’ Britain grew up adulating Joey Ramone and punk rock, while the child that emerged from the crumbling nuclear families of 80s’ USA grew up with Bruce Dickinson and heavy metal. Someone like Jim Morrison has become commercial property as his is a face that is recognized all over the world. Hence, even though a T-shirt manufacturer will use him to promote the brand, his face will, inevitably, come with his entire legacy. We have not fallen short of legends and heroes. It is just that all of us do not follow the same religion any more.

(Harsh Mall)

On Ram and Setusamudram

The political storm raised by the affidavit submitted by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to the Supreme Court has rekindled the debate over whether the nation officially believes in the existence of God or not. The ASI has stated in its affidavit that there is no historical evidence to suggest that any of the Ramayana characters ever existed, leaving the government in a fix, since it stands to lose some of its Hindu votes. It has led to an open war of words between Karunanidhi, the DMK chief and Advani, the BJP supremo, who radically differ on the issue owing to their ideological beliefs. Apart from causing a major controversy it has also incensed millions of staunch Hindus across the country, in the process also highlighting our failure to accept rationality over religion.

Since time immemorial our superstitions, traditional beliefs, and irrational ideas have impeded our economic, social and mental progress. Globalization, industrialization and urbanization were delayed in our country because of our rigid social structure. Unscientific notions and the inability to accept reason are a direct result of our age-old superstitions. Today, the...
Sethusamudram Project cannot be undertaken because Hindus all over the country believe that Lord Ram had built a bridge at the site to cross over to Ravana’s Lanka, and later destroyed it after rescuing Sita. Is this the India of the twenty-first century, which is soon supposed to become the next super-power of the world? Will we today allow progressive ideas to be held prisoner by the shackles of blind faith?

It is true that for our upliftment, precedence has to be given to progress over traditional beliefs, but at the same time what must be remembered is that our history, mythology and religion are very different from that of the Western nations. Our idea of secularism is again very different. The distinct nature of the people of our country, together with their culture and beliefs is the true identity of our nation. This identity, which has remained unscathed through centuries of turbulence and upheaval, must be preserved in today’s age of growth and development. When Advani protested against ASI’s affidavit and then against Karunanidhi’s comments, he was asking for respect to be shown towards the feelings of millions of people who worship Ram.

Whether Lord Ram actually existed or not, he will continue to be engraved in the hearts of his followers. The name of Lord Ram is, thus, sacrosanct and detached from scientific and historical facts. Even the most overwhelming proof against his existence will not deter his followers from worshipping him with deep reverence. It is this fact that each one of us must understand and honour. The sentiments of the people must be respected. Several diverse cultures today cordially co-exist in our country because of our tolerance. The freedom of speech and expression can be exercised as long as one does not hurt the feelings of others. To sustain our diversity we must never compromise on our tolerance. The question is not whether Ram exists or not, because Ram is an idea, He is a way of thinking. He shall always remain immortal for the millions world-wide, who believe in Him. The challenge we face today is how to take India forward without losing our identity or compromising our faith.

(Kaustubh Verma)
selves from a lot of muckraking is for the reader to guess. The entire chat is centred around the author’s experiences in America. He was a student at Princeton University and by the way he chronicles his first job, we are to think that he is competent and intelligent as well. Out of all the interns at a firm, he is one of the two who is selected to continue his career with the firm. This obviously conveys his ability to get things done. The book is marked by short, anecdotal interruptions and frequent calls for more tea. This has probably been put in the book to lighten the mood and keep in touch with the context and background of the narration. The author’s biggest shortcoming in America seems to be the fact that he is completely sequestered from familial emotion. The author’s obvious intention to co-relate the American issue with his own account is reflected in the fact that Erica and America are both his first love. He works for Underwood ‘Sam’son, with Christian connotations and there is a mention of Bush (Uncle Sam). The firm is a typical American multinational that ‘invades’ foreign economies and monopolizes businesses. Strangely, the personal upheavals in Hamid’s life coincide with American aggressions in the Islamic world.

He is a stranger to the country, and the country is equally alien to him. Here, he is acquainted with a reserved girl, Erica, who, apparently, feels guilty in befriending the author because she feels that makes her unfaithful to her deceased boyfriend. Although the author finds her to be a source of comfort, it seems that the relation is not mutual because she is constantly reminded of her late boyfriend by Hamid. Maybe that is the irony of their relationship. His worries are about his family. Ultimately, he returns to his country, which is where the novel begins. Here again, Hamid touches upon the fact that the may be the only permanent and most consistent companion one can hope for is one’s family. The Reluctant Fundamentalist is a fabulous read. The simplicity of its language and the succinct address to multifarious issues makes it unique.

(Saurav Sethia)

Poetry and Conflict

On poems by Seamus Heaney and the Irish Conflict

Seamus Heaney, in theory, could perhaps be termed the quintessential ‘Irish’ poet, for Ireland – be it that of potato farms and peat bogs, or that of the IRA and the ‘troubles’ – never leaves his poetry. He recognizes this reality early on, in a poem like Follower, where he states that:

‘But today
It is my father who keeps stumbling
Behind me, and will not go away.’

...and never lets this reality go, clinging on to the idea of an Irish ‘tribe,’ the idea of a unique Catholic Ireland. Indeed, Heaney seems to insist that as a poet, it is his role to answer, his prerogative to clarify his position in society and his views of it. But while this remains a constant in his poetry, one cannot say that Seamus Heaney’s poetry has not been coloured in some way by the paradigm shift in political activity in his native Ireland. And, it is in this evolution that we see a subtle difference in Seamus Heaney’s early and later writings.

Clearly, the most marked shift in Heaney’s writing is in its setting. A pastoral Irish setting is replaced by a decidedly political one, and the attention shifts from the bit motifs of ‘potatoes’ and ‘digging’ to bolder metaphors questioning concepts like ‘freedom’. At one level, Heaney goes so far as to say that the Irish attachment to their land is greater than that to Christianity. At another, more emphatic level though, his purpose is to illustrate the manner in which the Irish people rely on the potato crop. In the third stanza of the same poem, Heaney harks back to the great potato blight of 1845, describing how the failure of a single harvest resulted in the destruction of the entire Irish spirit, as “Hope rotted like marrow”. This image is intensified stylistically as Heaney abandons his rather loose iambic metre in ABAB rhyme to adopt a more sinister trochaic metre in AABB rhyme, almost signifying a sort of dance of death. However he refuses to accept death in the final outcome, restraining hope in the last stanza. Heaney is thus effectively able to come to terms with the Irish identity, something which he expressed his desire to do in his very first poem Digging, where, on the seeing the manner in which generation after generation of his forefathers worked at the potato drills, excavating their roots, he too develops a desire to get to his roots. It is interesting to note here the manner in which Heaney uses the metaphor of potatoes to evoke almost every human condition. The potato is the Irish way of life.

In essence, Heaney by referring constantly to the work of his forefathers, and giving it great attention, tries in his early poems to build a sense of a great Irish past and a traditional Irish community. However, his faith in this community wavers as time goes on, and politics change, and herein lies the difference in Heaney’s poetry. While he retains the idea of Ireland, and the Irish identity, he strikes out in Punishment and Casualty against the idea of a greater common good at the expense of individual liberty. In both he also rejects the modern notion of the Irish tribe, another major shift in his approach. In Punishment the tribe is responsible for imposing a savage and pre-civilized form of revenge, an ‘intimate tribal revenge’ on a series of ‘little adulteresses’. And in Casualty it is responsible for the murder of an innocent fisherman – the ‘tribal complicity’, in this case is in no doubt.

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Clearly, Heaney is troubled by this shift. At one level, he is able to describe the British occupation as Nazi rule, comparing a camp of Irish prisoners to ‘Stalag 17’, but in *Casualty*, he is asked in connection with the murder of an innocent, “Now you are an educated man … Puzzle me the Answer to that one.”

Moreover, he finds himself unnervingly silent when faced with repression by his own tribe. In *Punishment* he admits that he would have cast ‘the stones of silence’, for he is the ‘artful voyeur’. Heaney realizes that his individuality is compromised in his quest for political freedom.

So, while Heaney maintains his position of a poet giving answer after answer, his ‘answers’ gradually change in mood and tenor. The idea of an ‘Irish tribe’ is played around with but finally abandoned, and the goal of political freedom for Ireland is ultimately subverted to the altruistic goal of individual freedom for all, as Heaney finally realizes in *Casualty*, how can true freedom be attained by curfews and killings? This realization, perhaps more than any other, differentiates Heaney’s early poems from his later ones.

(Ashish Mitter)

**Paradoxes in Victorian Society**

*Cecily*: Cake or bread and butter?

*Gwendolen*: Bread and butter please. Cake is rarely seen at the best houses nowadays.

Through this banter, the Wildean and wider Victorian preoccupation with food in the upper classes is reflective of the stark contradictions prevalent in English society. At one end of the spectrum, the ‘working-man’ survived on potato peels and the galloping prices of essential commodities made life a daily battle, while, in the plush morning salon at Half Moon Street, Algernon Moncrieff relished cucumber sandwiches. The surfeit of resources at grand banquets and ‘fashionable’ households is palpably contrasted with statements like:

*Algernon*: I am greatly distressed, Aunt Augusta, about there being no cucumbers, not even for ready money.

The crumpets, lumps of sugar and cucumber sandwiches are important plot advancement techniques that Oscar Wilde uses in his play *The Importance of Being Earnest* to unearth the crude realities of the time and a vehicle to move Wildean wit and establish the salon culture with the Dandy as its archetype.

When Sir Robert Giffen examined the economic history of Victorian England, he studied the rise in price of essential commodities and the resulting malnutrition in the lower orders. In *Alice in Wonderland*, Lewis Carroll comments on the plentiful supply of food available to the aristocracy and how the lower end of society was deprived of anything beyond sustenance.

“*And what does it live on?*”

“*Weak tea with cream in it.*”

A new difficulty came into Alice’s head. “*Supposing it couldn’t find any?*” she suggested.

“Then it would die, of course.” “*But that must happen very often,*” Alice remarked thoughtfully.

“*It always happens.*”

Even in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, food scenes are often sources of bickering and divergence between the characters, largely reflective of the widespread social conflict on malnutrition, employment and morality.

*Gwendolen*: You have filled my tea with lumps of sugar, and though I asked most distinctly for bread and butter, you have given me cake. I am known for the gentleness of my disposition, and the extraordinary sweetness of my nature, but I warn you, Miss Cardew, you may go too far.

Evidently, the brawl between Gwendolen and Cecily originates at the tea-table. In Act One, Jack is unchivalrously stopped from eating cucumber sandwiches and is offered “*bread and butter*”, something Gwendolen is seemingly devoted to. Just as Jack bites into the bread, Algernon categorically rejects the marriage claims: “*You are not married to her [Gwendolen] and never will be… girls never marry the men they flirt with.*” In both the scenes, the tone is tense and there is an undercurrent of disagreement. However, characteristic of Wildean comedy, a dose of wit eases the digestion of the reader. Therefore, it can be inferred that like many contemporaries of his time, Oscar Wilde uses food as a ‘conflict point’ in his plots which is reflective of eighteenth century economic realities.

Strictly speaking of the text, food contributes in the wordplay between characters and extensively builds the Wildean humour, which becomes a driving force in the plot. “*Crumpets*” is intended as a pun; the colloquial usage of the word refers to a prostitute, and is aptly designated to Lady Harbury who “lives entirely for pleasure.” Similarly, Chasuble spoke “*horticulturally*” when he called “*young women green*”. Fruits are time and gain metaphorically used to display passion and Quixotic* love.

“*It is customary in good society to take some slight refreshments at five o’clock*” says Algernon, and indeed, food is an infallible theme in upper-class society. The mannerisms of the salon are evident in the guest lists of the
grand banquets, the seating arrangement at dining tables and food-habits of the high-and-mighty. Once again, the dining room serves as a discussion point and commentary on Victorian society. This is evident in the fact that Lady Bracknell doesn’t consider the Tories worthy enough to dine with but “amusing” and how Algernon’s absence will “completely put the table out” when she later dines with Mary Farquhar. The eateries are reflective of the “free-and-easy ways” of the salon society. Through this play, the varied meanings of food in Victorian society are brought out. Food connotes luxury and the display of indulgence in the upper orders while it symbolizes the daily struggle of the roadside dustman.

While history judges eighteenth century England as an era of Imperialism and empire building, Oscar Wilde uses the Victorian household to establish the worm’s-eye view and the prevalent inner contradictions. While nutrition, emancipation of women and employment invigorated the common man on the streets, the policy-makers were engrossed with territorial disputes, political consolidation and economic exploitation of colonies. There was a gap between these varied interests, which often led to social conflict. Food was symbolic of survival and the struggle in ordinary lives. By juxtaposing food with the rich tapestry, “Chippendale furniture” and the civilized music of aristocratic drawing-rooms, these contradictions are highlighted and satirically commented upon.

Sources: Victorian Web (Malnutrition and Social History (Public Health) Sections) References from Alice in Wonderland, Pygmalion by GB Shaw and The Importance of Being Earnest (Norton Edition). *Quixotic love is a concept born out of Cervantes’ Don Quixote, a book that deals with a knight and his notions of courtly love.

(Shikhar Singh)

Solitude
One watches the rain,
Traverse the fragmented glass,
Like drink to the human mind,
Peace to the soul.

A conversation may
Readily arise,
From the depths of silence,
Engulfing the bodily instruments.

Memories from the vast spaces,
A canopy of thoughts,
Illuminating the darkest reaches.

I am all alone,
With only shadows for comfort,
Reflecting and reminiscing,
In a life of dreams.

Enjoyed by the tranquility of solitude.

(Mansher Dhillon)
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Street theatre, in its unique way, appeals to most audiences. Since it requires few props and does not have a very complex plot, it is easy to comprehend for the common people; still, the deeper message embedded within the action on stage, has an impact on the higher denominations of society. In this way, street theatre performances are an ideal means of communicating with the public.

(Vishnukaant Pitty)

|Entertainment and Sport|

**The Twenty20 World Cup and the Chak De India campaign**

With the world making rapid progress, many things are trying to keep up in innovative ways. Everything from nanotechnology to food has become faster, quicker and more appealing to the consumer. These newer versions of everything have become very popular and are advertised heavily. Some things are merged to get new and adrenaline-pumping versions such as sport and entertainment, which have now become substantially closer.

This new blend makes sport, just for thrills and awe, striking, exciting and fabulous gameplay. It makes it faster, jazzier and shorter...a package of entertainment which no one can resist.

Recently, two new versions of entertainment and sport, namely the movie Chak De India and T20 cricket respectively have emerged and have got the world in a frenzy.

*Chak De* is India’s new motto. Everyone, from international cricketers sitting in their dressing rooms, to executives in their boardrooms are using it. It is now India’s newest phenomenon, striking a chord with people from all walks of life. Finally, Indians, for all their diversity, have something in common.

So what exactly is ‘Chak De’? *Chak De India* is one of the most recent movies the Yash Raj film banner has churned out. Incidentally, this Shah Rukh Khan-starring hockey drama is also the most influential.

It begins with a flashback to the finals of the hockey World Cup between rivals India and Pakistan, with Kabir Khan (Shah Rukh himself) as India’s captain. A match too close to call, sees the game going to a penalty shoot-out. Kabir, deciding to take India’s final penalty himself...misses. Pakistan wins. The Indian team is humiliated as they return home. Rumours abound that the captain’s actions were deliberate, that he actually wanted Pakistan to win. The residents of Kabir’s colony cold-shoulder him, sully his name and write the word ‘traitor’ on the boundary wall of his house. A devastated Kabir Khan retires and lives with this pain for seven hard years.

In the present now, a disgraced ex-captain of the men’s hockey team applies for the post of coach for the women’s version of the game. Amidst heavy political pressure, he perseveres, even pitting his girls against men. However, his true problem is the team itself. Divided in every possible way—religion, class and language, they only care for their state teams and their own personal interests. Drawn from as far away as Tamil Nadu, Mizoram and Jharkhand, the city-slickers are forced to play alongside the small-town stars and the experienced players with their juniors, as a team. The dictatorial (read: ‘Tughlaq’) ways of their coach, too, do not seem to help much, until the team ultimately learns the true meaning of team spirit, what it means to play under a single flag (and not for different states) and, most importantly, that they must be united in order to win.

From then on begins a roller-coaster ride of ups and downs, as the team travels Down Under for the Women’s World Cup, setting out to achieve what their embattled coach had let slip from his grasp—true glory.

So, to cut a long story short, the film is all about patriotism, a sense of belonging and the collective emotion of a nation. It has also, quite successfully, portrayed the flaws in the Indian administrative system, the gender bias and the class distinctions that exist in India. This, in essence, is *Chak De*—a group of fifteen young women, against all odds, pushing forward to do their nation proud.

Twenty20 cricket is everything anyone needs for enjoyment. It is like an action movie; packed with unexpected turns and results. This new form of cricket is an abbreviated version of classic cricket, which focuses on bowling your heart out and thrashing every ball with the bat. It is market-oriented cricket. It doesn’t focus on ‘retaining wickets’ or ‘field placements’, but just pure action. Its three hours of breathless and action-packed entertainment with American style cheerleaders is complete. This new style of cricket has become ‘commercial cricket’ and is perhaps what cricket needs to spice it up; pure entertainment. Thus, today, we find that sport and entertainment are becoming complementary.

On the other hand, T20 cricket is completely unorthodox and has taken the class and skill out of cricket. It now doesn’t matter how well you time the ball but how hard and far you can hit it.

These new blends have definitely got their pros and cons but ultimately will, in our opinion, leave an impression and in some way or another, remain popular.

(Bharat Ganju and Dhruv Velloor)
DEBASHISH CHAKRABARTY ON IDEOLOGY

Ideology is the way of looking at things. It is a perspective. In an overtly consumerist world today, where instant gratification barely leaves any space for having any point of view, I would still say that it is the core concept on which the world runs (even not having a point of view is a point of view). The students of today must be encouraged to develop their own perspectives, for that engenders choice which in turn will decide their future. One may or may not choose to accept an extant ideology, but at no instance must one exert choice without having understood multiple perspectives of any given context or event. For instance, if one chooses Coca Cola over jalzeera one must know and be convinced with the reasons of one’s choice. Likewise, when a student chooses ‘Science’ over ‘Arts’ or ‘Commerce’, very few students, or even parents, have any clue as to the reasons or the logic behind their choice. Just a driving ambition to become a doctor without knowing why a doctor is ‘better’ suited to an individual’s talent is more often than not detrimental for the student’s health. At yet another level, one must understand the nation’s policies from the various ideological perspectives. Junking either the nuclear deal or Prakash Karat’s opposition to it trivially would be an anomaly. Ideology defines us and should be allowed to brew within any person for it is the essence of an individual’s existence.

HAMMAD FAROOQUI ON JOURNALISM

Today’s mainstream journalism has completely turned into a business rather than a mission or vision. Even editorials have turned into ‘advertorials’. At times, the whole front page contains advertisements. Journalists have also turned newspapers into commodities as in the corporate sector.

Visual journalism, nowadays, has absolutely no accountability and broadcasts only sensational news. Even USA-based channels have become a form of embedded journalism. A few regional newspapers and The Hindu are still accountable, but none of the news channels are at all. The worst examples of journalism today are The Times of India, Punjab Kesari and Samna (Marathi). To top it all, Hindi newspapers today have a communal touch. (Views collected by Pranjali Singh)

SANDEEP ADHIKARI ON EMERGENCY

The intention was positive and initially effective in dealing with India’s miseries. It would have set everything right but people misinterpreted it and everything backfired on the government. It was required at that time but today’s coalition politics does not permit this course of action.

PIYUSH MALAVIYA ON 70s MUSIC

The 70s music was the music of my times and so I identify with it. I don’t think it would be an exaggeration to call this period the golden period of Hindi film music.

The trio of Kishore Kumar, Rafi and Mukesh, and of course Asha Bhonsle and Lata Mangeshkar, along with numerous lyricists and music directors like R.D. Burman, Kalyanji-Anandji and Shankar-Jai Kishan have really made music memorable. It’s not surprising that most of the remixes which are hits today are originally from the 70s.

PURNIMA DUTTA ON HISTORY

History is an account of the past. No interpretation of history can be objective. Even if you choose the same ‘facts’, how you choose to interpret those facts is a function of who you are culturally, emotionally and personally.

Even the facts one chooses in order to interpret certain events and processes, are subject to difference in perception. But that is the very essence of knowledge— if we had known everything in its entirety, we would no longer be learners; we would be seers!

ANGAD SINGH ON ANARCHY

I believe that anarchism should be philosophically understood – true personal freedom and abolition of all control. It is not a society determined by chaos, guns, bombs and corpses. Because democracy is stagnating and people are doubting the effectiveness of the present system, anarchism is being given a thought.
अज की युग और गांधीगिरी

विभाग पाहुँजा

अजजी के साथ वां बाल भी देखे देखे हलकत में रहे हैं। जिनमें विषम बुद्धियों का जिन्हा निकला है कि भाव शायद भी है। वहाँ देखे देखे हलकत में रहे हैं। जिनमें विषम बुद्धियों का जिन्हा निकला है कि भाव शायद भी है।

गांधीजी की जिंदगी की कारण तो उसमें हम पते हैं – नारी और दर्शन समाज का चाला, सामाजिक एकता, मान-मूर्ति, प्रभाव, नव तालिम, खादी, आधुनिक समाज, निजी और वाणिज्य जनरल की चाल।

गांधी के सिद्धांतों के लिए यह पुरुष संघ का साथ एवं साथ से सबका हाथ उठाते है। शायद, भाव की दीनता का कारण यह नहीं कि हम इन सिद्धांतों को अपनी विद्वानी में लागू, नहीं कर सकते हैं।

गांधीजी के विचार का रहते हैं उसमें हम पते हैं – नारी और दर्शन समाज का चाला, सामाजिक एकता, मान-मूर्ति, प्रभाव, नव तालिम, खादी, आधुनिक समाज, निजी और वाणिज्य जनरल की चाल।

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पूल
अरुण शुक्ल

जब सुखद के सुखद के पहली फिरके पहाड़ के पीछे पर, उस ओर से तिहरे, ताहर रन के गुलाब पर पड़ती है यो गला मोहित हो जाता है।

इस की सच्ची सुन्दरता कहलाती है। इस सुन्दरता के रूप में पूल ने कुछ कर्म का कहारा बनाया है। यह कभी सिर्फ हमे नहीं आए रहती है और इसकी पृथिवी के लेण पर नशे की फिरती रहती है। सुन्दरता यही है जो अपने सच्चे सदी बन लेती है और जबन से लागू तात्कालिक ही।

कथाओ में से चुने सुतार के बदले है और आंध्र के पृथ्वी कर देती है और आंध्र को नैरा कर देती है।

इतिहास में यह नहीं रहा जाता है। उसी तरह लाल, चमक, पवन, लघुपूव और सर्वाधिकार उपलब्ध हैं।

पूल अनेकों रोजों पर आते हैं। उसे तो गांव का गुलाब ही आ गया।

इतिहास में शाश्वत के मुहूर्त लख वह एक सुन्दर, सज्ज गुलाब आया था।

गैरीसियों के पुल के प्राण का प्रभाव और प्रस्ताव नही होता। यह एक अवश्य संकेत है कि आय कि समाज आता है, बीमारी को यह अद्वितीय लगाता है।

शाश्वतों एवं भारतीयों को पुल का होना अराधना पुरूषों का भी है।

पूल की प्रकाश और प्राण का प्रभाव नही होता। यह एक अवश्य संकेत है कि आय कि समाज आता है, बीमारी को यह अद्वितीय लगाता है।

पूल का सच्चा व्यवहार वहीं उठाते हैं। वे उनका अरुण खुशबु के तार का पिर राजा के रूप में परिवर्तन किया है।

पूल की नागरिकता का खिलों आता है, और पूल महत्त्व का सुन्दरता बदलता है। बाहर भी आदित्य का प्रकाश होता है और खिंची की बदलता है।

पूल की प्रगति नाम से आ पूल है। कई कथाओ के पुल ने छिलके झुलते जाते हैं। भारत का सहीपुल का रूप के है और यहा सर्वाधिकार उपलब्ध है।

पूल का प्रमाण नाम से आ पूल है। कई कथाओ के पुल ने छिलके झुलते जाते हैं।
अनुशासन

सुदीप पाण्डे

ईश्वर की सृष्टि का सारा कार्य निशानित रमण के अनुशासन होता है। स्वयंवर, स्वतंत्र, निर्यात, नीति तथा दिन-रात आय्ये प्रामाण्यक रमण के अनुसार होता है। 

शास्त्री इसलिए सभी सदृशकाय मानव से भी इस बौद्ध की अवधारणा की है। अनुशासन का अर्थ होता है अपने आपके नियमों के अनुसार चलने का धूम शक्ति।

समाज में अनुशासन का पालन करना - पानी की पूहते में, खेड़े होता, साक्षात्कार से कार्य करना, बच्चों का अदालत करना, पढ़ियाँ पर अनुशासन पर ध्यान रखना, काम में ध्यान रखना आदि है। इन अनुशासनों का पालन करना से हम निकालते हैं या जीवन की सामाजिक भाँति का सामाजिक काम करना। अनुशासन एक और स्वतंत्रता का है - 

अनावरण अनुशासन। युगों में रहे एक शरीर की भाँति के साथ से ईरान में निर्माण करने उत्पन्न हुआ समय। इससे अपने अपने मन, ध्यान और दिन के रूप में हम शीर्ष पर अनुशासन कर सकते हैं।

आज हमारे दक्षिण रूप से कभी आन्दोलन की अवधारणा का काम होता है। अनुशासन एक दिन के और समाज को आवश्यकता बनाता है और समाजों के आवश्यकताओं से संबंधित रूप में शावक शक्ति बनाता है। अनुशासन एक अनुशासन की शक्ति और नया मनुष्या। इससे व्यक्ति अपनी अवधारणा की दृष्टि का चलन कर सकता है। वह समझ हो सकती है कि दक्षिण का अनुशासन करना सही और समय सुकुल-शक्ति का अनुमान करना है।

रचना के बारे में जतना से अनुशासन का होना आवश्यक है।

लेखक आजाद देश में अनुशासनवीणियों में दृष्टि पड़ी थी। नेता, जनता, छात्र, व्यापारी और मज़हबक तक अनुशासनवीणि बनते जा रहे हैं। अनुशासनवीणि का एक कारण है ईरान। बाय-बाय पर हराक्रानत, बदलते रूप से अनुशासनवीणि के उदाहरण हैं। इसका मूल भास्ति हो गया है। इसी जीवन के व्यक्ति और राज्य की आवश्यकता प्रभावित होती है। इसने हमारे राज्यों और मानवों की शरीर-स्वतंत्रता को घटना पूर्वक रखा है। आज हमारी अवधारणा और लागू होती है।

हम कितना भी नवीन नहीं कर सकते कि वह जन समाज में अवधारणा भी सकता है। अब यह संसद में मानवता की वात कर रहा है और इसने कहीं तक काम कर रही है। इस कम कहीं के बाजर के कारण कर सकता है।

अर्थात् जो अवधारणा की वात कर रहा है और इसने कहीं तक काम कर रही है। इस कम कहीं के बाजर के कारण कर सकता है।

अंत में हम जानते हैं कि हम समाज में समस्त काम की आवश्यकता है। यह समाज में अवधारणा की आवश्यकता है। इसके साथ हम समाज में काम करते हैं।

सच बोलने के दुख

धूप कुमार

लक्षमण जताने। कहने हुए और इतने में दिखाते लोग कहे बार खुद ही धोखा का ज्यादा हो जाता है। कहा जाता है कि एक साथ की शिक्षा होती है, और भोजन सच सच मानने बात स्वतंत्रता है। अगर, यह यह समय हमने अपने महत्वपूर्ण जीवन की बातें नहीं? जिन्दी में हर इससे की कमी का खतरा पर हमारे साथ या दुख जाने होता है।

अपने बुद्धि कराये, और अगर बुद्धि कराये, तो हम पाएंगे या दिखाएंगे अपने बुद्धि कराये, मानने का निश्चय। मुबंता का बता तो यह है कि अनुभव इस धरों में ही नहीं बल्कि दुनिया में ही भी समाज और दुख के बारे में लोग सही होता है।

मैं ऐसे ही एक मनोकथा की उदाहरण देना चाहूँगा जब मुझे सच बोलने का अनुभव मुझे बारहवीं कार मुझे हुआ। इस मनोकथा को ध्यान बार बार भी हो गया होम में इसके में नहीं बहुत नहीं। उस यह है कि एक दिन मे अपने काम के संदर्भ में पानी पर आते रहने के बलते मे मूर्ख साधना करना। उसके समय मैं आता से कहा कहा कि अब मैं यह नहीं जानता।

मेरी सोच से अलग, यह घटना नहीं हुई थी। अगरते ही दिन साधना करता ने मुझे पुकारक कहा कि यह सब जाना चुका है। कर के मानने मे मैं उसी बात बांट दें। जोते ही मैं पूरी काफी बात तक करता मे नहीं तो मैं एक अद्वितीय सुगम तथा फूल बात करता है। लेकिन मे ही ही बतो हूँ कितना बहुत रुप से अलग मैं यह सब जाना नहीं।
परिचय

तुषार गुप्ता

"जितनी अधिक क्षमा करता उठाने की होती है, उन्मत्से ही सफलता की समाप्ति अधिक होती है।"

उस विषय पर मैं ने अधिक जानकारी नहीं दी गई थी, हां, हमें माना कि वे उसी वेदना में मन में कई विचार आए। मेरे पास यह विषय पर रहस्यमयी व्यक्ति के अवज्ञात कोई पत्ता नहीं, समय अवमानना लगा सकते हैं। हमने खुद के प्रश्नों के साथ अवकाश में रहने की तैयारी की, वहीं दिल्ली और उसके समीप के स्थानों से हैं। हमने कई जवाबों की जरूरत नहीं मानी थी कि खुद में वही समय का आखरी स्थान बनेगा या नहीं।

वैदन छोटापा ने अपने विचार व्यक्त करते हुए कहा - "ख़तरा उठाता रिक्सा लेना होता है।" गिरिजा में बँके उठाने अभाविक है। हर तो दोबारा नहीं उठाने पड़ता है।

ख़तरा उठाने से हमें हकदार सशक्त होता है, कई बार हमें भी होता है, लेकिन हार का मकरण बहुत नहीं जानता या बहुत समय उपयोग करता है। ख़तरा उठाने एक उपाय है जो आपके लिए खास होता है क्योंकि इसे रेडियो में बोलने वाले हैं।

इसके बावजूद जो विचार व्यक्त करते हुए कहा कि ख़तरा बढ़ता है। दोस्तों के लिए जीवन बजाने के लिए ख़तरा उठाते हुए कहा कि यह मुझे अपनी जीवन खतरा से भरा है। इसके बावजूद हमने खुद के प्रश्नों के साथ अवकाश में रहने की तैयारी की, हमें कई जवाबों की होती थी।

सचमुच ख़तरात्मक ने दोस्तों की प्रशंसा बताते हुए कहा कि दोस्तों ने हमें बताया कि ख़तरा उठाते हुए कहा कि यह मुझे आपका जीवन खतरा से भरा है। इसके बावजूद हमने खुद के प्रश्नों के साथ अवकाश में रहने की तैयारी की, हमें कई जवाबों की होती थी।

"भारत और वामपंथी दल किस्तूम वर्मा"

अर्जुन शर्मा के वामपंथी वर्धन सभ्यता के संस्थापकों के वामपंथी समर्थकों के संस्थापकों के साहसिक लड़ाई जीतने की उम्मीद की आवश्यकता है। जब तक एक वर्मा ने दोस्तों की प्रशंसा बताते हुए कहा कि जीवन का खतरा से भरा है। इसके बावजूद हमने खुद के प्रश्नों के साथ अवकाश में रहने की तैयारी की, हमें कई जवाबों की होती थी।
एक किसान की विवेकनाथ
अक्षय निलेंदु
कृमेश, ओ कृमेश। ये यहां हों जो एक पारंपरिक ज़मीन का मालिक एक गरीब किसान को दुरुस्त कर दिया है। मालिक के एक कुलता पर परिवहन दीदा हुआ आता है और कहता है “जी मालिक, बालक कम होगा।” मालिक भारी आजादी में कहते हैं, “कृमेश, यहां फिरे रूपों का जरूरत है।” कृमेश के भोजन से सरलता से चार शरीर दिलक्षित हैं। “जी मालिक, पढ़ावी हारा।” मालिक, “यद्यपि दूसरे नेता के का?” कृमेश- “जी, अपने इस्तेमाली बच्चे जीवन में हार जाएंगे।” परन्तु हां, यह दर्शन में पूरा हारकर कृमेश नहीं है। मालिक, “यद्यपि यह दुर्मिलता न कर सकें।” कृमेश मर ही मर दिखना है। कहता है- “यहां हो नहीं सटाता, और यहां धुएं हूआ तो चर तक अपने इस्तेमाली बच्चे की मौत नहीं कराएगा।” मालिक के ही दोहरे मुहरों दुर्भागा हैं। कहते हैं- “कृमेश, तुर्कुआर जीवन किसान शुद्ध हवा में हो नहीं। अपने यह तो पड़ होगा। कृमेश- “उत्तम वातावरण, आर इससे कम नहीं है।” ऐसा कहते हैं कृमेश वहां से उत्तर आया।
कृमेश की दिनों के अन्तर के मालिक के बाद दिया जाता है। कृमेश की मां का बार नमस्ते का मालिक का चुकाया दिया जाता है। कृमेश की चाची और अंदरूनी के चुकाया दिया जाता है। परन्तु कृमेश दिन रात का काम करना नहीं छोड़ता। उसे भाग में महात्मा गांधी के आदेश में आता है और उसके अंदरूनी पढ़ाव और हार का काम उसे पढ़ाव-पढ़ा करने के लिए प्रशिक्षित करते हैं। एक सूची की बात है, कृमेश गाये बच्चे की बात उसे पढ़ाव-पढ़ा करने के लिए प्रशिक्षित करते हैं। कृमेश की मां का आदेश आता है “मालिक हूआ धुएं, भाग कर जाओ।” पूरा का काम नहीं है। परन्तु कृमेश मानता है कि अपने मालिक हूआ धुएं भाग कर जाओ। यह लिखा है यह काम सुनें तो ही। कृमेश हो गए हैं। कृमेश हानी जीवन में भी है।
जब कुछ हो आता है तब अपने का आदेश में पढ़ाव है। उसका पूरा विश्वास और मानने मालिक उसे धुएं देते हैं। दाक्तर कृमेश के होस्ट अपनी खाता का अपना दिखाते हैं। उसकी आदेश में हूआ धुएं है। परन्तु कृमेश दिन रात का काम करना नहीं छोड़ता। उसे भाग में महात्मा गांधी के आदेश में आता है और उसके अंदरूनी पढ़ाव हार का काम उसे पढ़ाव-पढ़ा करने के लिए प्रशिक्षित करते हैं।
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क्या खोया, क्या पाया
लतुज कुमार

बख्ता हुआ था मैं, समूद्र के किनारे
पढ़ रहे थे मुंह पर, गर्म हवा के अंगरे।
तम्मी दिखा एक लाल चमकीला संदूक,
समुद्र के बीचों-बीच
लगा भरने वह मेरी तरफ़।
लाल गोलियां से जड़ा हुआ संदूक
रखा था मेरे आगे, वह चमक है!!

वेला में वही खराब हुआ था दृष्टि,
उस समुद्र की गहराईयाँ में।
वधा था तो हायुँ सुख,
उस संदूक की परवाहियाँ में।

गर्म हवा और तेज ध्रुव ने तो,
गले को रोककर बना दिया था,
संधियां कहूँ ना उसे उजाड़ बनाए।

चल पड़ा मैं नारियल के पाँच को तलाशाने,
उस संदूक की बाहर रखकर।

नारियल पीकर मिल गई सतनुमिति,
देखी उसके मेरे चमकाव।
अपनी ही मस्ती में चला जा रहा था,
वापस अपने संदूक की ओर।

उसकी झलक दिखा रही थी दूर से,
कितना चमकीला, कितना अनोखा था वह संदूक।
तभी आई एक विनाशकारी लहर,
और समा लगा संदूक को अपने ही अंदर।

मैं दौड़ा, तेज़ दौड़ा उस तट की तरफ़।
वहीं पड़ूँ जो देखा मैं नस्ताट का,
वहीं समुद्र के बीच-बीच।

उस समय मेरे मस्तिष्क से
एक ही प्रश्न उम्मकर आया - 'क्या खोया, क्या पाया!'
The clock struck seven. Immediately, all television sets lit up in India. People took leave from their offices just to get a glimpse of the ‘Men in Blue’. Team India, with its new jerseys, geared up to face the Bengal Tigers. Hopes were high and spectators kept their Indian flags waving. However, surprisingly, India fell to Bangladesh at the World Cup. Flags stopped waving. Heads bent down in shame. Televisions were broken just because India crashed out of the World Cup. The atmosphere was saturated with criticism. But what was the reason behind this unexpected failure? Here’s my account.

Team India didn’t have an appropriate mixture of young blood and experience. The team balance didn’t have any strength–Virender Sehwag and Saurav Ganguly weren’t a perfect match. Sehwag played a risky game with flair and glorious shots but one couldn’t depend on him. Ganguly was uncertain too. The middle order failed to live up to expectations and collapsed only too soon. The lower order was full of youngsters lacking experience, and at such crucial junctures, experience would have had the most impact. Probably, a Tendulkar going down the order would have uplifted hopes in a time of perpetual collapse. There should have been more all-rounders who could prove their mettle in both aspects of the game. Cricket is a sport where individual performances matter. There were no individuals to perform, with the exception of Sachin, Dravid and Ganguly. The rest were being experimented with. The World Cup is not suitable for experimentation. If the order was shifted here or there, and if there were a few more all-rounders, probably India wouldn’t have had to suffer the agony of defeat. The flaw in the team balance is directly the coach’s fault.

The second reason for India’s early exit was that India wasn’t hungry for success and victory. You need to have an appetite for glory, which India just lacked. Not one of them wanted to dirty their ‘new jerseys’ and dive for the ball. It was more about looking good on the field. They did not play with their heart and soul. No one had the sense of urgency. In the India-Bangladesh match, the ball went past them but they just stood like reluctant children who were simply refusing to put in any sort of effort. On the other hand, the opposing team displayed a great show of athleticism. They were all over the place: stopping, diving for the ball as if it was made of gold. Languidness, on ‘Team India’s’ part, cost them the honour of entering the Super Eight. Probably, if there was more vigour and enthusiasm on the field, the draws could have been different. India should have set the ball rolling and hit the ball with such sense of urgency, that the opposing team would have crumbled.

We could be the third reason. Yes! Us. ‘Us’ in the sense: the public. Public pressure with the added burden of defeat could have been the main reason behind the Indian team’s defeat. The public began going wild. Fanatics and maniacs began burning posters of Greg Chappell and Mohammed Kaif’s house was painted black. A man broke through security and slapped Chappell on his face in front of the media. The fact that security arrangements had to be made for the Indian cricketers on their way home is shameful. The public acted with perfect unreason. After all, our cricketers are fallible human beings. They made it to the finals last World Cup. Just because Lady Luck did not favour them this time does not mean that the public should go on a veritable rampage. This enormous pressure from the public made our cricketers tense and rigid. The fact that their houses and families were at stake, crushed them. We have no right to object if we are at fault.

There were a vast variety of other reasons. But, the reasons I have penned here were fundamental to the early exit of India from the World Cup. So, cross your fingers and “Let the dead Past bury its dead” and let us learn from our mistakes and hope that Team India grows from strength to strength.
Sexism in its True Colours

“Society accepts women in masculine roles more readily than men who assume traditionally feminine ones.”

In the Greek tragedy, Antigone, in what was a historical test, Oedipus’ daughter, Antigone, was the tragic hero, a sacred position reserved for only those embodying intelligence, perseverance, strength and lack of fortune. This play was well-accepted by Greek society, where the feminine character died as the ‘inspirational’ tragic hero.

There were many undertones and innuendos in the play, one being, that while a woman can take the position generally bestowed upon a man, a man can’t have anything to do with womanly characteristics. In the fifth scene of the play, the king’s son, Haemon is admonished and lambasted by his father for “playing the girl” as he was crying. Thus, as Sophocles would have had it, Haemon’s character, now repulsive and insignificant, sinks into the shadows, leaving the light on Antigone. Centuries later, has anything changed?

On a lazy Sunday afternoon, thoroughly scan the newspaper. It won’t be too difficult to infer that there are a lot of women who are assuming so-called ‘masculine roles’. Indira Nooyi of Pepsi is a business tycoon; Sonia Gandhi is one of the leading politicians in India and has been listed 6th on Foebes Most Powerful Women of 2007; Angela Merkel is the Chancellor of a political powerhouse, Germany, just to name a few. Their ‘masculine’ roles have been widely accepted by society. And now, are there any traces of a switch? Are there any men who have gained acknowledgements by society for stepping into a woman’s shoes?

At the very epicentre of this argument lies what Sigmund Freud would have called an indubitable genius. It is humiliating for most of us to even be associated with the term ‘feminine’. It is an insult to their so-called ‘honour’ and pride, hence the sobriquet ‘male chauvinist pigs’.

Men engaging in traditionally ‘feminine’ activities are normally shunned by their peer group and on a macro-scale, it has been conceptualized that it is demeaning for a man to act like a woman, making him a laughingstock. To give you some personal insight, there have been hundreds of boys in school who have been called a loose variant of the term ‘eunuch’, as they don’t indulge in any sporting activities.

To put matters into perspective, how many men take care of the house, while their white-collared wives drive the car to work? None. It is humiliating for the man to step into a woman’s shoes. If it is so embarrassing and humiliating for the man, how can society accept it?

Girls can do what boys do. They can play sports, go trekking, and play an electric guitar. But how many boys stitch or knit, or indulge in customized manicures and pedicures? For me to generalise these as ‘feminine’ activities is wrong, but the above statement still holds true.

A very long time ago, teaching was a man’s job. But as feminism gathered strength, we found that women could vote and were authorised to be teachers. And see how well that turned out. If society hadn’t accepted it, then women would never have taught. For most of my school life, I have been taught more by women than men, a reason why I feel schooling has motivated me to excel. The fact remains that society has allowed women to assume masculine roles more readily than it allows men to assume roles traditionally called ‘feminine’, with the exception of highly dogmatic and male-dominated societies (like intensely Islamic ones) where neither of the two happen.

To conclude, let me leave the readers of this piece with a question, in the hope that it is answered sincerely: what would you give more recognition and acknowledgement to—a woman who is the CEO of a multi-billion dollar MNC, or a man taking ballet lessons?

DILSHER DHILLON: WINNER OF THE SHANKAR DAYAL SHARMA ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING CONTEST FOR SENIORS

To Die or Not To Die

He crouched in his trench. The enemy was bombarding them with heavy shelling. Of course, he was absolutely terrified. He looked at the faces of his comrades – their frightened faces mirrored his own.

They were those ‘brave souls’ who ‘fearlessly’ decimated enemy units. In a moment of sudden clarity, with hell raging around him, he understood what he had to do to win the war. He would have to take the initiative. He pulled his face into a determined expression, and shouted words of encouragement. His comrades still trembled. He knew it was time for him to end it. Yelling savagely, he leapt out of his trench, firing wildly. He had only run a few metres, when a colossal explosion rent the air and he blacked out. “At last, the end,” he thought.

He woke up several hours later. It was dawn and an unnatural peace had settled over the plain. He looked behind himself, and found that his trench had been hit by a shell. Not a single soldier breathed. So his bravado had, in fact, saved him from death. He looked up at the sky and thought, “the ways of God are truly strange.”

(Shaurya Kuthiala)
‘A’ for Articulate

Allow me to introduce you, or rather, re-introduce you to an entity that is as large as it is small, as powerful as it is humble: the letter A. It is said that in the beginning of the history of mankind, there was the word. But, surely, before the word there was the letter – the building block from which the word was constructed – the Greek Alpha, the Hebrew Aleph, the Arabic Aleph, and our own A. A mighty monarch indeed, the letter A. And its very simplicity in no way detracts from that might. It is the easiest of all the phonetics to pronounce. It requires merely a slight quiver of your vocal chords. It doesn’t curl your lips or twist your tongue or cause your teeth to clash together. How obliging, how un-troublesome it is, and yet how powerful. Indeed, how omnipresent, in all spheres of human life, and always in a positive context.

A-grade is every student’s aspiration.

A-one: a symbol for excellence.

In a deck of playing cards, the most powerful Aces are marked with the letter A. In logic, the symbol for the universal affirmative proposition in the general form ‘all Xs is Y’ is...yes! You’ve guessed it: the letter A.

It is also the only letter in the English language, apart from its relative, the vowel ‘i’, that constitutes a word in itself. As for I, it is a pompous, egoistic, first person singular word. It serves only itself. Little wonder that a national daily has recently demoted it from being a singular word. It serves only itself. Little wonder that a capital letter to a lower case ‘i’. A doesn’t need that crude rebuke. It doesn’t believe in blowing its own trumpet. It is quietly confident of its reason for being and performs its function without boasting or bragging.

It has taught us, even before nanotechnology came into being, that small is beautiful; that the humble can rule the world. There is a lesson to be learnt there, that quality always wins over quantity.

Clearly, A is a force to reckon with! Who wouldn’t want to be a part of the A-team? It is not surprising therefore, that this letter has found a place in the most unlikely places. In American Major League baseball, the Oakland Athletics are simply referred to as the As. The note A is the note that all instruments in an orchestra are tuned to. Fifty-plus instruments, all playing one glorious sound...A. A is the standard size of a battery. It is a vitamin, a blood type, the first side of a record or cassette. It is present in every sentence we speak, making it the very basis of human communication.

Truly, it has come a long way since its existence as a pictogram of an ox-head in the Egyptian hieroglyphics. An ox head: a symbol that denotes strength and stability. Yes, these qualities have endured in the letter A.

Salad Days and High School Sweethearts

When I look back on the seventy-three odd years that I have spent in this wicked world, I first count the things that I have lost. Most recently, my teeth, some of my hair, a portion of my wealth, most of my health, the desire to whistle at the sight of a perfect ten figure. Do forgive an old man’s ramblings: the list grows long and my time here is short. But, you know, the only thing that I really regret losing is my youth. The very word seems to speak of excitement, vigour, thrill, innocence and the sheer zest for life. If I knew then what I know now...

In those long gone days that I call ‘then’, I had friends who believed that the maxim ‘there is safety in numbers’ meant that they could fall in love with at least three girls at the same time and were never able to understand the slap they got in return for their generosity once the cat was out of the bag. The trysts back then were the sort you see in a one-act play, with an unconfident boy and an apprehensive young girl. A typical evening used to go well until the boy would decide to mess with the group of youngsters staring at his girl from across the table, and that would be the final fatal deviation from the one-act play plan. There were also youngsters like my neighbour who worked as a janitor at a garage just to earn enough money to buy his girlfriend a gift. Alas, it was money ill-spent as the blooming periwinkle of their love was nipped in the bud.

When I was young, I was a bit of a Romeo, in fact I thought I was better than the original Romeo, with a dash of Majnu and Casanova added. When I was young, a ‘date’ was a fruit sent in a dabba by an uncle from the Middle East, a mall was the main street in a hill station, and PVR was a synthetic fabric. Times have changed, terms have changed, but the essence of a relationship between individuals of the opposite sex...some things never change.

Today, with my grandchildren visiting me over the weekends, I am living the life of an ordinary, retired old man. For my grandchildren I am the most appro-
priate grandfather. I am ‘cool’, I get them a lot of chocolates to eat and I share all my secrets with them; the ones with girls in them interests them the most. Of all the lessons that life has to teach them, I have one of my own– ‘gather your rosebuds while you may’. My wife is a loving memory now, but I am sure that when I join her, she will still rap my knuckles for all the escapades I had with and without her. As for the alliances and, indeed, dalliances with them, each one of them can still bring a smile to my face and banish the blues.

As an old man I realise that life would be so incomplete without my youth. I leave you therefore with the words of another old man–

*When I can look Life in the eyes,*

*Grown calm and very coldly wise,*

*Life will have given me the Truth,*

*And taken in exchange—my youth.*

---

**The Wait**

The calm breeze blew through the forest. The scent of the pine trees wafted through the air and the chirping of different birds could be heard. The moist ground was covered with leaves and twigs which had not been disturbed for years. There stood a shabby house in the centre of the forest with broken and dilapidated windows.

One man sat under a tree, clad in nothing but a single white cloth around his waist, waiting. He had been waiting here in this disguise for years, at this very spot, since that very day, when it happened. That incident had changed him and shown him that no one could be trusted, not even your own blood. His grey beard had grown long and untidy and his wrinkles had deepened.

There was a rustle of leaves and the snapping of a twig. A smile spread across the man’s face. The time had finally come. He picked up what he needed from under a heap of leaves and slowly and silently, walked towards the man who he was waiting for. The man had a similar grey and straggly beard and looked about the same age as him. He was wearing a brown jacket and had an axe in one hand.

The man who was clad in white, said in a hoarse voice, “I’ve been waiting a long time…brother”. The man spun around immediately and trepidation spread across his face. The man in white held a revolver to the other’s head, cocked it with a distinct click, and gave him an ultimatum, “Tell me where it is! I know you have come back for it!” The other looked down across his face, “Never.”

The man instinctively pulled the trigger at point-blank range. There was a thud and everything was, once again, silent. The man walked back and sat under the tree, waiting for the others. *(Bharat Ganju)*

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**A Temple Visit**

The temple is in close proximity to the school and some of the devotional music, adapted to the tunes of Bollywood songs, occasionally filters into the campus. I got a chance to pay it a visit on *Janamashtami*, after five long years, due to a coincidence of the festival and my ‘night-out’ falling on the same day.

The place boasts of no elaborate tradition or architecture as it is not really a very old building. But it does become a hub of activity on festival days for the people of the neighbourhood, aptly called Krishnanagar, it caters to. And being a temple devoted to Krishna himself, during his birthday celebrations, the queues of devotees stretch almost to a kilometre. It was to avoid this long wait, which occasionally grows violent, that we tried a ‘back door VIP’ entry. We entered from the exit gate, and while all my family members managed an easy crossing, my way, owing to my lack of enterprise and a slightly lazy attitude, was blocked by a stern hand. I tried to push it away but it persisted. There were shouts and groans and I was finally pulled (or pushed, I am not too sure) inside the hall. The only marks of the mild scuffle: three black fingerprints on my new white T-shirt.

So I entered one of the most densely flower-decorated halls I have come across lately. It came as a sweet surprise to a person who always thought this temple to be a modest institution. However, my apprehensions were soon swept aside as I received a ten-rupee note to offer to the new-born god. Earlier it used to be a two-rupee coin. Undoubtedly, inflation had affected faith as well. Further into the proceedings, my view that the ordinary, devout Indian was not wholly averse to wealth was confirmed. So, how could the followers denounce wealth? A woman, very gently, pushed my bowed, praying self aside to place a twenty-rupee note in the cradle to pick up, with practised skill, ten one-rupee coins. A net gift of rupees ten for God!

I turned around to see another, ‘real’ baby also dressed like Krishna, made to sit on a straw chair by his doting parents, who felt as proud as if they were parents of the ‘real’ god. The more the baby whined, the richer the parents got. Another economic opportunity!

We were in the final stage. This time, we lined up in front of the priest and waited for our *prasad*. A benefactor, who was also a member of the temple committee, handed us an apple each and pushed us to our foreheads, enabling us to exit the temple before the waiting masses thronged it completely.

*(Skand Goel)*
Ever since its inception some two and a half months ago, the Discipline Committee has been described as ineffective, inefficient, and unnecessary. Its functioning has been labelled needlessly bureaucratic and laborious. This feeling of disgust has been exacerbated by the knowledge that the committee is merely an advisory body, and hence its hearings are merely a waste of time. In short, the Discipline Committee has been lambasted by a majority of members of this community on some pretext or the other. This is unfortunate. The fact that it has been reduced to a joke (mockingly called a Disco) in the eyes of some people is even more unfortunate.

Instituted by the School Council, the Discipline Committee, which consists of four teachers – the Deputy Headmaster, and one representative each from the Deans, Housemasters and Masters – and three students – School Captain, School Council Secretary, and Prefects’ Representative, hears extreme cases pertaining to the discipline of boys in school. The Committee may call in any member of the community to serve as a ‘witness’ in its hearing, though its final recommendation isn’t binding on the Housemasters’ Council.

There can be no doubt as to the necessity of such a body in a school like ours, for it strengthens the system of checks and balances, promotes transparency and consistency, provides a forum for students to express their views and explain their case, and is a long-overdue step towards the foundation of a responsible system of student governance. The students of this school, so used to cribbing about disciplinary action, at least have an insight into it. The fact that it has been reduced to a joke in the eyes of some people is even more unfortunate.

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Keeping this in mind, the members of the community must be more patient with the Disciplinary Committee. That said, noone can deny that the committee, as it exists today, has wrinkles which must be ironed out. Primarily, the Committee is hampered by its pace. Hearings often take too long, and the pace is further slowed by the fact that cases are often referred to the committee late. Any decision (or recommendation, for that matter), if taken late, loses its impact, and the committee, if it wants to gain acceptance and legitimacy, must address this issue immediately. The body must also ensure at all times that its recommendations are consistent and unbiased, something that is bound to become an issue as time goes on. Hopefully, the Disciplinary Committee will take root in The Doon School and be an integral part of a system that would truly be a hallmark in the seventy-two year history of this school.

(Ashish Mitter)

The essence of life in the system lies in being a part of it, criticizing it, loving it, hating it...

The system seems to be an entity, which all of us gleefully criticize and try to oppose in our own little ways, but depend on nevertheless. What has always intrigued me is what a system can be defined as. For instance, in our school, would it be the administration or the faculty, or the alumni, or the students, or the rule book, or basic ethics that have already been defined and carried forward by tradition, or any other such vague custom? Or is it an amalgam of all these possibilities? And if it is, would it be a generalization to criticize it? One’s adolescence always seems to be associated with a sense of angst, fear, and, above all, depression (which has now become quite a cliché). Conforming to the popular mindset in your respective environments can be a convenient escape from all of that. Now, the other dilemma is whether individuality is the price we have to pay for conformism. It is a necessity to conform to a social order and to a mindset. But once your mind has been set and has acquired a foundation, it cannot and should not be directed and guided by conformism. This is where the sustenance of one’s individuality is moulded. Thus, one should conform to a basic social order, but not to views or opinions, or ideologies and even beliefs, because that would diminish the line between one’s individual self and one’s...
environment and as a result this would affect one’s thought process. In a schedule like ours, the individual is practically socializing from the moment he wakes up to the moment he goes to sleep. He is living, breathing, behaving, thinking, and existing as a part of a collective entity and conforms to a method of living. Can a person sustain his individuality in such a system? I have often stated in my debates that society cannot practically manage to, or afford to, operate at the individual level. But, if the individual entity was insignificant, there would be no society in the first place. Therefore, the significance of an individual in any system, should be understood or realized, by first deconstructing the entire concept of a system into certain key elements, which, together, comprise the entity. These elements may despise the system, they may oppose the system, but they are the building blocks of the system and cannot function without it, and neither can the system function without them. There is indeed a degree of mutual dependence, which is the foundation of the structure of the system. But, in the process, what is ignored is that every individual, every building block, does itself have an internal system in accordance with which it functions, which the collective system does not recognize, and this is the cause of the conflict; because it is during adolescence that one’s individual framework or one’s internal system is trying to go beyond its mere foundation, and is persistently being told by the larger picture that it is heading in the wrong direction. This leads to internal-external tussles.

When one is a child, enthusiasm, zest, euphoria, and positive energy is rooted in one’s misconception of life. It is caused by the fact that one is obliged to believe that life will be happy. Whereas, when one grows older and reaches the intermediate stage (adolescence), one gradually learns that there is a startling possibility that life will not be happy, and this causes depression. But, it is when the sadness has sunk into your system and had an impact on you, that you begin to accept the fact that life is not going to be great, and you begin to delve into this idea and find happiness in the overwhelming sorrow and the multi-dimensional nature of life. Can the system be blamed for this? Can conformism prevent this? Will this phase pass? In my view, the beauty of life lies in the fact that this phase will never pass. It will grow and develop, and, hopefully, be channelised in a constructive direction, and so will the individual system. At the end of the day, whether or not one’s individual system should function in tandem with the external system is a matter of perception. But, since we all do happen to be a part of the system that we struggle against, to me, the essence of life in the system lies in being a part of it, being outside it, criticizing it, loving it, hating it, being depressed by it, understanding it, realizing it, recognizing its significance, and above all, recognizing the significance and insignificance of your own self inside it, around it, outside it: as a creature locked up in his own, individual system plunged into a bizarre universe in order to bear it and cope with it.

(Vivaan Shah)
The Indian Platform

It’s a humid July afternoon; the crowded railway station, the stampede for the general compartment, the sweat, the haggling coolies and an announcement, “...train has been delayed, the inconvenience caused is deeply regretted.” You manage a corner of the bench on the platform and look at the papers: “Railways create history, profit of Rs. 14,000 crores.” And this, you consider, the biggest anomaly of the century. Yet, the Indian Railways is not all about indefinite delays, rude front-offices, dirty bathrooms and stuffy compartments. The Indian Railways, the second largest railway network in the world, employing over 1.6 million, running 11,000 trains a day across 7092 stations distancing 62,000 km of track, caters to seemingly impossible numbers. There is a je ne sais quoi about the railways that makes every trip on a train distinctly memorable and a learning experience.

The imagery of the Old Delhi Railway Station: bustling, historical, betel stains on walls, impatient porters, announcements and trains chuffing sheepishly into the station. The experience begins and ends here. The reservation chart is our first stop, to confirm the legitimacy of our ticket and reservation status (for those banking on DRM quota). Thereafter, after breathing the sweat, the haggling coolies and an announcement, the stampede for the general compartment, the Madgaon station in Goa is known for jalebis, pakoras and the like. However, the station has more to it than just the intriguing physical surroundings (colourful and ancient weighing machines included). Today, the railway platform has come to symbolize more than a mere communication system. It is an amalgam of our cultural diversity, rich history and present state. The Railways has come to acquire centre-stage in the great Indian Drama, be it noisy Question hours, a home and source of living for thousands, or historically, a trigger to the political theatre, its notorious safety record has cost many a Minister their political future (if memory serves, Lal Bahadur Shastri being one of the first), and often led to ‘major embarrassments’ for governments, leading to electoral debacles.

The next time you take a train, read beyond the India Today. It was on one of my trips from Guwahati that I spotted an anomaly: the Rajdhani stops at Katihar Junction for nearly thirty minutes, but halts in Varanasi for precisely a minute. And then one is reminded of state boundaries and selective political priorities. Like the farmers of Vidarbha, the passengers at Varanasi Junction for nearly thirty minutes, but halts in Varanasi for precisely a minute. And then one is reminded of state boundaries and selective political priorities. Like the farmers of Vidarbha, the passengers at Varanasi alight hurriedly because they fall in the ‘low priority zone.’ If you are a regular passenger, notice the station codes and single out ‘CNB.’ Today, in an effort to erase the colonial legacy and respect ‘local sentiment,’ we have changed the names of our metros to Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai and Bengaluru. But on our Railway schedules, Kanpur is still coded ‘CNB,’ logical to Company officers and their dictionary of kitchen Hindustani.

This highlights the Indian dilemma of being intensely nationalistic (as a reaction to colonization), yet ‘western’ in ways, aspirations and ideals.

The Railways was the product of the ‘investable surplus’ generated by the industrializing British economy. Therefore, while Simla (the summer capital) had a train connection early on, several areas in the plains remained unconnected to this means of transport. The Railways was built with a political motive: to integrate the empire and support the economic interests of the ruler. It, therefore, invariably became a target of our anti-British sentiment and repeatedly (1857 revolt onwards) became the battleground for our independence agenda. Post-1947, it became a uniting force for this diverse land and continues to hold that influence on our society. Such is the vitality of the Railways, that a national emergency was declared after a rail-strike was proposed by opposition parties during Indira Gandhi’s rule. Therefore, in our contemporary history, the Railways act as a distinctly national and integrating force.

Since the dawn of coalition politics, and post-liberalization economic policies, the Indian Railways has basked in our polity’s limelight. It is a ‘plump’ portfolio, a large public employer and represents the changing face of our economy. Far from being a representative of public sector failures (despite overstaffing, red-tapism, bureaucratic inefficiencies), it surprises everyone by being in the pink of financial health. In a political theatre, its notorious safety record has cost many a Minister their political future (if memory serves, Lal Bahadur Shastri being one of the first), and often led to ‘major embarrassments’ for governments, leading to electoral debates.

The overbearing presence of the railways in our political and economic polity is not only indicative of the entire system but of the individual too. The railway station is a confluence of local life and a hub for social activities. The Madgaon station in Goa is known for its coconut-water sellers, the Manmad station for mouth-watering langar food; Ahmedabad for Viallid ice-cream, and so on... Observe the train names and connect them to our geographical diversity: trains originating from Bihar are invariably prefixed with ‘sram;’ this is because of a vast migration of labourers form Bihar, in search of employment. Prayagraj Express to Allahabad gets its name from the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati river; the fa-
The law prohibits an individual from taking his own life. Therefore, the idea of the law demanding the execution of a human being is absurd. The death sentence is an uncivilized and obsolete way of dealing with crime. It was employed in the olden times when barbaric and sadistic punishments were still prevalent and non-violence was a distant concept.

We have evolved since then, and know that murder is not the answer. The crimes committed by Saddam Hussein were undoubtedly heinous and revolting but no crime, however barbaric, deserves the death sentence. The death sentence is against the very concept of humanity. Justice can never be delivered by means of violence. A murder is not the remedy to a massacre. The law cannot stoop to the level of a criminal and perform a similar act. It would set a bad example for the public, especially the youth. Everyone has the right to live and the death penalty is thus a breach of human rights. How can the law promote bloodshed as an answer to injustice, a way of achieving vengeance? ‘Tit for tat’ people may say, but that is not the way any system should work. Two wrongs don’t make a right.

We need to deal with this matter rationally. Instead of awarding Saddam a death sentence, the judge could have pondered this matter a little longer and come to a viable conclusion. Perhaps life imprisonment would be harsh enough and give Saddam a chance to think, in silent contrition, about what he did. Putting him to death will not bring the people he brutally murdered back to life. It will only aggravate the situation further, and we all know how volatile the situation in Iraq currently is. For a majority of people in his native country, Saddam was God. The death sentence may just make him a martyr in their eyes. Saddam’s death sentence could stimulate rebellion. Riots could break out. A milder punishment will enable the people to bury the matter and move on. Often, a punishment has graver consequences than the crime itself. Saddam has murdered scores of people. It would be foolish to add to the list by giving him the death penalty. Is it reasonable to award Saddam a death sentence just to provide vengeance to the bereaved parties?

Justice, contrary to popular belief, is not blind and we cannot let this become a case of murder for murder. Violating the right to life of a man for committing a crime does not provide justice. Instead of stubbornly holding on to the past, we need to relent and let the matter rest.

In Issue No. 2136, the Weekly debated the execution of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, who was charged with crimes against humanity.

In conclusion, for the porter, traveller (nearly four billion a year and ten million a day!), chai-wala, station master, platform dweller and any average Indian, these words of Rabindranath Tagore, in his poem Flute Music, will strike a chord:

\[ \text{At dusk I go to Sealdah station} \\
\text{Spend the evening there} \\
\text{To save the cost of light.} \\
\text{Engines chuffing,} \\
\text{Whistles shrieking,} \\
\text{Passengers scurrying,} \\
\text{Coolies shouting,} \\
\text{I stay till half past ten,} \\
\text{Then back to my dark, silent, lonely room.} \]

(Shikhar Singh)

| Death Sentence to Saddam |

The Guillotine

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In Issue No. 2136, the Weekly debated the execution of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, who was charged with crimes against humanity.

The law prohibits an individual from taking his own life. Therefore, the idea of the law demanding the execution of a human being is absurd. The death sentence is an uncivilized and obsolete way of dealing with crime. It was employed in the olden times when barbaric and sadistic punishments were still prevalent and non-violence was a distant concept.

We have evolved since then, and know that murder is not the answer. The crimes committed by Saddam Hussein were undoubtedly heinous and revolting but no crime, however barbaric, deserves the death sentence. The death sentence is against the very concept of humanity. Justice can never be delivered by means of violence. A murder is not the remedy to a massacre. The law cannot stoop to the level of a criminal and perform a similar act. It would set a bad example for the public, especially the youth. Everyone has the right to live and the death penalty is thus a breach of human rights. How can the law promote bloodshed as an answer to injustice, a way of achieving vengeance? ‘Tit for tat’ people may say, but that is not the way any system should work. Two wrongs don’t make a right.

We need to deal with this matter rationally. Instead of awarding Saddam a death sentence, the judge could have pondered this matter a little longer and come to a viable conclusion. Perhaps life imprisonment would be harsh enough and give Saddam a chance to think, in silent contrition, about what he did. Putting him to death will not bring the people he brutally murdered back to life. It will only aggravate the situation further, and we all know how volatile the situation in Iraq currently is. For a majority of people in his native country, Saddam was God. The death sentence may just make him a martyr in their eyes. Saddam’s death sentence could stimulate rebellion. Riots could break out. A milder punishment will enable the people to bury the matter and move on. Often, a punishment has graver consequences than the crime itself. Saddam has murdered scores of people. It would be foolish to add to the list by giving him the death penalty. Is it reasonable to award Saddam a death sentence just to provide vengeance to the bereaved parties?

Justice, contrary to popular belief, is not blind and we cannot let this become a case of murder for murder. Violating the right to life of a man for committing a crime does not provide justice. Instead of stubbornly holding on to the past, we need to relent and let the matter rest.

(Shikhar Singh)

| Why we voted the way we did... |

It is an interesting observation that while our cover-story strongly protests the hanging of Saddam Hussein, the former Iraqi President, nearly 60% of the school community goes against this view. In my opinion, I feel that many of the ‘Yes’ voters are swayed by the Americanised view of ‘Devil’ Saddam. That, just as after the World War, Hitler was portrayed as barbaric and inhuman, the western media has labelled him with similar attributes. The overwhelming majority, in my opinion, are not ‘for’ the death penalty in itself, but feel that given the atrocities committed by Saddam, he deserves death. I agree with this view but feel that a decision of this kind must be taken after careful consideration (given the sectarian violence and domestic chaos in Iraq) and correct legal procedures must be followed. The convicted should have a fair trial, chance for re-appeal and then abide by the legal verdict. It is perhaps for this reason that a substantial number of us (40%) disagree with the sentence accorded to him.

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(Rushil Singh)
“Nice place,” I commented, taking in the tasteful interiors, the subtle décor and the impressive wine rack at the far end of the restaurant.

“Thanks,” Tom replied with a grin. “Though I must confess, all the work is Allison’s. I just figure out a way to make a profit.”

I laughed. For a man I had met a bare week ago, Tom was surprisingly easy to get along with. I had yet to meet his wife, but if the restaurant was truly her work, I suspected she’d be altogether less friendly. I smiled inwardly at this thought.

There was the briefest of pauses in the conversation, and as efficiently as the Royal Butler, if there is such a position, the maitre’d appeared at the table with an ingratiating smile.

“Such a pleasure, Mister Finn,” he intoned nasally.

“Hello, Albert,” Tom said. “I’ll have the usual, and a bottle of the ’96 Australian red.”

He made a short bow. “And sir?” This was addressed to me.

“Oh – um – anything…with beef,” I said.

“Ah, the chef is particularly proud of his Boeuf Bourguignon. I am sure sir will not be disappointed.”

I shrugged and he disappeared. I turned to Tom.

“Wanna know why the beef’s important?”

He shrugged and said, “Sure.”

“Well, I wouldn’t insult your establishment by having a salad, and I’m certainly not making a meal of vegetables. Now, that means some animal has to die for me. So, for the sake of my self-image, or whatever they call it in The Matrix, I feel better – no, grander – if a bigger animal dies solely for me. Ergo, the beef.”

He stared at me for a long moment, then burst out laughing.

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He stared at me for a long moment, then burst out laughing.

“I know, right?” I said, smiling. “Probably makes me the greatest philosopher since Sartre.” Then, almost as an afterthought, “Although it could just mean I’m a lunatic.”

His face contorted into a hopeless expression of mirth, and he attempted to stuff one of his wife’s starched napkins down his throat to stifle his laughter.

Of course, I most certainly am not a lunatic. I like to think of myself as a facilitator of sorts. A man who accomplishes, for a fee of course, goals that his clients may not, for whatever reasons, be able to themselves.

The food arrived. Again, it appeared almost as if by magic. Wine filled our glasses and we were left alone.
The Bourguignon looked great, so I speared a morsel and placed it daintily in my mouth. We ate in silence for a few minutes, and when we were about halfway done, Tom said, “So, what’s this proposition you wanted to discuss with me?”

“Hmm,” I mumbled through a mouthful of food. After swallowing, I replied, “There’s a guy downtown who runs a brilliant restaurant. But his accountant managed to falsify his tax records, and in a week he’s gonna be bankrupt. The accountant needs some capital to buy out the owner. That’s where you come in.” I smiled, a chilling smile.

Tom went pale. “Well, I…you can’t possibly…I wouldn’t…”

“What?” I cut through his panicked babbling. “I was told you’d done something similar not too long ago. It’s why I approached you in the first place.”

“Oh, shit,” He whispered.

I pulled the silenced Walther from my holster and said, “Mister Jonah says goodbye Tom.” I pointed the gun between his eyes and squeezed the trigger. Nothing happened. I cursed, and glanced at his sweating face and terrified eyes. “Didn’t cock it,” I shrugged sheepishly. I yanked the slide back and blew his brains all over the wall.

Then I dropped the gun, took a sip of wine and dabbed my lips with a napkin, thanking the Lord that it was an early dinner and there were no other patrons in the restaurant.

On the way out, I stopped and turned to Albert, who stood paralyzed with shock. “Hey Al,” I said, “the bourguignon was very good.”

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According to you, humans are...

- Thinkers: 35%
- Creative: 30%
- Sheep in a herd: 35%

Which form of government do you support?

- Aristocracy 10%
- Liberal Democracy 53%
- Restricted Democracy 11%
- Monarchy 26%

Do you agree with liberalization?

- Yes, Economic Liberalization of 1991 has boosted the economy: 36%
- Yes, cellphones and iPods should be allowed: 39%
- No, everyone should have restrictions (like the Broadcast Bill): 25%

Methodology: The poll was conducted by randomly interviewing 250 members of the school community. Percentage figures have been rounded-off to the nearest whole numbers.
Staff vs. Old Boys

The Old Boys, led as usual by Nalin Khanna, came down to play two matches during the parent-teacher meeting weekend, and the Staff geared up to play them first, on a warm Baisakhi Day.

The Staff batted first, and we drafted in two students: Chetan Kaul and Keshav Prasad to face the new ball, operated by Asit Lamba and Naved Farooqui. Asit began poorly, with Kaul taking seven runs and a wide off the first over. Kaul continued in an aggressive vein, with a four off Farooqui. Asit, however, struck back by shattering the stump of Keshav Prasad for a disappointing duck, and Farooqui followed suit, bowling Kaul for eleven. This brought both our coaches, Junaid Anjum, and R. Bhandari to the crease.

We hoped the left and right-hand batting combination would prosper, and ensure some respectability for the Staff. The pair wisely took their time to settle down, while Lamba and Farooqui struck a purple patch, bowling fast and accurate on a good length. Farooqui, in particular, bowled some unplayable deliveries, and one of these yorked the very reliable and accomplished Junaid Anjum for ten runs. The doughty and combative, Dr. Deepak Arora was the next man in, and we appeared to be staring down the barrel.

At this point, Deepak Kaul came in for Naved, and within a few overs, Yadav Rai replaced Asit, whose overs had run out. Bhandari was stroking the ball well and Dr. Arora soon began to match him stroke for stroke. Deepak Kaul bowled economically, while Yadav’s first over was a mite expensive, with Bhandari hitting him for a six, and Dr. Arora playing some rousing strokes off both feet. The Staff bandwagon was on the roll and continued to make progress, when Pratyush Vaishnav was introduced into the attack from the left-hand and Dr. Arora to an untimely end.

Nalan Khanna began operations from the Skinner’s end, and we appeared to be staring down the barrel. Dr. Shukla and Nitin Chauhan made any headway. The former timed the ball well and gathered valuable runs for the team. NTC, with his usual hit or miss approach, took the attack to the bowlers, hitting Nalin for a six over mid-wicket amongst several boundaries before being stumped off Indu Shekhar. The Staff finally mustered a score of 167, all-out. The Old Boys bowled steadily throughout, but their fielding was somewhat patchy, letting the Staff back into the game.

Dicky Shivendra Singh and Vipin opened for the Old Boys after lunch, and in a moment of sheer optimism, bordering on lunacy, I opted to bowl the first over to Vipin from the CDH end. I thought I might have the advantage, being a few pounds lighter than Vipin. This was not to be. Trying to bowl seam-up, my arm refused to roll over at the minimum required rate and four short deliveries were taken by Vipin from the middle stump, and deposited into the area outside Hyderabad House; a most inauspicious start for the Staff, from which we never really recovered. Nitin Chauhan operated manfully from the Skinner’s end and after an over from JNX, Anjum took over the CDH end, but the Old Boys had got off to a roaring start. Even the departure of Vipin, bowled by Anjum for 26 did not disturb their momentum. Sandeep Chandra joined Dicky, and both batsmen played their shots. Dicky hit two sixes and the batsmen plundered nineteen runs off an over from Anjum. We were forced to bring in Bhandari, with his left-arm spin. Keshav Prasad bowled two economical overs of medium pace from the Skinner’s end, before conceding thirteen runs in an over, making way for PBR for an over before RSF took over the Skinner’s end and bowled a fiery and inspired spell of six overs.

Bhandari and RSF bowled beautifully and the fielding was as good as it could be. The Old Boys were on the back foot, but the required run-rate was in their favour, and Nalin, who played a dour innings, along with Pratyush, carried the team to victory by five wickets, with three overs to spare.

While the Old Boys deserved their victory, the Staff put up a stiff fight. Two overs, one bowled by myself and the other by Anjum were the difference between the teams on the day. Dr. Arora’s courageous knock, full of concentration and flair, was a remarkable performance. The collision between Asit Lamba and Naved Farooqui, both going for the same skier over short-cover was the disaster of the day. Lamba sustained quite a serious injury and had to sit out the next day, while Naved was lucky to escape with minor contusions.

School vs. Old Boys at Abhimanyu Cricket Academy

The day after Baisakhi saw the School play the Old Boys in a day-night encounter under lights at the Abhimanyu Academy ground. Fresh in spirit, but clearly depleted in physical resources, the Old Boys began badly with Nalin, their captain, losing the toss to
Anirudh Kapur, who jumped at the chance to bat on a perfect batting strip under a late-afternoon sun.

The Old Boys had already suffered two injuries to their players. Donny breaking his finger in practice and the collision between Asit Lamba and Naved Farooqui, while going for a catch, rendering Asit hors de combat and placing Naved in a sorely restricted physical condition. The attack, therefore, was opened by an injured Naved and Deepak Kaul, while Samridh Aggarwal and Dilsher Khanna were the School openers.

The two School batsmen began cautiously, getting the measure of the attack, and the surface, with each thumping Naved for a couple of boundaries at the outset. Deepak Kaul bowled a tight opening spell, while Naved clearly showed the effects of injury and fatigue. Aggarwal and Khanna continued their business-like, determined approach, and slowly the bowling attack into the dust of this beautiful, new ground carved out between two hillocks, nestled severely alongside a flowing river, banked by a steeply rising ridge. Dilsher played a swashbuckling 78 off 63 balls, and delighted with the execution of his strokes, mainly on the off-side. Samridh played a classic innings; risk-free, yet enterprising. On-drives, straight-hits and leg-glances flowed from his bat. Both batsmen played with delightful fluency and their opening stand of 153 runs in twenty overs is one of the highest ever for the School.

As often happens, both batsmen departed in quick succession. Dilsher went first, bowled by Pratyush. He had thrilled the onlookers with some explosive hitting, including two sixes and nine fours. His 78 runs were compiled in only 63 balls. Samridh was soon caught and bowled by Nalin for 72 runs in 74 balls, with only five fours, proof that the running between the wickets was of a very high order.

On the bowling front, the bowlers who suffered at the hands of these rampaging batsmen were, of course, the opening pair, while Indu Shekhar bowled only one over for 11 runs and retired. Nikhil Sharma and Pratyush did the bulk of the bowling in the middle overs and were both mauled rather severely. Nalin, too, came in for rough treatment, but pegged away determinedly, being rewarded with the wicket of Samridh.

The departure of the two batting stars of the day brought in Dilshad Sidhu and skipper Kapur to the crease. The momentum was exhilarating and as a consequence, Dilshad was run out going for a second run, being unable to beat a fine throw by Sandeep Chandra from the fine-leg region. Kapur was stumped of Nikhil Sharma by Sandeep Vij. Tanveer was run out and only Aryaman Sengar made any further impression, getting twenty runs at a run-a-ball with the support of Shrivas Chandra and Chitwanjot Singh. In one of the brightest displays of batting, the School totaled 217 for six in thirty overs.

For the Old Boys, Nalin Khanna, Pratyush Vaishnav, Nikhil Sharma and Kunal Srivastava each got a wicket. The Old Boys batted when the full effect of the lights had made itself felt and the ground was perfectly illuminated on all sides. Vipin and Dicky opened again, this time to the bowling of Tanveer Angad Singh and Aayushya Bishnoi. In his first over, Bishnoi bowled Vipin with a beautiful in-swinger that squeezed through the gate. Indu Shekhar, who came one down, suffered a similar fate, first ball! Chandra came in on a hat-trick and denied the bowler, later stroking him for a boundary in the same over. From the other end, Tanveer compounded matters for the Old Boys by bowling the in-form Dicky for no score, causing deep consternation among the visitors, and great celebration in the ranks of his own team mates. Bishnoi was in a relentless mood and trapped Anil Malhotra in front of his stumps, causing panic in the Old Boys’ ranks. Pratyush was drafted in, but Tanveer, who was swinging the ball prodigiously, slid one across the stumps and through his defence. The Old Boys were, at one stage, fifteen for five, with only Sandeep Chandra showing any real mettle.

Nalin Khanna joined Chandra and there was a semblance of a stand, but the series of misfortunes plaguing the Old Boys continued, and Vivan Rai snapped up a sharp chance at short mid-wicket by Sandeep Chandra, just after the batsman had hit Bishnoi for a six. Sandeep Vij, former School Cricket Captain and wicket-keeper/batsman arrived at the crease for, what was to be, a very brief stay. He was bowled by Shailendra Singh, who was operating from the pavilion end, relieving Bishnoi. The innings was in shambles and seemed beyond repair. This proved to be the case as Deepak Kaul and Nalin soldiered on to no avail. With Sheel Sharma making a short appearance on the crease, there was a moment of nostalgia for the Old Boys and Staff. The Old Boys folded up at 65 in 21.5 overs. The School won by 152 runs-- one of the largest margins of victory in a thirty overs game that one is likely to see.

The School batsmen laid the foundation for the win, with the bowlers delivering successive death blows to the top order of the Old Boys’ line-up. In defence of the Old Boys’ team, it must be said that they had expended a lot of energy in beating the Staff comprehensively the previous day. Age, fatigue and the tight fielding by their young adversaries proved all too much for them on the day.

Still, the event was an exciting one and it was decided to make this day-night fixture an annual affair between the two teams.
Samridh Agarwal – Right-hand batsman; right-hand, off-spin bowler. Samridh played only a handful of matches this season, due to the ICSE examinations, and then transferred to Millfield School, UK. We missed him a great deal this season, and I am sure we will feel his loss very keenly in the next. Anyhow, I am glad that he’s making his way ahead, in the way he feels is appropriate for him. Of the large number of cricketers I have seen at School, I cannot think of anyone who loved the game more than Samridh. I was once informed that he actually slept with a cricket ball in his hand! This, and his correct, orthodox, upbringing in the art of batsmanship led me to draft him in the School Cricket Team as a C former. I doubt any C former has ever scored more runs for the School than he did. He also bowled seam-up and took quite a few wickets in his debut year. From that day, he served as the backbone of the School batting. To sum up, Samridh is a wonderful school-boy batsman: reliable, consistent and very circumspect. However, these classical and orthodox virtues may hinder his progress in the modern game. His stroke-play is not adventurous enough, and he will have to make significant adjustments in technique in order to play the kind of shots that a batsman must, in modern-day cricket.

Aryaman Sengar – Right-hand batsman. He is a hard-hitting and potentially explosive middle-order batsman. Without flowering to his fullest capacity, he won us a match and saved us severe embarrassment in another. His athleticism, speed and agility provided much-needed quality to the field. His catching could be better and he needs to learn to defend his wicket more effectively.

Tanveer Angad Singh – Right-hand batsman; right-hand medium-pace bowler. Tanveer showed great agility in the field, and extraordinary reflexes in the gully region. He swung the ball prodigiously, in to the right-handers, but the short-form of the game is weighted against this type of bowling. As for batting, he was always called upon to score at a break-neck rate and delivered on a few occasions. A utility man, who could have achieved more.

Dhairje Khera – Wicket-keeper batsman. He proved an adequate keeper in the end, working hard and shoudering the burden of this crucial, but thankless role. His taking of the medium-pacers improved consistently, while the slower bowlers suffered at his hands. His slam-bang batting prowess was seldom tested. He emerged a good team man, with a sense of achievement.

Rituraj Raizada – Right-hand finger spinner; right-hand batsman. Rituraj filled the spinner’s role quite effectively. His lack of flight meant that he couldn’t lure batsmen to their doom, but his tight, flat deliveries were difficult to put away. He also fielded extremely well to his own bowling. His fielding skills were equally effective in other positions around the ground as well, and he has a decent throw, which is rare. His batting, though rarely used, shows a doughty, aggressive approach.

Chitwanjot Singh – Left-hand batsman. Chitwanjot’s School cricket career was hampered by a period of injury and convalescence, during which he remained away from the game. There is no denying his innate cricketing sense, his silken touch at the crease, and his desire to contribute to the team. On the downside, he lacked physical fitness to an extreme degree, was a poor runner, fielder and catcher. Despite all this, he played a couple of grand, match-winning knocks for school, which will always be a source of satisfaction for him.

Shrivats Chandra – Right-hand batsman. Shrivats was in and out of the team, failing to cement his place. He was capable of providing a sort of gushing momentum at the top of the order, with his keen eye and free swinging of the bat. He played a couple of effusive knocks during the season, but really, was short on technique.

Shailendra Singh – Right-hand medium-pace bowler, right-hand batsman. Shailendra shouldered the responsibility of opening the bowling for School by bowling with all the determination and dedication at his command. He had a fair amount of pace, and a measure of out-swing. He made the mistake of hardly ever attacking the stumps and consequently gave too much room to the batsmen. He worked hard in the field and was generally safe. A hard-hitting batsman, he rarely got an opportunity in this area. He is also one of the most gentlemanly performers in the cricket field.

Anirudh Kapur – Captain; right-hand, leg-break bowler; right-hand, lower middle-order batsman. He made his debut for the School as early as his C form. Anirudh is an outstanding leg-spinner, with a classic action and impressive control over length and direction. Unfortunately, the Main Field wicket did not afford him enough bounce, which is so crucial to success for a bowler of his type. However, Anirudh defeated even good batsmen with flight and the considerable turn he was able to extract from most pitches. His batting was always seriously flawed! Towards the later part of his career, he made adjustments to his technique and there was significant improvement in his batting.

As captain, he led the side, on most occasions, with great commitment, and grew substantially in the areas of core competence that a captain of a cricket team needs to master. Anirudh was an enthusiastic fielder, and was always quick to pounce on the ball. He was constantly on the look-out for a run-out, against the run of play.

THE DOON SCHOOL WEEKLY OCTOBER 6, 2007
Dilsher Khanna – Right-hand batsman, right-hand finger-spin. Tall, with a lumbering gait, Dilsher showed some ability, mainly on account of the high trajectory from which he delivered the ball. On the other hand, he failed to measure up to minimum standards of accuracy required at competitive level. His batting, though aggressive and even volatile, lacked the underlying bulwark of defensive armour, and he often gifted his wicket to the opposition.

Vivan Rai – Right-hand batsman. A strapping, free-stroking player, with an upright stance, who played some of the most electrifying strokes I have ever seen from a School Team player. He began the season in a carefree, careless mood, but later matured and took on greater responsibility for the team’s effort. He does not use his defence judiciously, and does not approach is not to be denied, yet lack of powerful strokeplay and other School commitments meant he had only a brief stint with the team.

Itihaas Singh – Right-hand batsman. Itihaas was one of the junior brigade, who were blooded into the senior ranks, and received their baptism by fire. Itihaas began the season well, opening in a few games with Dilsher, and scoring moderately well, with the square drive being his most remarkable stroke. On the downside, he was too slow between wickets and lacked strength to bludgeon his way through tight situations, being mainly a touch player with attendant limitations, pertinent to limited-over cricket. Technically, he needs to abandon his fixed uprightness on the front foot, and get his eyes down to the level of the ball. In order to improve and be a great School batsman, he should keep an open mind and continue to improve.

Rajdeep Deo Bhanj – Right-hand batsman. Rajdeep has great potential as a batsman. He possesses a good eye and dancing feet at the wicket, while paradoxically seeming leaden-footed in the outfield. Rajdeep has great patience, the hallmark of successful batsmen, and though he often displayed a questionable over-cautiousness, the results, especially in the Inter-House matches are full of hope for the future. He also distinguished himself on a tour of England, which augurs well for School cricket.

Rohan Mehra – Right-hand batsman; right-hand finger-spin. Tall, with a lumbering gait, Rohan showed some ability, mainly on account of the high trajectory from which he delivered the ball. On the other hand, he failed to measure up to minimum standards of accuracy required at competitive level. His batting, though aggressive and even volatile, lacked the underlying bulwark of defensive armour, and he often gifted his wicket to the opposition.

Sachin Uppal – Sachin showed some promise during the season, with his natural ability to swing the ball away from the bat and had some early successes. However, his performances fell away, mainly due to his flat-footed approach to the stumps and the shuffling gait he employs to propel himself forward, precluding the generation of the kind of rhythmic momentum a medium-pacer cannot do without. His fielding was inconsistent and uninspiring.

Ashish Mitter – The School Captain was a late entrant to the team and played three games in March. We had him go out at the top of the order, and in two of the games, he gave us stability, if not momentum. His studied, orthodox and copybook approach is not to be denied, yet lack of powerful strokeplay and other School commitments meant he had only a brief stint with the team.

Dilshad Singh Sidhu – Right-hand batsman. An excellent fielder, who took some blinding catches during the season. His unorthodox, left-arm, medium-fast bowling never came along as one had hoped. His batting, equally makeshift, was brisk in intent, and fluent in stroke-play. The running between wickets displayed by him was an example for the rest of the team. He was a fine utility man, who gave his best for the team.

Vivan Rai – Right-hand batsman; right-hand off-spinner. Vivan made his place in the team with a series of consistent performances, delivering measured and tantalising off-spinners throughout the season. He picked up many wickets, and tried hard even pulling off a few sharp catches at short mid-wicket. There were few opportunities for his defensive batting. He needs to build upper-body strength and all-round fitness.

Rajdeep Deo Bhanj – Right-hand batsman. Rajdeep has great potential as a batsman. He possesses a good eye and dancing feet at the wicket, while paradoxically seeming leaden-footed in the outfield. Rajdeep has great patience, the hallmark of successful batsmen, and though he often displayed a questionable over-cautiousness, the results, especially in the Inter-House matches are full of hope for the future. He also distinguished himself on a tour of England, which augurs well for School cricket.

Aruj Shukla – Right-hand batsman, left-hand orthodox spin. He bowled his slow left-armers with a firm measure of control, achieving a good bit of turn and bounce, besides developing a good slower ball, amongst other variations, including an effective armee. He needs to develop a faster one and field more efficiently to his own bowling to further develop as a cricketer. His right-hand batting improved, and though not much tested, will surely be needed in the years to come.

Aayushyavardhan Bishnoi – Right-hand batsman, right-hand, swing bowler. Aayushya spearheaded the school bowling attack, and was extremely successful with his sharply moving in-swing, over which he has a fair bit of control. He must improve his run-up in order to generate extra pace in the years to come. A hard-hitting and correct batsman, he failed inexplicably on many occasions, and seems to lack confidence in this department. A more balanced and organised mental approach will help him, while he remains poised to emerge a genuine all-rounder in the game.
I don’t maintain a photo album, and I no longer chronicle events in a personal diary. Garnering moments is a risky pastime. I live and the memories form themselves. Looking at the sepia photographs of my father’s youth forced me to introspect. It was a rather inexplicable feeling: this recondite void; this bleak nothingness; this garroting discontent, which seemed to close in on me. Snap back to reality, I told myself. But somewhere in the back of my mind, this ambivalence reminded me of an incomplete past. I cannot say that I had managed to subdue it, because I was definitely not indifferent to it.

As a D former, I was called an introvert, and as a B former, I was unobtrusive. In my A form, I was labelled indiscreet, and maybe a bit mad. That concoction can definitely amount to human TNT: it probably did. I didn’t change; I couldn’t change; in truth, I wouldn’t change. I am stubborn and obstinate. These qualities have stayed with me through life (not to suggest that I am dead now).

I remember…my servile ways in D form were almost sinful – I felt like throttling myself. The subservience with which I carried out all orders that were given to me by teachers was detestable. My one-point-agenda in D form was, probably, to score some points with the masters. My temperament in C form seemed to be much better. Peer pressure did do me some good. And I refused to do things assigned to me if I didn’t want to. That, naturally, put me in some trouble with my Housemaster. But, I still didn’t have a point of view. The herd mentality was persistent, and for some reason, I sought to keep my brain’s languor intact. I recall this particular incident when the Housemaster was ‘pasting’ some of us at eleven in the night. One of our form mates fainted, saving us from maybe half-an-hour of auditory torture.

In B form, a revolution took place that changed my psyche: I read Ayn Rand. Most of her ideals continue to influence me. In her writings, I found more rationality and meaning than in any other author’s. In her works, I found relief in her works. B and A forms served to establish me as an iconoclast of sorts. I enjoyed doing things on my own accord; I enjoyed acting on impulse. And I tried to use the Weekly as my forum. I felt complete. Looking back, I can safely say that these were the best years of my life. There was a sense of purpose then – resolute and unyielding.

By this time, studies took the back-seat. I vividly remember the horror with which I confronted my first sixty percent. In time, it became an every-report-card affair. I had achieved some sort of consistency, by now, at performing below what is generally expected on the academic front. This particular night, I was crying because my parents were very agitated with my attitude. My parents seldom get angry with me and prefer not to intervene with my school matters, so obviously, this came as a shock to me. Someone came to me then, and said, “Don’t let that fire go out.” Maybe I interpreted it incorrectly. If I didn’t, then it was the best recipe for my disaster and I derived some inspiration from it, mustered up courage, and went on to sideline academics even more, while living up to my rebellious image. I liked to think that I was a maverick of sorts (and who was I kidding?).

The only thing that is etched in my memory after this, is the way I crumbled beneath the pressure of ICSE. Truth be told, I died a surrendered warrior. It will remain with me throughout and with something like this embossed in my mind, I hope I won’t make such a terrible mistake again.

This article bears no relevance to your life. I hope it never bears any relevance either. Maybe it just sounds great on paper: trust me, I lived through all this and if I had an option to go to hell or re-live some of those moments, I’d think it prudent to stay in hell. And not because I don’t want to change these things, but because I am still so perplexed with what I should have done; I am still so unsure about whether what I did was correct that making a judgement and passing a decision would be too difficult. Maybe reading it was just a waste of your time; maybe it wasn’t: I don’t know. But, reminiscing about the past and dreaming about a future: I wish there was a time-turner to life. I wish those could also have been the ‘good old days’. But then again, maybe they were...
Twisting road, like life, a strange desire,
The course of Bhagirathi to calm the ire.
Dark, crisp air, winter hills green,
A blue plate special and a *chai* to roll,
Joy, mirth within control.

Glittering night, a blanket of snow,
Fear, faith, fire, a flickering flame,
A meadow to nest, tents to rest,
Restless, eager, time to reflect,
The morrow will show the mountain crest.

Waking in the dark, to hear the lark,
Strong feet worked on white virgin sleet,
Hill slopes adorned –
Daisy, wild flowers, beautiful buds,
Colour, shades of violet and blue.

The rhythm of heart, body and mind,
Ecstatic march to search the soul.

The climb gets steeper, the breath, deeper,
To source the goddess of the blue sky,
Disengaged from the earthly hue

Slow and steady, no race to win,
The tread to Dayara, higher and higher.
Burning sun, the snow on fire,
Each breath inward, vibrant thoughts,
Tender care, rekindled empathy.

Heaven’s halo, a rainbow,
The arms of the ridge, its snowy slopes,
Whistling winds, a mortal dance,
Call for reincarnation, beautiful terrain,
Adieu! Dayara, I will see you again.
The world of reality has its limits; the world of imagination is boundless.

Jean Jacques Rousseau