A Helping Hand
Saurav Sethia and K.P. Somaiya interview Lalit Pandey, (ex-84 K '65) who was conferred with the Padma Shri for his efforts in bringing environmental education to rural areas in Uttarakhand’s hill districts

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): What work exactly do you carry out with the Uttar Pradesh Environmental Education Society (Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan)?

Lalith Pandey (LP): Well, we run an environmental education programme in schools of the region from classes six to eight, and try to bring about a better understanding about the relationship between villages and ecosystems; about how the two are inter-dependent, and important for the rural scenario. We also organise women’s empowerment groups and run free schools for the social as well as educational development of the rural community.

DSW: What led you to abandon the corporate world for social service of the kind that you do?

LP: I realised that, as a member of a very privileged section of society, I had a certain responsibility. The ability to make decisions and be self-reliant is very important. I must also add here, that my experiences in American society also helped me to make my decisions. Compared to Indian society, Americans are more liberal. Children are freer to make their own decisions. There, we were encouraged to pursue professions that we would like, not those which were necessarily lucrative. I decided that rather than living in a cocoon, it would be better if I did what I truly wanted to do rather than be carried away on a conveyor belt of sorts. Mostly, we don’t really think hard about who we want to be, so we end up going down very conventional, rigid paths of life.

DSW: In your opinion, did education at Doon help you to pursue the career you wanted to, rather than one you would be forced into?

LP: The first Headmasters of the school, Foot and Martyn, themselves said that Doon was not meant to be a school that created only millionaires, but was meant to mould boys into men who would contribute positively to society. The school exists to give the world good citizens, not millionaires, but was meant to mould boys into men who would contribute positively to society.

DSW: Why do you think Doon School was meant to mould boys into men who would contribute positively to society?

LP: Doosco apart from any one in society, let alone the less privileged.

DSW: How would you compare Indian students with their foreign counterparts in such examinations?

LAMDA: I think the students are totally committed to their work. They were carefully prepared. They had very clear comprehension? If so, what do you think is the reason for this?

Wendy Daniels (WD): Sometimes, yes. They have a tendency to be over-imaginative. They express thought with confidence and clarity. I think it is very progressive and builds up communication skills effectively.

DSW: What do you feel distinguishes LAMDA from any other similar examination?

WD: I think that LAMDA has always moved with the times. It has recognized the importance and emphasis of speech and communication. It also has a very progressive set of divisions within it. It is very progressive and builds up communication skills effectively.

DSW: How would you compare Indian students with their foreign counterparts in such examinations?

WD: I think the students are totally committed to their work. They were carefully prepared. They had very clear speech and very good voices. I am very impressed that there was no strain in their voices and that they sounded very good. Their voices were also carefully produced and extremely good. Their diction is also infinitely better than that of boys in England.

DSW: What do you think that Indians speak too fast for comprehensibility? If so, what do you think is the reason for this?

WD: Sometimes, yes. They have a tendency to be over-excitacile and run words together. Honestly, I wouldn’t know why they do it. I think it is probably something to do with their temperament. Their speech is very animated.

DSW: Do you think that Indians speak too fast for comprehensibility? If so, what do you think is the reason for this?

WD: I think it engenders confidence and an ability to express thought with confidence and clarity. I think it is very important to do so. LAMDA extends your horizons through the study of literature and poetry. It stimulates the imagination.
PT ACCOLADES
Dilshad Sidhu has been adjudged Best PT Leader for the year 2007. Well done!

DISTRICT ATHLETICS
Following are the results of the 62nd Dehradun Districts Annual Athletics Meet, 2007:

Under-14:
High Jump: Tushar Gupta (1st)
200 metre run: Udai Bothra (3rd)
The School team won the 4x400 metre relay in this category.

Under-16:
Long Jump: Amit Gupta (1st)
100 metre run: Sumer Boparai (2nd)
Shot Put: Shivam Pal (2nd), Pururava Jamwal (3rd)
Discus Throw: Piyush Gupta (3rd)
High Jump: Vishesh Kochher (3rd)
Long Jump: Shiva Gururani (3rd)
800 metre run: Aadiya Gupta (3rd)
The School was placed third in the 4x100 metres relay in this category.

Under-18:
100 metre run: Ambar Sidhwani (1st), Suryajit Singh (3rd)
200 metre run: Ambar Sidhwani (1st), Praman Narain (3rd)
400 metres: Dishad Sidhu (1st)
110 metre hurdles: Tanuj Bhramar (1st), Pratham Mittal (3rd)
High Jump: Suryajit Singh (1st)
800 metre run: Dishad Singh Sidhu (2nd)
Long Jump: Tanuj Bhramar (2nd)
Discus Throw: Aryaman Sengar (2nd)
400 metre run: Aryaman Sengar (3rd)
1500 metre run: Hanumant Singh (3rd)
High Jump: Aditya Yadavalli (3rd)
Javelin Throw: Aryaman Sengar (3rd)
The School was placed second in the 4x100 metre relay in this category.

Congratulations!

MORE APPOINTMENTS
The appointments on the Editorial Board of the DSIR, this year, are:
Editor-in-Chief: Salsham Sharda
Chief-of-Production: Vishnukaant Pitty
Editor: Naveed Chaudhary
Anindya Vasudev has been appointed the Secretary of the Mess Committee for the forthcoming year.
Gurbaz Sidhu has been appointed the Secretary of the Quiz Society for the forthcoming year.
We wish them a fruitful year.

GK PRIZES
The results of the S.R. Das G.K. Prize Test are:
1st: Saurabh Tiwary
2nd: Ashish Mitter
Congratulations!

FIRST AID RESULTS
The results of the Inter-House First Aid Competition are:
1st: Tata House
2nd: Hyderabad House
3rd: Jaipur House
4th: Oberoi House
5th: Kashmir House

Well done!

INTER-HOUSE ATHLETICS
The House rankings in the Inter-House Athletics Competition, 2007 are as follows

House Cup
1st: Tata House
2nd: Oberoi House
3rd: Kashmir House
4th: Jaipur House
5th: Hyderabad House

Senior Cup
1st: Tata House
2nd: Oberoi House
3rd: Kashmir House
4th: Jaipur House
5th: Hyderabad House

Junior Cup
1st: Kashmir House
2nd: Tata House
3rd: Oberoi House
4th: Jaipur House
5th: Hyderabad House

The careers’ notice board will post information on Finance and Accounting this week. All aspiring economists and bankers should look it up.

2. The Doon School Weekly Saturday, November 10
Ladies and Gentlemen, and students of the Doon School:

Welcome to our Founder’s Day celebrations.

Let me begin with a brief introduction of the Chief Guest.

Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar is the Honorable Minister for Panchayati Raj, Youth Affairs and Sports, and Development of the Northeast Region in the Union Cabinet. From 2004 to 2006, he was Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas. Mr. Aiyar was born in Lahore. He studied at Welham Preparatory School and The Doon School. He went on to do an Honours in Economics at St. Stephen’s College, Delhi University, and topped the university. From Delhi, Mr. Aiyar moved on to Cambridge University where he did a Master’s in Economics. Mr. Aiyar joined the Indian Foreign Service thereafter, and served in Brussels, Hanoi, New Delhi, Baghdad, and Karachi in various capacities. During Mr. Rajiv Gandhi’s prime ministership, Mr. Aiyar served in the Prime Minister’s Office. He sought voluntary retirement from the foreign service and entered politics. Mr. Aiyar was elected to the Lok Sabha from the Tamil Nadu constituency of Mayiladuthurai in 1991, 1996, and 2004, and lost in 1999 and 1999. Mr. Aiyar is not just a diplomat and parliamentarian, he is also a very successful commentator and writer. Since 1989 he has written regularly for a number of newspapers and magazines. Amongst his books are Remenbering Rajiv: One Year in Parliament, Pakistan Papers, and Confessions of a Secular Fundamentalist. Mr. Aiyar has been a standout parliamentarian and Minister. The Indian media, on more than one occasion, has listed him as one of the most effective Ministers in the present UPA government. Most recently, in September 2006, Mr. Aiyar was recognized for his parliametary abilities when he was awarded the Outstanding Parliamentarian of The Year Award for 2006. He is widely regarded as an articulate, witty, and often combative parliamentarian, and has stood for issues of inclusiveness, tolerance, and social justice. Speaking as an Old Boy and as someone who grew up in Tata House, it is most gratifying to have such a distinguished Old Boy from my House as Chief Guest.

May I also introduce the Board of Governors: Mr. Dhruv Sawhney is Chairman of the Board of Governors, Dr. Krishnamoorthy Srinivas has helped the school with medical and counseling issues, Mr. Ajay Shriram is Honorary Treasurer of the Board, Mr. Analjit Singh chairs the Fundraising Committee, Mr. Vikram Lal is head of the Human Resources Committee of the Board, Mr. Mahesh Sahai helps the school with financial and tax matters, Mr. Rohit Handa is the Chairman of the Architecture and Projects Committee, Mr. Ratanjit Singh helps the school with estate care and has a particular interest in the role of values in education, Mr. Gurdial Singh, who is President of the Old Boys Society and a Special Invitee to the Board. It is my great pleasure to welcome all visiting parents, Old Boys, and other friends of the School who lend such colour to the occasion. May I extend a special welcome to those Old Boys who have come to celebrate their jubilees and get-togethers. These are the batches of 1957, 1972, and 1982. My batch, the batch of 1972 is here for its 35th year, and it is very exciting for me to see them here. I welcome back into our midst former Headmasters Gulab Ramchandani, Shomie Das, and John Mason. I would like to recognize my former teacher and a revered master of the school, Mr. Gurdial Singh, who is here every Founder’s Day. Just weeks ago, he was awarded the Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award for lifetime contributions to mountaineering. In his long and distinguished career, Mr. Gurdial Singh has received several awards including the Arjuna Award, Padma Shri, and the President’s Gold Medal of the Indian Mountaineering Federation (IMF). I would also like to recognize another one of my former teachers and an iconic personality, Mr. Sheel Vohra, who also is here every Founder’s Day. Mr. Vohra lives in Dehra Dun, and he continues to visit and help the school unstintingly when asked to do so, both on and off the sports field. Thank you, sir.

The Annual Report, in its entirety, will be on the school website. I will, therefore, turn to some of the highlights of the year. Let me begin with the Board examination results. We had an excellent year. The ISC batch averaged over 85.6%, and 34 boys out of 78 scored over 90%. In the ICSE, we averaged 84.5%, and 28 boys out of 92 scored over 90%. Aditya Ajmani topped the ISC batch with an average of 96.25%. Akshit Batra topped the ICSE batch with an average of 95.4%. The ISC result is probably the best we have ever produced. The school began the IB Diploma in April of this year. We have made a reasonably good start. Boys and teachers alike are enjoying the challenge of the IB which is demanding and rigorous. Our first IB batch will take the examination in November 2008. As important as academic excellence is excellence in sports and other co-curricular activities. It has been a busy and fulfilling year for the school in this regard.

In sports, we continue to excel at basketball. The school was runners up in four tournaments and won the Hilton Fixed Five’s Tournament. Less than a week ago, it won the IPSC basketball tournament—we think for the first time ever. Several of our boys played for the state’s under 16 and under 18 team in the national championships. In cricket, we played night cricket for the first time, against the Old Boys in Delhi, and then again in Dehra Dun, and split the matches. Soccer is also very popular and is attracting a lot of talented junior boys. Our junior team played eight matches, winning five. Vahin Khosla scored twelve goals and got two hat-tricks. He also represented the Shimla Under 16 team in the Welsh International Super Cup in England in the summer of 2007. The squash team won both the junior and senior Uttarakhand state championships. In tennis, our boys went to the semi finals of various tournaments. Abhishek Gupta and Kanav Mehra won the finals of the doubles of the under 16 category in the Uttarakhand State Ranking Tournament. Abhimanyu Chandra has just won the Under 18 Uttarakhand State Ranking Tournament. Abhimanyu Chandra has just won the Under 18 Uttarakhand State Ranking Tournament. Swimming and life saving are vital skills. Eighteen out of 28 boys who appeared for the Rashtriya Life Saving Award became life guards and lifesavers. In the inter-house swimming competition, records continued (cont. on page 4)
to tumble: Oberoi House broke the 12x25 metres relay event, Vishesh Kochher broke the 100 metre breaststroke in the medium section, and Aditya Bisht set a new record in the 200 metre freestyle in the medium section. In the IPSC Swimming Tournament, just a few days ago, we came second in the boys’ category.

In debating, we had an outstanding year. Twenty-five boys represented the school in various debates—an unprecedented number. We had emphatic wins in the Slater, Gibson, and Chuckerbutty debates. We brought back the Slater Trophy after ten years, and came second in the finals of the Frank Anthony Debate. Shikhari Singh and Ashish Mitter won a massive 18 Best Speaker awards between them!

The Lambda Speech examinations attracted a large number of boys again. 32 boys got Distinctions and 37 got Merits. While I am on the subject of speech you will recall that senior boys take Assembly twice a week; and boys of all forms give Assembly talks on Mondays and Saturdays. From this year, we will award a prize for the best Assembly speaker in English and Hindi. The prize is in the memory of the late Shrivindu Mehta (ex-65 J ’74).

A school year should obviously be about the Model United Nations programme. Students represent different countries in simulated UN debates and discussions. Two years ago, we sent our first team to Delhi and came back second in an inter-school competition. This year, we won at Woodstock and went to competitions in Chennai and Mumbai where we went up against teams that had been in the fray for over a decade. In September, we hosted our own MUNA competition.

Mountaineering has a great history at Doon. In the summer of 2007 our mountaineers climbed the Dhumdar Kandi Pass at 5576 metres. The Doon School became the first school to climb up to the pass.

Music attracts boys like perhaps no other activity, as you will see in a few minutes on this stage. In the inter-house music competition, over 120 boys participated, nearly one quarter of the school.

Similarly, our publications flourish. Here too over one hundred boys are involved in everything from writing and editing to production. I know of no other school where so much publishing occurs. This year we launched a Mathematics magazine, Infinity. We hope it will stimulate an interest in Mathematics and will be a regular feature.

Our quiz team was very active. Led by Ashish Mitter, it won the Riverdale, RIMC, Scindia School, Gibson, and Welham Girls quizzes.

The list of House and individual awards this past year, as always, is immense. Let me just report three items. At the inter-house level, The Doon School Cup was awarded for the third time. The cup goes to the House that scores best on academics, sports and other co-curricular activities, and discipline. This year, once again, The Doon School Cup was won by Oberoi House, closely followed by Kashmir House. At the individual level, our most coveted awards are the Scholar’s Blazer, Games Blazer, and Proficiency Cups. The following were awarded the Scholar’s Blazer: Skand Goel, Pranay Aggarwal, Pradyot Shahi, Pulkit Baheti, Shikhari Singh, Vishnukaant Pitty, Vishesh Goel, Yash Rajiv Gandhi, Akshay Kumar, and Aashit Batra. The Games Blazer went to the following: Rajnish Aggarwal, Abhimanyu Chandra, Tanveer Angad Singh, Jehangir Chinoy, Aditya Ajmani, Pulkit Baheti, Shubham Gupta, Dilshad Siddhu, Sunay Mangalgi, Ritu Razaaz, Tanuj Bramar, and Suryajit Singh. Pulkit Baheti won both the Scholar’s and Games Blazer, a feat which has only been done thirteen times since the Scholar’s Blazer was instituted 36 years ago. Incidentally, the first winner of both Blazers is here in the audience, my batchmate, Vinay Sheel Oberoi, (ex-327 T ’72). Finally, the senior Proficiency Cup was awarded to Pulkit Baheti and the junior Proficiency Cup to Snyraj Kishoreprupia.

We continue to be involved in a variety of social and community service projects. This year the boys have worked in surrounding villages in Dandapur, Fatehpur, and Mullookchand. They built toilets, a community centre, and primary school buildings. Other boys went to Ladakh where they worked in the Wanlal village for nearly a month. Four boys went to the nature reserve project in Forfar, Scotland, where they helped build various facilities. In April, for the first time, we sent an entire form to work in local villages for about a week so that every boy once in his school career gets the opportunity to do village development work and experience life in rural India. The new S formers, having completed their Board examinations, went to nearby communities and worked at various development projects. It was hot and demanding work, but they learned a lot about themselves and about the lives of people less fortunate than themselves. I want to thank Rahul Roy (ex-926 J ’82) and Bhaskar Vira (ex-286 J ’85), who gave us the idea of sending the boys after the Board exams. Within the school, the boys continue to serve in various ways—at last count, we had twenty-five SUPW squads. Scores of boys are involved and learn the importance of service and working together.

Ladies and gentlemen, students: that concludes my review of some of the highlights of the year. I want to end with my thanks to those who have helped the school. This year the school has attracted a number of generous donations. I would like to take this opportunity to express our very great thanks for these gifts. Nearly three years into our fundraising programme, we have received over thirteen crore rupees, from our Old Boys and from corporate houses.

Before I close, may I also take this opportunity to thank the entire Doon School community for its cooperation and good humour: the students, who are the life and soul of the school, my colleagues on the teaching staff, who are tireless and dedicated to the cause, the Heads of Departments, Housemasters, and Deans, who are in the front lines every day, the Deputy Headmaster, Mr. Philip Burrett, who does so much with great good humour and understanding, the Head of Human Resources and Head of Finance, who allow us to get on with schoolmastering and, finally, the administrative, technical, and subordinate staffs, who serve the school with such diligence and affection. On behalf of the school, may I take this opportunity to thank Mr. Dhuruv Sawhney for his leadership as Chairman of the Board of Governors. This is Mr. Sawhney’s last Founder’s Day as Chairman. The School has witnessed many changes in the past five years. These would not have been possible without his experience, energy, and astuteness. Dhuruv, thank you very much.
The Mess Committee

Anindya Vasudev reports on the meeting held on November 6.

It is understood that there does exist a problem when it comes to the variety of vegetarian dishes served in School, especially with the growing frequency of paneer-based dishes that would leave “paneer coming out of the oafs” of all our vegetarian friends. Marthas’ point is well taken (LTTE, Issue No. 2169, November 3) and it was, amongst other proposals, one that was discussed extensively. But, at the same time, I would like to bring to your knowledge that paneer is, in fact, not the cheapest available option to School. Moreover, our endeavour will be to reduce the frequency of paneer-based dishes and introduce a greater and better variety of other non-paneer dishes.

There were a few other matters discussed in the recent Mess Committee Meeting. Winter food items will soon be reintroduced in the menu. The decision on the installation of the Horlick’s dispensing machines in the Houses would be taken at the end of this month. In the spring term, next year, there will be new furniture in the CDH. A variety of different pastas are going to be tried out. The soya content in food will increase for both, variety and nutrition. The proposal for the introduction of cloth and paper napkins was rejected as it would lead to littering on campus, especially near the CDH. Iced tea will remain a cafeteria item, and will be served in the Tuck Shop or in the Houses as café. The proposals of the previous Mess Committee Meeting have been implemented and we are constantly trying to increase and improve the assortment of vegetarian dishes that we are offering. The Mess Committee is appreciative of all the proposals from members of the School community. They, alone, will help us to serve you better.

The Mess Committee

Cruciverbalist’s Corner

Shoumitra Srivastava


5. The Doon School Weekly Saturday, November 10
Evil Eyes
Kanishka Malik

You might look at me through those clever eyes,
Laughing at me for my repeated tries.
Tricking me behind my back,
Stopping me on my tracks.
You are the destroyer of my melodies,
Encouraging my enemies.
You always try to snatch my victory,
Trying to put me in misery.
When I’m telling you kick me more,
Throwing me out of heaven’s door.
You always try to cause me pain,
Leaving me nothing to gain.
You always try to throw me down,
Casting me that dirty frown.
I’m aware that you are jealous of me,
You try regretting that, painfully.

I will rise,
Because you know I am wise.
I know you try to make me burn
This is because you yourself melt
Knowing that even a hundred of you cannot be felt.
No matter what you do,
With numbness you will always be blue,
And always try to pretend,
That you are the boss
And can send me for a toss.
But let me tell you
That the truth is the truth.
No matter what games you play,
It is me who will win the day.
Everyone will laugh at you.
Perhaps, then you will realize your mistake,
To never be so fake,
Never being something that you can’t be.

Departure
Vatsal Khandelwal

They depart into the ever-widening depths of memories.
Memories, just memories,
With no authenticity left in them.
It is predestined by God.
But, who is God to come in the way of love?
This is the last moment to cherish,
And this is the last moment to live together.
Nothing will be left after this.
The moments they shared together,
Pierce his heart like a dagger.
For him, she is just a dream,
For her, he is just a memory.

Three Trees
K.P. Somaiah

Opinions change,
And so do we;
After such a long time
Would you recognize me?
I’ve still not packed,
Late, as usual;
I hope I’m done
When morning comes;
Don’t want to be told off again.
So look for yourself
In the tangled web of history,
More new inventions
For you and for me;
Playing politics
In the offices of intelligence,
So many dirty tricks
In the guise of benevolence.

Even as I watch,
Wasting what I know I should not,
The sunlight casts more shadows
Across me;
And what used to be
Three trees that once stood
Now only one remains.
I hope I’m not around
To see them fall again
Once again...

Finished
Vikram Aditya Chaudhri

Hello there,
Me here.
A stare into each other’s eyes.
Standing tall,
Who will fall?

Statements full of lies.
Bad judgement?
Should I repent?

Words fly many miles across.
Intended meaning,
Hypocritical being?

Life is filled with remorse.
Its over:
Thoughts hover.
What is done is done.
Life goes on,
No time to mourn.

For the one who has, forever, been shunned.