



The Doon School WEEKLY

Established in 1936



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Editorial

Seventy-five years, and we're still growing. The term began with the return of a debating contingent to Dubai and an MUN delegation to Harvard, and that's still just the beginning. I sometimes ask myself: all those years ago, had anyone imagined we'd get this far and still keep edging ahead? I look around and wonder what things were like, seventy-five years ago. Looking back at D form, a scant five years ago, I can see many changes around the campus: a tree, I don't remember what tree it was, but an old, gnarled tree, near the Main Building, was cut down a few years ago. The Main Field landscape has also seen several changes – Foot and Martyn Houses, the CDH, new masters' housing, etc. Apart from many such superficial changes, construction of new buildings, freshly-grown lawns and new faces, there have been changes in lifestyle. Many details of Doon in the 1930s seem alien to us. This year, being our platinum jubilee, we may rediscover these many details of the School's history while continuing to make history.

Although seventy-five is not such a big number, the School has lived through historical events, ranging from the Second World War, the Quit India Movement, Independence, Partition, to the more recent separatist movements in Uttarakhand, the Iraq War and the Global Economic Recession. The age of the School is almost four-and-a-half times mine. We've got a lot to celebrate. All of us, in our own capacities, are trying to do justice to the numeric significance of the anniversary. Commemorative events will be held on a larger scale. The Pagal Gymkhana fête will be grander than ever. The road ahead is challenging. We'll be faced with high standards of quality and logistics. Demanding times are ahead, and we will be pushed to our limits of tolerance, diligence and sanity. But that won't stop us from putting up a great show.

And this is just DS 75. After this year goes by, we'll soon look forward to the many, many ahead: perhaps DS 100 or DS 150. We've come a long way since 1935. The achievements of the years ahead are perhaps as unimaginable as our position today was decades ago.

Burj Doon

Vivek Santayana reports on the Modern World Debates, 2010, held at Dubai Modern High School, Dubai, between January 23 and 25



As usual, I am unsure how to begin. Our myriad experiences could easily span three different accounts: one of the debates themselves, one of our misadventures in Dubai and one of NRK ("who," we reminded ourselves, "is Mrs Khambatta, the Vice Principal, now") driving us home. If the *Weekly* were to run all of these articles, they would cover sections such as reports, travelogues and adventure sports. I would prefer to restrict myself to the debates alone.

It was wishful thinking on our part when we, Shekhar Bishnoi, PKB and I, thought we would reach Dubai with no trouble at all. Somehow, we made it in one piece, overcoming a series of false starts, redundant displays of chivalry, the surliest of immigrations of officers, inappropriate behaviour by co-passengers and the seemingly endless airport corridors. We found ourselves in the bright, yellow Dubai Modern High School bus in which we would spend the next few days, battling traffic. We were dropped off at our host family's home, the Shankers' (pictured above), a place we referred to as 'our home' in a number of Freudian slips.

I can safely say that I had been racing the entire day: racing to reach Arab Unity School for my SAT and then racing to reach the Dubai Modern High School to meet NRK as soon as possible. How strange it was to see my former Housemaster's study move to a different country. "Nothing has changed", she said, and nothing had changed indeed, with the exception of the suffocating air of protocol around her. Another surprise was that Mr Mason was the Chairperson of the debates. The result of the draws that were conducted in my absence were not exactly to my liking: I was up first in the *JAM* round the following day, hence kicking off the competition. To add insult to injury, I had even more bad luck: I was to speak ninth in the *Deconstruction* round! Bishnoi, on the other hand, had slots that were more comfortable, sixth and fifth in the *Face-off* and *Turncoat* respectively, held in an intimidating, plush, red auditorium. For reasons I am yet to understand, we had an exhausting itinerary ahead, which involved windowshopping in Dubai Mall, a desert safari and an evening of camel rides, belly dancing and an Arab dinner that could fill a gourmet column by itself. We had seemingly forgotten our main purpose: debating, the realization of which took some time to sink in.

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Regulars

WELCOME

We welcome two new members of the teaching faculty, **Srinivas Swamy** (SSW) and **Vikram Matthai** (VMT) who will be teaching Biology and Geography respectively. We wish them a pleasant stay stay.

PREFECTS, 2010

The following are the appointments to the **Prefects' Council** for the forthcoming year:

School Captain: Arnav Sahu

Hyderabad House

House Captain: Jayant Mukhopadhaya

Prefects: Uday Shriram, Shivam Katyal, Arvind Sharma

Jaipur House

House Captain: Kartic Sharma

Prefects: Bharat Ganju, Trivikram Singh, Hemang Agarwal

Kashmir House

House Captain: Aseem Kumar

Prefects: Devashish Singal, Abhishek Jain, Shivam Pal

Oberoi House

House Captain: Shekhar Bishnoi

Prefects: Vahin Khosla, Shiva Gururani, Saarthak Singh

Tata House

House Captain: Karanbir Singh Dhariwal

Prefects: Rajdeep Deobhanj, Rishabh Chatterjee, Itihaas Singh

We wish them the best for the year ahead!

APPOINTMENTS

The following are the appointments for the forthcoming year:

Music:

School Music Captain: Shatrunjai Rai Dewan

Orchestra Leaders: Divyam Agarwal, Uddhav Prasad

Choir Leader: Siddharth Bathla

Popular Band Leader: Arpan Agarwal

Music Society Secretaries: Uday Shriram, Yashasvat Kapur

Art:

Art Secretary: Chandrachuda Shukla, Nipun Mohan

Boy-in-Charge, SUPW: Netesh Dev

Girl-in-Charge, STA: Smitha Nair

Doon School Art Magazine:

Editors-in-Chief: Shivam Katyal, Devansh Khaitan

Chief of Production: Saarthak Singh

Graphics Editor: Jayant Mukhopadhaya

Boy-in-Charge, HAM Radio: Viren Kapoor

Students-in-charge, Sunrise Club: Smitha Nair, Bharat Ganju

We wish them a fruitful tenure.

DUBAI DEBATE

The School was represented by Vivek Santayana and Shekhar Bishnoi at the **Modern World Debates, 2010** held at the Dubai Modern High School, Dubai, between January 23 and 25. Vivek Santayana was adjudged **Second-Best Speaker** in the **Just a Minute** section of the Preliminary Round. Well done!

SCHOOL COLOURS

On November 29, 2009, in the Special Assembly, School Colours were awarded to: Ayaan Patel, Jayvardhan Singh, Sagar Agarwal, Tarang Khurana, Viren Kapoor, Aaditya Vicram Gupta, Aditya Sukhia, Sriyash Kishorepuria, Abhilaksh Lalwani, Dhruv Velloor. Congratulations!

RAFFLE DRAWS, 2009

The following have won various prizes at the **Oberoi House Pagal Gymkhana Raffle Draw, 2009**, held on Friday, November 27, 2009:

DVD Player and Speakers: Vatsal Modi and Siddharth Bidasaria

Playstation 3: Jyoti Gupta

PSP: Abhishek Gupta

Home Theatre System: Jitendra Dhingra

Planet Earth DVD and Man vs Nature Sleeping Bags: Abhishek Gupta, Neela Imam, Saket Golyan, Parth Vohra, Kanishk Gupta, Tashi Topgyal, Rishabraj Das, Ananya Tiwari. Congratulations!

ADVENTURERS

Aviral Gupta, Abhinandan Rajan, Khalid Alawneh and Shivank Singh completed an **adventure course** held at **The Nehru Institute of Mountaineering** from December 1 to 15, 2009. Well done!

SERVICE PROJECTS

The following had represented School in the various **Round Square** and social service projects over the winter break:

Regional Round Square Junior Conference, The Sanskaar Valley School, Bhopal (December 29-23, 2009): Sirish Shrivastava, Abhishek Bansal, Avik Gugalia, Mahak Sharma, Vidit Sidana, Mudit Agarwal, Pulkit Bansal, Sanchit Thakral, Kumar Sambhav Sethia

RSIS Project, Thailand (December 7-27): Devashish Singal, Arjun Vilas Mahajan

RSIS Project, Nasik (December 7-23, 2009): Viren Kapoor, Tushar Thakral

RSIS Project, Kenya (December 10-28): Manik Garg, Angad Bawa

Social service project at Fatehpur (December 4-14, 2009 along with seven students from The Sanskaar Valley School, Bhopal): Smitha Nair, Rishabh Chatterjee, Siddharth Bathla, Abhyun Chatterjee, Bipasa and Malini Malaviya

The **Annual General meeting of the Round Square Schools and Friends of Round Square (South Asia & Gulf Region)** was held at The Doon School from January 16-17, 2010. Nineteen school heads and Round Square representatives, along with 4 members of Friends of Round Square, attended this meeting.

(contd. from page 1)

As the President of the DMHS Debating Society had put it, “This is Dubai. You learn to give concessions for delays.” The debates began with sufficient ceremony: delayed arrivals notwithstanding, introductions and speeches. But soon enough, I was invited to speak on the ironic *JAM* topic of ‘Collapse’ and the debates were under way. When the Chairperson invited members of the audience to try their hand at extempore speeches, a number of younger speakers did so, which was commendable. The *Face-off* round followed, with motions ranging from the abstract “... our parents need to reboot” and “... luck is a synonym for hard work” to the factual “... stimulus packages are justified” Arguments were put forward concisely and everyone also responded well to the questions posed by the Chairperson (a variation to the rules we had originally formulated at Doon).

The Chairperson’s lively sense of humour kept us well entertained as we came to the third event of the day, the *Turncoat*. As there were ten speakers and five motions, five pairs of speakers received the same motion. Despite that, there was not too much repetition in the content or the argument, although there was one outstanding (read ‘conspicuous’) display of chivalry and friendship, which perhaps resulted in two of the speakers receiving the same scores, in addition to their serendipitous encounter.

The *Deconstruction* round was something new. The rules were simple: a video clip was screened. The speakers were then supposed to deconstruct the argument. There were occasional tendencies to present cases against the motion rather than focus on a narrow deconstruction of the sample argument, but that was perhaps the challenge of the round. *Reducto ad absurdum* was at its pinnacle, and the winner earned a standing ovation.

We were eliminated, but we forgot the agony of defeat in incessant jokes, Beatles’ songs and hilarious rambles around the campus (perhaps at the cost of other people’s sanity). Soon afterward, the final was underway. The motion for the final read ‘This House believes in a world with no boundaries.’ Although most speakers interpreted the subject narrowly to mean globalization, intense arguments were made on both sides. The competition ended soon enough, and the Calcutta clique undisputedly shone. St James carried the magnificent trophy home (although how they managed to, I have no idea). La Martiniere for Boys finished second.

In retrospect, we weren’t disappointed. We experienced Dubai in a way we’d never have otherwise: Kinokuniya, the Dubai Fountain, glimpses of the Burj Khalifa, a friendly host family, the Dubai Metro, the desert safari, everything. It’s a timeless blur, now. But we benefited greatly from the experience in many ways and we returned with a love for debates, debating and debaters alike.

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| Interview |

GAINING MOMENTUM

The Doon School Weekly’s interview with **Ahmad Kamran**, a Physics teacher, who joined the School community last term

DSW: What activities would you like to involve yourself with while in School?

Ahmad Kamran (AHK): Being in the field of Physics, I would like to involve myself in a number of activities requiring my knowledge. I would like to participate in activities such as Electronics, HAM Radio, and astronomy as well. I have also seen the Inter- House Quiz Competition and it got my attention. In sport, my interests revolve around basketball and tennis. I think I would like to see myself, perhaps, helping the teams in whichever ways I can.

DSW: Is this your first experience in an all-boys’ school?

AHK: Throughout my teaching career I’ve always taught in co-ed schools but I have taught in an all-girls’ school before so I definitely have some idea about a single-sex school. It does not seem to me that it makes a difference if you’re teaching in a boys’ school, girls’ school, or even co-ed, for that matter, but the level of competition does tend to be higher in co-ed schools.

DSW: What do you think should be changed in School?

AHK: Yes, I think there are too many activities that take place in School and they sort of push academics to the backburner, so I would try to make things a little more balanced and promote academics parallel to sports. Nevertheless, the School has been functioning for 74 years now so it shouldn’t face problems!

DSW: What is your opinion of a Dosco now that you’ve had a chance to interact with them School?

AHK: Before I joined School I had a very high opinion of a Dosco and today it has not changed. They are a cultured lot who make their presence felt and are disciplined inside the classroom as well as outside.

DSW: What inspired you to join School?

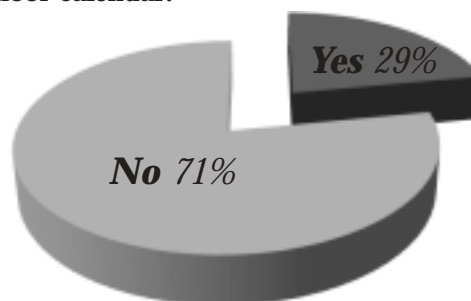
AHK: The Doon School is one of India’s most prestigious schools and has one of the strongest systems that I have ever come across. It was perhaps its long-standing reputation that always inspired me to join this institution.

DSW: What are your hopes for yourself during your tenure in School?

AHK: I want to see myself as part of the School community for a long time and see myself involved in activities other than teaching. I hope that I can help students in every way possible and that I make a difference.

Opinion oll

Are you intimidated by the thickness of the School calendar?



(209 members of the community were polled)

Next Week’s Question: Is it too cold for PT?

MEALTIME MUSINGS

Shashank Peshawaria

Like every other time when I'm in the CDH, this time there was nothing on my plate, only some spilled *dal* and a spoonful of rice, made to look like a finished heap to ward off the scolding voice of my matron. And since, as usual, I wasn't really busy with the food, I put my head up and swept my eyes over a sea of interesting Doscocs, busy doing a whole lot of different things. If one wants to know the real mood of the School community on any day, all one needs to do is to enter our Vodafone Central Dining Hall.

This was the first working day of School after the winter break when we Doscocs were lunching. This year's appointments had been announced (and disappointments, which hadn't been). Some of us didn't care while some of us did. Those who didn't care either gazed around blankly like me or yapped away about their homes/girl-friends/school food/other stuff at the rate of nearly thirteen words per spoonful. The rest just congratulated each other. How nice! It didn't matter whether the first bell had rung; everyone was just floating all over the place.

After the first bell had rung, a newly-appointed School prefect took the podium to make the day's announcements as all heads angled to get a better view of the podium and all ears came out of the long hair in which they had been buried, to catch a fresh voice. A little *wooo* was heard rising (and dying soon afterward) from the audience. But that was it.

Doscocs will have many more meals and many more appointments, thus many different moods. Tomorrow the herd will get used to its new leaders and this effervescence will dissolve. But there'll be different scenarios and other actors. Because the thing with School is that the film here just rolls on and on and never stops.

| Poetry |

A Seed

Shashank Peshawaria

I see it's a seed in my heart.
Someone waters it every day,
Gives it proper light and air,

Makes sure it will grow into a tree, very strong,
With its roots drilled deep into my heart-soil,
Its branches leaving no room for any other plant of
my own.

And would he not benefit from its better fruits
When the rotten ones will drop on my ground?
It's sad what a loser he is who wastes his wealth
On this seed that will never grow into a tree.
You think I'll let another man use my soil for his
things?

In the Dark

Uday Shriram

I'm standing alone in the dark. Naked. There are no walls. No matter how much I run in one direction or another, everything is unchanging. There isn't anything to lean against, nothing to hold. I scream. I scream again. No reply. Not even an echo. The ground around me is hard and smooth. Unforgiving and unbreakable. I slam my fists on the ground. And I can't feel any pain. I run forward without thinking and trip over my own feet, fall flat on my nose. The blood and tears flow down immediately. But I can't feel any pain. I can't smell the blood. I can't feel the warmth of the tears inundating my face. The only sense still active is my hearing. I scream again, if just to reassure myself of this. Again. Shriller, more banshee-like. My face is pressed against the ground. I can't feel if it's cold or warm. There is no breeze to send shivers through my body. I punch myself in the gut. The air is blown out of me, but I can't feel pain. I ram my knuckles into my jaw. It dislocates. Hangs, limp and lifeless. I poke my thumb into my eye. I can feel the insides of my eyes, the blood and flesh all over my palms. I press harder into my eye, round and round, just because it is so fleshy and disgusting. I put the same thumb into my mouth. My tongue cannot taste the remnants of my eyeball. I grab my lower jaw, stick my tongue out, and with one motion, let my teeth do the rest. I try to feel around for my severed tongue on the ground. It is wet and sticky. But now I have something to hold on to.

Unquotable Quotes

*Let the fire heat up.***Milind Pandit** waits patiently.*Heating it will take tomorrow.***B Dinesh Reddy**, future-plans.*Are you intimidated in the thickness of the School calendar?***Yash Mall** asks for opinion.*Could I have some lip gloss?***Arnav Sahu** grooms himself.*She is the main protagonist.***Vigya Singh**, the critic.

ERRATA

In the previous issue of *The Doon School Weekly* (Issue 2237, dated November 28, 2009), **Nikhil Sinha's** name was omitted from the list of boys who have been awarded **Full Colours in Athletics** and **Vishnu Dev Datt's** and **Piyush Upadhyay's** names were omitted from the list of **Half Colours in Athletics**. The *Weekly* regrets the omissions.

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