

Established in 1936



# The Doon School WEEKLY



Saturday, March 1, 2008 • Issue No. 2176

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## The Bounty of Bio-diversity

*Vishnukaant Pitty reports Dr Vandana Shiva's talk on environmental issues and shares his experience of a recent visit to Navdanya*

On Saturday, February 23, Dr Vandana Shiva, the founder of Navdanya, visited the school to give a talk on the various environmental issues concerning the world in general. Navdanya is a programme founded by her to support environmental activism. It supports the rights and interests of local farmers, and also plays a major role in conserving the many indigenous seeds and plant biodiversity that is under the threat of extinction.

She began her talk by emphasising the need for the world, especially countries like India, to have varied biodiversity. She explained, through many examples, how most of the ecological problems prevailing in the world were caused by the lack of sufficient biodiversity in the world – for example, she said that the main cause of the climate changes in the world was the shift in the equilibrium of natural biodiversity that, on a general basis, was maintained by nature. She spoke at length about the benefits of having high biodiversity within the state. Slowly the topic of the discussion shifted to bio-piracy and why it is causing a problem in today's world.

Having been involved in taking the company, Monsanto, to court for the controversy over the bio-piracy of Basmati rice – an often cited example of bio-piracy, Dr. Vandana Shiva was able to give us a valuable insight into the political dealings of the case. She spoke with great conviction about the claims that Monsanto had laid to justify its 'theft' of the Basmati and its sale under a new name - Texmati. After a few jokes at the expense of Monsanto, the mood lightened considerably in the hall (after all the talk about the way people had proved to be liabilities for the environment through their mismanagement of resources, not to mention being over-consumptive) and, finally, the discussion was thrown open to the house for an interactive session with her.

Many interesting aspects of the discussion were brought to light in this session. For example, it was pointed out that high biodiversity, with its plentiful gene bank, was a good resource for its own survival as it formed a kind of a foundation for the varied genes to provide the base for genetic immunity among the diverse species.

The next day, a group of boys, escorted by the following: PMV, NRK, DEB, PKB and Bobbie Lamont, went to Navdanya on a visit. We were to join a workshop that Dr

Fritjof Capra, a renowned physicist and an acclaimed author, had been conducting there. He spoke on his theory of 'The Web of Life' that he had been propounding in his books. Although most of the people at the workshop found it difficult to grasp all that he said, they did interact with their questions and doubts. The topic of discussion slowly shifted from the web of life to another one that was, perhaps, easier to discuss for the rest – da Vinci and his works as a scientist. He spoke on how da Vinci preferred experimental learning to the learning by rote which is so common nowadays.

What we learnt during this entire interchange of thoughts and ideas over the matter, in essence, was that when quality time was spent outdoors, only then could one really get an insight into the problems ailing the environment. The workshop was attended by many foreigners, almost all of whom were surprised at the damage that 'man' was doing to his environment. Quite a few of them commented that they were really surprised by the protection Navdanya was offering to the economy of farmers and the conservation that it was practising to shield the diversity of seeds in the land.

At the end of the talk, Dr Vandana Shiva thanked Dr Capra for his inputs in the workshop as a physicist and a man of science. After this, she had a small group discussion with all the Doscos and The Doon School masters there. It was then that the topic of Navdanya and its various activities came up. She told us how the cases against the unacceptable government rules were fought, stressing on the fact that mass movements always made more of an impact on the government, rather than a direct appeal. She spoke to us about the impact that the economic policies of the government were having on the farmers and about how, she felt, the government could help the farmers by providing them a kind of governmental security for their produce.

Also, when the subject of the implementation of existing laws protecting farmer rights, rather than the formulation of new ones came up, then Dr Vandana Shiva admitted that as of now, Navdanya was focusing mainly on the aspect of getting the desired environment-friendly laws passed and not really concentrating

*(contd on page 5)*

## News-in-Brief

### NEW APPOINTMENT

Deep Singh (ex 585 HA '01) joined the teaching faculty on February 25 and will be teaching Economics and Music.

We wish him a fruitful tenure.

### IAYP AWARDS

The following boys have completed various levels of the IAYP:

**Gold:** Pranay Kapoor, Jagbir Ningthoujam, Arjun Gulati and Shailendra Singh.

**Bronze:** Sidhaant Gupta, Arpan Agarwal, Neel Madhav and Shahaan Pushp.

Well done!

### BADMINTON TROPHIES

The results of the **Inter-House Badminton Competition, 2007**, are as follows:

#### Junior Cup:

**1st:** Jaipur

**2nd:** Hyderabad

**3rd:** Kashmir

**4th:** Oberoi and Tata

#### Senior Cup:

**1st:** Jaipur

**2nd:** Hyderabad

**3rd:** Oberoi and Tata

**5th:** Kashmir

#### House Cup:

**1st:** Jaipur

**2nd:** Hyderabad

**3rd:** Oberoi and Kashmir

**5th:** Tata

## Unquotable Quotes

*I'll give you suspended.*

**Shreyvardhan Swaroop** intends to take stern action.

*Are you doing your post-graduation in MBA?*

**Samarth Jaiswal**, feeling inquisitive.

*Open to page last.*

**PKN**, in a hurry to finish.

*Clip your face.*

**Ayyappa Vemulkar**, the shearer.

*Someone hit a chalk to me!*

**Kanav Mehra**, failed fielder.

*Boys, don't indulge in talks.*

**AKM**, we are listening

*It was a do and die situation.*

**SBL**, the next Bruce Willis.

*Did the whole form get a form change?*

**Vivek Santayana** wants a clarification.

*I'm not going to submit photos under a camera name.*

**Vivek Santayana** invents a new class of pseudonym.

*Defence the ball!*

**Adhiraj Singh**, the coach.

*Today is a very tired day!*

**Avi Raj**, lazy beyond measure.

*I said you, mine.*

**Nikhil Bhushan**, calling for a catch.

### CAREER CALL

The Careers' Notice Board will feature **Commercial Aviation** as a career choice this week. All budding pilots should check it out.



## Auto Expo, 2008

*Uday Shriram and Varun Rai*

The moment we pushed our way past the gate at Pragati Maidan, we knew that we were in for the ride of our lives. Glamorous is the plainest description of the Auto Expo held every second year. The enthusiasm sizzles in the air as lakhs of people flock in every year to behold the spectacle. With all the coolest cars, gadgets and not to forget the models, it is definitely the place for a teenager to be. We were lost in the rush almost as soon as we had entered.

Almost immediately, we found ourselves in the hall showcasing vintage cars, from the legendary Chevy Impala to the stunning Aston Martins. The Harleys and Indians just begged for a ride. The Volkswagen showroom was next, where there was a host of caravans, SUVs and some concept cars. The Maruti showcase was very impressive with a huge collection of Zen Estilos, all differently modified, with a tweak here and there. The A-Star and Kizashi concept gave us a taste of what was coming next. The Dilip Chhabria showroom had concept cars inspired by everything from Gallardos to Ambassadors. Standing proudly at the Honda showroom was the soon-to-be launched Jazz and also the Accord as well as their own F1 car. The Suzuki bike stall featuring the Bi-plane and the Hayabusa were a treat for the eyes.

We arrived in the afternoon at the General Motors showroom, which had some sleek and stylish Chevy concepts as well as the all-time favourite, the Cadillac CTS. The monstrous Hummer H3 put its Indian counterpart, the Mahindra Axe, way out of its league. We went through a pair of huge gates and were greeted by a large and milling crowd. You got it: it was the unveiling of Ratan Tata's revolutionary Nano. It was pretty impressive for just Rs. one lakh, apart from the fact that my cycle tires looked gargantuan in front of the Nano's shining wheels. Arriving at the BMW showroom, we pushed our way next to the tiny entrance beyond which was BMW paradise. Two bouncers tried desperately to subdue the crowd, but a hundred against one isn't much of a match. We were soon face to face with the BMW-3 and five series. There was even a six-series convertible. What luscious curves it had!

We finally reached the domain of the elite, the Audi and Mercedes clubbed into the same hall. We couldn't tear ourselves from the super SLK 350s. We took every car manual the Audis had, the posters of which still hang in my room. We drooled over the Q7s, A4s and Lemans F1 which were all laid out in a shining array of metal. However, all we saw of the Lamborghini or Ferrari in the Expo was a dust-covered Gallardo and F430 which were enough to send us into shivers of ecstasy. But after all this, the award for the coolest car in the Expo would go to (after a hard decision) the Porsche Caparo T1. With speeds that can outperform a Bugatti Veyron, the Caparo is illegal on all roads except in a few countries in Europe. Need we say more?

### Gold Rush

*The IAYP (Duke of Edinburgh's Award) in Doon has a long and distinguished history. The North Zone Award Authority of IAYP is keen to establish links with all past Gold badge awardees. We call for all past Gold badge awardees to contact us at [vnp@doonschool.com](mailto:vnp@doonschool.com), sending your name, batch, the year of receiving the award and your contact details.*

# Children, School and Society

*Experiences and reflections on what can be done*

*Baljit Malik 's (ex 73 K '56) article, continued from our previous issue*

I would like to round off this paper with a few reflections and practical suggestions. When you look at schools today, with a few exceptions, most are lacking the humanistic ethos of compassion and caring. You are not convinced that they are a place where children can look forward to emotional and moral support. Yet, school is where children spend the better part of the day for eight months in a year for thirteen years of their youth. It is where they grow up, where they have their early encounters of the larger world outside home, where they fight their early battles in life. It is so important that they should be able to relate to school without fear, with a feeling of belonging, with confidence that they will find teachers and peers who will listen to them and care for them. A physical and social environment in which they can interact with mutual respect and caring, an atmosphere of freedom and responsibility, instead of fear and suspicion.

And all this, it must be stressed, is relevant not only for students. The staff too should be able to feel relaxed and motivated. They should feel that they have a stake in the school. They should not have to worry all the time about how to cope with an autocratic principal or an interfering, unsympathetic governing body. Indeed, the key to a healthy school atmosphere lies in staff welfare, an area that is often sadly neglected. Everyone wants teachers to work harder, to put in longer hours, but seldom are they willing to provide them with a reasonable salary and other amenities. I have yet to come across a private school with any kind of health-care for its staff.

Given the stiff competition for placement in good colleges and institutes, what goes on in the classroom is undoubtedly of crucial importance. But with over-crowded classes, the teachers can hardly be expected to carry out their routine task of checking assignments and marking test papers while also keeping a tab on students with reasonable efficacy and efficiency.

Instead of a few big and over-crowded schools, catering to a privileged herd of an elite; why not many more small schools catering to smaller, less privileged herds? Let every home contribute a plant and a flower pot, each class assuming responsibility for maintaining a patch of garden indoors or outdoors; flowers, vegetables, herbs or shrubs. Let the PTA also be involved in greening the campus. Let the corridors and walls be covered with paintings, cartoons, maps, posters and photographs, exhibiting a permanent but changing panorama of life and culture in India and abroad. Let there be a system which keeps bathrooms clean. And in order to make everyone responsible for their cleanliness, let there be a bathroom-cleaning campaign, once a month, with students and staff taking to *jharoo* and *pocha*, along with the Class Four staff. There also must be a daily check to see that taps and flush tanks are in working order.

Schools fortunate to have financial resources sometimes tend to go in for prestigious buildings, which are not put to optimum use. For example, assembly halls and canteen halls should be designed for multi-purpose functions, including indoor games like table-tennis, badminton and basketball.

We live in a polluted world; a world full of noise, air, polluted soil, water and food in towns and cities which have become wastelands of cement and concrete, with dismal sanitation and sub-standard housing. In an urban environment where nature has been subverted, the human spirit perverted into selfish pursuit of narrow self-interest.

In reaction to this ugly world, why not create a campus that is green and soothing, where cooperation prevails over one-upmanship, or where a spirit of concern keeps the school property clean and shining; a campus where the bustle of a school in action is also compensated by silence and meditation.

Why not give our children a chance to discover their inner voice, an inner feeling of peace, another way of living and working – a less ugly and violent than we have created around ourselves.

Given the distortions and problems our development policies have created, it is surely an essential to have a continuous study programme to promote ecological and environmental understanding and consciousness. For this there should be a graded course at every level, a course that schools should be able to design for themselves.

Never before has the electronic media been an influence on the shaping of the human mind as it has become now. We have all become subject to conditioning by TV and video culture, also by the growing influence of computers in our lives. Yet there is virtually no educational institution which has taken steps to evolve a course for understanding media – how it works, what it does, how we should react to it, how it can be controlled.

Human rights violations have become an unfortunate fact of life at all levels – all the way from home to the parliament. The same goes for democratic rights, with rights being savaged. It is almost needless to state that duties too have been neglected.

The Indian calendar is full of festivals. Some like *Basant* are hardly celebrated any more. Another dying festival is *Lohri*. Festivals such as these are seasonal, common to all communities, linking our rootless modern lives with rich tradition. Schools should celebrate these occasions, combining study and craftwork with fun-filled outdoor activity. A kite festival around *Basant* could be turned into an annual event, the theme and accent being on yellow. Yellow clothes, yellow flags, yellow decorations, yellow *mithai*!

It is perhaps also time that certain festivals like *Raksha bandhan* were re-interpreted. If one of the aims of education is to help in the emancipation and liberation of women from their age-old domestication, then men should also be tying rakhis as a gesture of seeking their protection. A *Raksha bandhan* in which both boys and girls exchange with each other would be a beautiful celebration of a new relationship between the sexes.

Finally, coming down to the brass-tacks of academic achievement and progress, parents most of all want good examination results. For this there has to be an efficient system of continuous assessment of class work, homework and regular tests.



## कुछ आपबीती, कुछ जगबीती

असीम कुमार

अनुवाद - शैमित्र श्रीवास्तव

आवासीय विद्यालय आज की शिक्षा प्रणाली की एक महत्वपूर्ण कड़ी हैं। आवासीय विद्यालयों में कुछ तो है जिसकी वजह से आज इस तरह के विद्यालयों की संख्या दिनोदिन बढ़ती चले जा रही है। ऐसा भी नहीं कि यहाँ सब कुछ अच्छा और चमकदार है, अच्छाइयों हैं तो कुछ नुराइयों भी अवश्य हैं। आइए, इस विषय पर खुलकर विचार कर लेते हैं। कुछ तथ्यों को टटोल लेते हैं। उसके बाद ही किसी निष्कर्ष पर पहुँचने का प्रयत्न करेंगे।

छात्रावास में अपनी आज़ादी की लगाम छात्र के अपने ही हाथों में होती है। अध्यापकगण किसी हद तक तो छात्रों की आज़ादी पर नियंत्रण रख सकते हैं, लेकिन उसे पूरी तरह नियंत्रित करना उनके लिए सम्भव नहीं होता है।

एक अन्य पहलू जिसे समझ लेना बहुत आवश्यक है, यह है कि मनोवैज्ञानिकों का साफ मानना है कि माता - पिता ही बच्चे के सबसे अधिक प्राकृतिक सहायक होते हैं। उनका यह भी मानना है कि यदि बच्चे को काफी समय तक उनसे अलग रखा जाता है तो यह स्थिति उसके लिए मनोविज्ञान पर गहरा असर डालती है।

आवासीय विद्यालय छात्र को ज्ञानार्जन के लिए सर्वोत्तम वातावरण प्रदान करते हैं। रीसोर्स सेंटर, पुस्तकालय, अध्यापकों का हर समय उपलब्ध होना आदि कुछ ऐसी सुविधाएँ हैं जो आवासीय विद्यालय में ही पाई जा सकती हैं।

आवासीय विद्यालयों में ऐसे वातावरण का निर्माण किया जाता है जिससे वहाँ रहने वाले छात्रों का चारित्रिक विकास भी होता है। इससे उनकी सामाजिक और व्यक्तिगत जिन्दगी में भी सकारात्मक परिवर्तन आता है। वे जीवन को बेहतर तरीके से समझना सीखते हैं तथा जीवन को बेहतर तरीके से जीना सीखते हैं।

इसी विषय में कुछ लोगों का यह मानना है कि आवासीय विद्यालयों में अध्ययन, खेलकूद तथा अन्य सहगामी क्रियाकलाप केवल कुछ ही लोगों के साथ होते हैं। जिसके परिणाम स्वरूप छात्रों का सामाजिक दायरा काफी कम हो जाता है। यह स्थिति भविष्य में भी छात्रों को केवल कुछ ही लोगों के साथ रहने पर मजबूर कर देती है।

अमूमन सभी आवासीय विद्यालयों में कमावेश एक अन्य असामान्य स्थिति का भी छात्रों को सामना करना पड़ता है। वह स्थिति है बुर्लींग की। कुछ लोगों का मानना है कि इससे छात्रों में मानसिक दृढ़ता बढ़ती है। छात्र इससे भविष्य में व्यक्तिगत जीवन में समस्याओं का बहादुरी से मुकाबला करना सीखते हैं। पर, सच्चाई तो यह है कि बुर्लींग और उससे उपजा मानसिक तनाव बच्चे के मनोविज्ञान को बिगाड़ कर रख देता है। कड़वी यादें जीवनभर बच्चे को परेशान करती रहती हैं।

छात्रावास में बच्चा चौबीस घंटे अपने साथियों के साथ रहता है। यह स्थिति उसे अपने आप को वातावरण के अनुकूल बनाना सिखाती है। ऐसे में बच्चा बीच का रास्ता निकालना सीखता है। दूसरों की बात समझना और दूसरों को अपनी बात समझाना सीखता है। इन गुणों की सहायता से छात्रों के व्यक्तित्व का सम्पूर्ण विकास होता है।

इस विषय में कुछ लोगों का मानना है कि आवासीय विद्यालयों अन्य सभी चीज़ों की तरह दोस्ती भी नियमों के अनुसार होती है। उसमें अपेक्षित मुक्तता नहीं होती। इसका परिणाम यह होता है यहाँ की दोस्तियाँ असली जिन्दगी को नहीं झलकातीं। उनमें एक तरह का खोखलापन बना रहता है।

मैंने अपने लेख में छात्रावासीय जीवन के कुछ प्रमुख पहलुओं को आपके सामने रखा है। इनकी सहायता से दो और दो चार जोड़ कर इस परिणाम पर पहुँचा जा सकता है कि आज के समय में आवासीय विद्यालय कितने तर्कसंगत हैं।

### विज्ञान बनाम कला

रेवांत नायर

एक विद्वान पुरुष ने कहा था कि हम सब्ज़ी के द्वारा लेकिन, फूल के लिए जीते हैं।

उक्त वाक्य में वक्ता की सब्ज़ी से मुराद विज्ञान की थी और फूल कहकर वह कला के बारे में बात कह रहा था। अब इस पंक्ति का अर्थ इस प्रकार समझा जा सकता है - हम विज्ञान के द्वारा लेकिन, हम कला के लिए जीते हैं।

विज्ञान और कला हमारे जीवन के बहुत महत्वपूर्ण तथा बहुत भिन्न हिस्से हैं। जहाँ विज्ञान दलील को व्यक्त करने का साधन है, कला

मनुष्य के भीतर छिपी हुई भावनाओं को अभिव्यक्त करने का। विज्ञान स्थूलता की बारीकी की व्याख्या करता है और कला भावनाओं की सीमा को छूने का उपक्रम करती है।

विज्ञान एक जागे हुए मस्तिष्क खोज है तो कला स्पन्दनों का खेल है। एक दिमाग में रहता है तो दूसरा दिल की गहराइयों में।

मेरा मानना है कि हमारे जीवन में दोनों का ही समान महत्व है। विज्ञान ने कला में नया रंग भर दिया है। संगीत के साधन वैज्ञानिक आधार पर बने हैं। हारमोनियम हवा के प्रवाह से, गिटार तारों के हिलने से अद्भुत ध्वनियाँ पैदा करते हैं। विज्ञान हर पल आपकी और हमारी सहायता करता है। मनुष्य का जन्म, इलाज, सुख - सुविधा के साधन सब विज्ञान की ही तो देन हैं।

चित्रकला, नृत्य, संगीत, काव्य और नाटक आदि कलाएँ हमारे जीवन में खुशगवारी का आलम पैदा करती हैं।

कला में अभ्यास या रियाज़ का बेहद महत्व है। हम कलाओं को जन्म देते हैं, सँवारते हैं, अभिव्यक्त करते हैं और फिर उनकी प्रशंसा करते हुए उनका आनन्द लेते हुए जीवन सफल बनाते हैं।

तो दोस्तों, उस विद्वान विचारक ने ठीक ही कहा था - हम सब्ज़ी के द्वारा लेकिन, फूल के लिए जीते हैं।

### परिवार

चन्दचूड़ शुक्ल

परिवार व्यक्तियों का एक ऐसा समूह है, जहाँ कई लोग एक साथ रहते हैं। यह रहना केवल शरीर से एक साथ रहना ही नहीं बल्कि मन से भी एक साथ रहना है। बहुत से लोगों का मानना है कि परिवार केवल रक्त के रिश्ते पर ही पनपता है।

मेरी नज़र में यह सोच सही नहीं है। हमारे पूर्वजों ने भी वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् की बात कह कर इस सोच को गलत साबित कर दिया था। इस बात के द्वारा उन्होंने यह सिद्ध किया था कि पूरा विश्व ही एक कुटुम्ब है। इसमें कहीं भी खून के रिश्ते की बात नहीं कही गई है।

कोई परिवार प्रेम, एकता, मित्रता और मन के रिश्तों से ही बनता है खून के सम्बंध से नहीं। मेरा तो यहाँ तक मानना है कि अगर घर के पालतू कुत्ते से भी प्रेम और सहानुभूति का सम्बन्ध है तो वह भी परिवार का सदस्य ही हो जाता है।

मेरा यह भी मानना है कि परिवार मनुष्य अपने परिवार के बिना अधूरा है, चाहे वह कितना भी अमीर या प्रभावशाली क्यों न हो। अपने परिवार के अभाव में वह राह से भटके हुए पथिक से अधिक कुछ नहीं है।

परिवार मनुष्य को कामयाबी के रास्ते पर ले जाने वाली पहली सीढ़ी है। यही कारण है कि सफल लोग अक्सर अपनी सफलता के पीछे अपने परिवार का बहुत बड़ा हाथ मानते हैं।

एक व्यक्ति परिवार में रह कर ही वह सब सीखता है जो उसे परायों का साथ नहीं सिखा सकता। परिवार में रह कर मनुष्य अपने लिए लड़ना सीखता है, अपने हक के लिए लड़ना सीखता है। इसका सबसे सार्थक उदाहरण है वह बच्चा जो अपने भाई - बहनों के साथ रहता है। उसका कोई भाई उसका खिलौना ले लेता है तो वह बच्चा अपने अधिकार के लिए लड़ता है। यह प्रवृत्ति उसके जीवन में बहुत काम आती है।

ऐसा नहीं कि परिवार में मनुष्य सिर्फ अपने हक के लिए लड़ना सीखता है, बल्कि इसी प्रकार वह बाँटना भी सीखता है। परिवार उसे रहने के तौर तरीके सिखाता है।

परिवार में मनुष्य अपने भावों को स्वतंत्रता से प्रकट कर सकता है, क्योंकि वह अपने परिवार के बीच स्वयं को सुरक्षित महसूस करता है। उसका अपने परिवार पर भरोसा रहता है। यही कारण है कि वह अपने परिवार से आसानी से संस्कार ग्रहण कर लेता है और साथ ही जीने की अन्य कलाएँ भी सीखता है।

इस बात पर तो सभी ने गौर किया होगा कि अगर किसी से कोई गलती हो जाती है या उसे किसी बात से दुःख पहुँचता है तो उसे सबसे पहले अपने परिवार से ही मदद और सहानुभूति प्राप्त होती है।

दूसरी ओर एक मनुष्य जिसके पास परिवार नहीं होता, परिवार के सदस्यों का साथ नहीं होता, वह पूरी तरह से अकेला पड़ जाता है। उसके पास कोई ऐसा नहीं होता जिस पर वह आँखें मूँद कर विश्वास कर सके। उस अकेले इंसान के पास तनाव और दुःख के अलावा कुछ भी नहीं रह जाता। परिणाम यह होता है कि उसका जीवन उत्थान के स्थान पर पतन की ओर बढ़ जाता है।

मनुष्य एक फूल की तरह है तो उसका परिवार एक हरे भरे मज़बूत पेड़ की तरह। फूल पेड़ से अलग होता है तो बहुत जल्दी सूख जाता है। मुरझा जाता है।



(contd. from page 1)

on the implementation front.

After this interaction, we left Navdanya having learnt a great deal. What we had earlier thought about the struggle involved in fighting for the environment and farmers, was actually just the tip of the iceberg. An overall awareness was necessary for such a success; and to spread such awareness, we discovered, was an extremely difficult task, especially among people who were too involved in their busy lives, comfortably spent indoors, to look out of their windows and bother about the world outside.

## Gai ni ng from Gap

*Bharat Ganju and Shoumitra Srivastava interview  
Claiborne Thompson, a gap year student-teacher*

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

**Claiborne Thompson (CTH):** I live in Charlottesville, Virginia along with my parents and three siblings. We all went to the same boarding school, Groton. I grew up playing tennis and picked up squash later. I also like playing golf and skiing in the winter. At Groton, I was in three choirs. I have worked for a weekly newspaper in my town, called *The Hook*. I love reading and lately I have been reading quite a few books by Russian authors.

**DSW: Have you read any Indian literature?**

**CTH:** Well, not yet. I would love some suggestions! But I have read the *Bhagavad Gita* when I did a course in religious studies.

**DSW: Why did you choose to do a gap year and is it a common trend in the West?**

**CTH:** I have always wanted to teach after school and this will also help me reflect on what I have learnt while at boarding school. As far as taking a gap year goes, it is not a very common trend with the students out there.

**DSW: What was it like, being a high school student?**

**CTH:** Well, Groton is northwest of Boston, near the New Hampshire border. The school is co-ed and we have structured days similar to Doon. We do not have specifically named houses, and everyone lives in a dorm. We don't really have much to do outside school as Groton is a small town with only three restaurants. I still regard those years as the best four years of my life.

**DSW: Do you have any other interests apart from playing tennis and squash?**

**CTH:** Yes, I like painting a lot. I was a part of the environmental group in my school. I was a peer counsellor for some time too. Apart from all that, I also love writing.

**DSW: Do you think single sex schools have a future in today's time and age?**

**CTH:** Well, I'd say single sex schools are definitely better than co-ed schools in some ways. They do have quite a future in this day and age. The environment is completely different in a good way.

**DSW: What are the things about India that you have liked the most and disliked the most?**

**CTH:** Before coming to Doon, I did quite a bit of travelling with my family in Bombay, Varanasi, Agra, Jaipur, Udaipur and Delhi. It was quite a different experience for me, especially the amount of culture and history that India garners. Varanasi was the most interesting place I have been to. And, of course, I loved seeing the Taj Mahal as well.

## Camp Fatehpur

*Ranjana Adhikari writes about the social service camp held at Fatehpur from December 5-15, 2007*

The year 2008 saw the strengthening of the bond Doscos have with Fatehpur, a tiny village off the road to Vikasnagar, which was adopted by us in August, 2005. During our weekends, midterms and vacations we've spent many a fruitful hour here.

The village epitomizes social service to many Doscos. From a poor, under-developed village, Fatehpur has now become self-sufficient. Through the perseverance of the villagers, it now has hydro-electricity, a *gharat* (water mill) and an improved sewage system. Ancillary activities include a bakery, furniture-making from lantana, a fish-pond and a community centre. For the past three years, due to good coordination and the skillful labour of students, a village that is resurgent both socially and economically has emerged. This year, we had Appleby College, Canada, assist us in putting the finishing touches to



the community centre. A group of six foreign students and two teachers accompanied a bevy of eager Doscos, all of whom worked tirelessly.

We carried heaps of debris and cement, assisted in preparing cement mixtures, and even made cement blocks. Our rather monotonous routine was thankfully interspersed with our free time in which we would either walk down to the Vikasnagar market (to buy shoes which were distributed amongst the villagers on the last day), or go sight-seeing to the Ashoka Pillar in Kalsi, Paonta Sahib and the Asan Barrage to get a sense of our beautiful heritage and environment, which can't be studied in textbooks. Sometimes, we chose to stay put in the SKCC hostel at Bhimawala, and play badminton.

We are fortunate that we are given the opportunity by the school to understand how the people of rural India live. Assisting them helps us to put into practice the aspects of environmental education that can perhaps never be learnt in a classroom. However, none of this would have been possible without the initiative and guidance of our teachers. Our relationship with Fatehpur will continue for some time in the near future as it remains the focal point of all the social service done at school and is now like another home away from home.

This project was not only about hard work to help the underprivileged who are deprived of the basic necessities. It also gave us a wonderful experience, and helped us make a host of acquaintances. An experience like this makes one realise how much of a difference one can make with just a little effort.

## School vs. Indian Public School

Gursharan Singh

The School played the Indian Public School on Sunday, February 17. The Indian Public School team has had a complete makeover since last year, when we beat them rather easily. This time, the tables were turned on us quite decisively.

Keshav Prasad won the toss and put the visitors in to bat, with the idea of using the early dampness in the pitch, and the slight moisture in the air to his advantage. The School bowlers, however, squandered the opportunity, and allowed our opponents to get off to a good start. Mehul Mehrotra and Rohan Gupta were both ineffective, and bowled a number of wides. Tushar Gupta and Divijinder Oberoi were quickly introduced, and made an immediate impact on the proceedings. Divijinder was immaculate in length while extracting disconcerting bounce and Tushar was simply fast and straight, with no frills!

The galloping run-rate was effectively checked, and for a while we seemed to have control of the game. However, our young and inexperienced spinners Vigya Singh, Chandrachuda Shukla and Angad Bawa could not contain the rampaging IPS batsmen, and the visitors totalled 209 for four in 35 overs.

The School batted after lunch, in good conditions, but against considerable pressure, which grew steadily as Itihaas failed to get off to a start against some very clever and restrictive bowling by Atul Yadav, who bowled mesmerising deliveries! Shashvat, too, mistimed several attempted square-cuts and the score languished at 21 in 5 overs, and a mountain to climb ahead.

Predictably, it got to the batsmen, and first Itihaas, and then Shashvat were run-out – Shashvat by a brilliant direct throw! Chetan Kaul seemed quite out of sorts as he shuffled and prodded, clearly displaying symptoms of low confidence. Not surprisingly, he left his crease in a half-hearted attempt to latch on to a very wide delivery, and was stumped. Chetan must organise his mental approach towards tackling the task of batting in limited overs cricket, even if he can't organise his fairly whimsical and shaky technique. This is not to question his undeniable talent in this area.

Rajdeep played as he often does, with a judicious mixture of defence and aggression. However, wickets tumbled like ninepins at the other end, and he was left standing, as a regular procession of batsmen came and went. Keshav ran himself out. A more graphic example of suicide in the cricket field would be hard to conjure. Chandrachuda was bowled. He failed to cover the line of the ball.

Quite frankly, Rohan, Suryavir and the others fell victim to the mounting pressure of chasing a huge total,

and while Mahajan and Mehrotra batted sensibly at the end, Mahajan became too adventurous, and ran out Mehrotra to put our innings out of its misery.

While, on paper, it appears that the School stumbled and fell short in the chase for runs, it is more probable that our poor bowling and inadequate fielding cost us the match in the morning session.

The team has, I hope, learnt many valuable lessons from this large defeat and will work individually and collectively to measure up in the days to come.

### Scores:

**Indian Public School:** 209 for 4

Kunal - 68; Siddhartha - 43; Vaibhav - 32;

Vigya - 1 for 19; Divijinder - 1 for 29; Keshav - 1 for 36;

**The Doon School:** 134 all out

Rajdeep - 39; Divij - 9;

Amit - 3 for 24; Vaibhav - 3 for 22.



## Letter To The Editor

### Fond Memories

This is with reference to Ashim Mukherjee's (ex 44 T, '58) Letter to the Editor, dated November 17, 2007 (issue no. 2171), 'Sudhir Khastagir Remembered,' which certainly stirred up many memories for me.

As mentioned, he was not only a great artist, but had many other admirable qualities in him. I would never have been involved in art in the first place, had it not been for the encouragement I received from Mr. Khastagir.

Incidentally, Jaiveer Singh was the Tata House Soccer Captain at that time, and a very able one, too. He steered the House to numerous victories and we won the soccer cup in 1955.

As for boxing, Mr. Khastagir would chide me a lot on it, because I used to neglect the Art School during the boxing season. He even challenged me to a bout, saying that he would knock me out in one punch. To which I replied, "Sir, I am sure you can knock me out, but I would still love boxing as much as I love painting." Thereafter, he not only continued to encourage me with my painting, but also with my boxing. Such was our great Art master.

But then, The Doon School has been made famous, to a great extent, by the wonderful masters and teachers we have had, and I am sure that this tradition still continues to this day.

Thanks for bringing back those good memories.

(B. N. Roy  
ex 103 T, '55)

Online Edition: <http://www.doonschool.com/magazine>

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