



Established in 1936

# The Doon School WEEKLY



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The Doon School Weekly welcomes all guests visiting School for The Chuckerbutty Debates and The Doon School Quiz, 2010

## EDITORIAL

### An Academic Disposition

The Headmaster had addressed us on the importance of debating when the Final Round of the Senior Inter-House English Debates was being conducted and shared with us an intriguing anecdote: the infamous 'King and Country Debate' in 1933 at the Oxford Union (wherein the motion reading "This House will in no circumstances fight for its king and country" was carried) was a cause of great sensation in the press. The uproar went as far as to propose a deletion of the phrase 'King and Country' from the Union archives lest the verdict be considered too absolute. The resolution was considered representative of the opinion of the youth, the opinion of an entire generation. There was panic amongst politicians, who feared the youth would no longer serve in the military. The speaker of the proposition, Kenelm Digby (who later became a prominent attorney in England), looked back on the episode and remarked, "It was just a debate. I don't know what the fuss was about." But the fuss was natural, given the prestige and renown of the Oxford Union and the level of academia.

I would often start my debating practices with junior boys with two questions: "What is a debate?" and "What makes a good debater?" Likewise, I may ask myself what a quiz is and what makes a good quizzier. Quizzing and debating are both academic pursuits. They are competitions of how much one knows and how well one can argue. They test a number of traits: knowledge, wit, eloquence, quick thinking and rhetoric. So naturally, a good quizzier or debater must be open-minded, must know a lot and must be articulate. But what is most critical is an academic disposition: a good quizzier or debater must thirst for knowledge, feel the exhilaration of an argument and rise to meet every question. A debate or a quiz is a forum for learning and a test of a desire, willingness or eagerness to learn.

So here, at The Chuckerbutty Memorial Debates and The Doon School Quiz, two of the most anticipated School events, we are showcasing the activity of our prominent Debating and Quiz Societies. We are celebrating that critical academic disposition, celebrating a desire and willingness to learn. A junior boy had asked me a few days ago, "How can I participate in 'Chucks'?" I remember asking the same question when I was in my D form, to which I got the same answer, "Keep debating. Keep at it." Indeed, one must keep at it, keep growing and keep learning. That is the underlying

principle of the events.

## Shah of Story-telling

Excerpts from The Doon School Weekly's interview with **Mahmood Fahrooqi** (ex-146-K '90), the co-director of Peepli Live, who conducted a storytelling session, Dastangoi, for School on Saturday, August 28

**The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Explain your love for storytelling, whether through film, drama or writing.**

**Mahmood Fahrooqi (MMF):** I am a film buff; the first play I saw was in the Rose Bowl, when Naseerudin Shah performed *Waiting for Godot* in 1984. Storytelling is a way of keeping conversation, whether it be through writing, speaking or any other means.

**DSW: What kinds of skills are required to engage an audience in storytelling?**

**MMF:** First of all, the storyteller must enjoy what he/she is doing, only then can he/she pass the stimulation and joy of the story to an audience. In a way you have to be a raconteur.

**DSW: What, essentially, will you call Dastangoi: acting or recitation?**

**MMF:** That, I will leave for you to decide. When you act, there are many characters, dance is also a performing art. There are many performance forms. For example, when you get late for a class, you come up with an alibi which is convincing enough for your teacher to believe. In this, you perform too! There are many performances in life - performance makes you forget the real world.

Some key Nazi leaders were very fond of music and art. Art appreciation is something which comes with age, I remember when Hamzad Ali Khan and Ravi Shankar came and performed in School, many of us slept off!

**DSW: Is today's generation interested in art forms such as Dastangoi?**

**MMF:** Today's generation is quite exposed and familiar with Dastangoi. Everyone is interested in entertainment in many forms. If it touches on the common human experience, and is honest, it is bound to generate an interest.

**DSW: How is Peepli Live special for you?**

**MMF:** It is special as my wife wrote it and we directed it together. The very fact that we managed to make it is a big deal. Two dumb Delhi *waalas* went to Mumbai to make a film. We are very happy that it was liked. In Amitabh Bachchan's days, it was the commoners who made him popular, now it is different. At one point, Muzaffarpur and Patna were the film capitals of India, now it is different. Films are being made by English speaking, convent-educated directors.

**DSW: Films with a strong message usually suffer at the box office and only receive recognition at theatre festivals. Would Peepli Live have had the same fate if it had not been an Aamir Khan production?**

**MMF:** Aamir Khan would have helped the publicity, even if the film isn't seen by all but it will return in DVD. Films maintain longevity due to their quality. If this happens, it is colossal, for example, a few films like *Hazaar Vaade* and *Udaan*, their impact should be judged over time. When *Sholay* came, it was getting average ratings. After some time, its quality showed.

## SPORT REPORT

**The School Squash Team** played a number of friendly fixtures in Delhi on August 26 and 27 and won four matches against the Vasant Valley School, Delhi and three matches against Pathways School, Delhi.

**The School Soccer Team** also played a number of friendly fixtures in Delhi between August 26 and 28. The School beat Vasant Valley School 2-1 and Pathways School 5-1. The School drew 0-0 against Modern School.

Well played, all!

## DOON MUN

The following are the results of the **Doon School Model United Nations Conference** held between August 27 and 29:

**Best Delegations:**

**United Nations High Commission for Refugees:**  
Saudi Arabia (Urvashi Kapila and Snehav Gupta, D.R.A. Bhavan Vidyalaya, Chandigarh)

**United Nations Human Rights Committee:**

Saudi Arabia (D.R.A. Bhavan Vidyalaya)

**United Nations Environment Programme:**

China (Cameron Smith and Nishant Raj, The British School, New Delhi)

**United Nations Economic and Social Council:**

Nigeria (Kamya Choudhary and Uday Veer Garg, Vivek High School, Chandigarh) and Gabon (Umang Newatia and Milind Pandit, The Doon School)

**United Nations Security Council:**

Gabon (Kanishka Malik and Sachit Taneja, The Doon School) and China (Angad Bagai and Simerpreet Zorawar Singh, The British School)

**Historical Security Council:**

Belgium (Abhinav Mittal and Piroune Balachandran, The Doon School) and British Colonies (Karan Keith Agarwal, The British School)

The British School (China) won the **Best Delegation Overall**.

Mayo College Girls' School, Ajmer, (U.S.A.) won the **Best Delegation in the Crisis Situation**.

Congratulations!

## ENVIRONMENT WORKSHOP

Prabal Jindal, Akshay Sharan and Madhavan Saklani conducted a workshop on environmental issues at **The Tibetan School, Dhoolkot**.

### ERRATA

In the results of the **Junior Inter-House English Debates**, the name of Yuvraj Nathani, joint Best Speaker with Vrindam Nagpal, was omitted in issue no. 2256. The *Weekly* regrets the error.

## Opinion oll

**Are meals being disrupted by too many announcements?**

 **Yes 61 %**

 **No 39 %**

( 219 members of the community were polled)

**Next week's question:** Do we have the time to stop and look around?

## Ball Game

*Yuv Vir Khosla reports on the matches played by the School Soccer team in New Delhi from August 26 to 28*

Due to the rescheduling of the tournament in Sanawar, the School soccer team could not make its customary trip to The Lawrence School. Thus, it was decided that the team would go to Delhi for a few friendly fixtures. These matches were preparatory ones for two important tournaments in Dehradun: the Council's and the RIMC Tournament. Prior to the trip, the soccer team had been working very hard and had had a number of matches, including one with the Old Boys' team. For the first two weeks or so, the team did not have a professional coach and was being trained by MLJ. Under his guidance, the team improved the level of play and their physical fitness in just a month.

With the team finalized, the School soccer team left for Delhi on August 25. We received a grand farewell, almost as though we were leaving for the World Cup! Enjoying the attention, we soon found ourselves on the way to the railway station. After a chaotic time at the station, we were all fast asleep during the train journey. We knew that we had to catch up on our sleep as we would be on the field soon after reaching Delhi. As soon as we reached Delhi, the one thing that surprised us was the weather. We expected Delhi to have similar weather conditions to Dehradun's. Everyone thought that Delhi would be flooded and was under the impression that our matches might be called off. On the contrary, there were no signs of rain during our stay. They were the hottest and most uncompromising conditions that we had ever played in. Our first match was against Vasant Valley School. Since the start of the season, we were prepared to face one of our toughest competitors. Not that they were better at skill, but we were aware that they practised all around the year. This hardly made much of a difference during the game. We won a very close game with two goals to one, the scorers being Shiva and Vahin. What helped us get the better of them was our 'josh'. The following morning, we had our second match; this one against Pathways World School. On reaching the school, we were first served breakfast. Well-nourished, we began the game. It was less hot and humid than the previous day, which surely, had an impact on our performance. We had rectified our mistakes of the previous match and were on the field to prove something to the others as well as to ourselves. With brilliant coordination among us, we were able to win the match five goals to one, with Vahin scoring four and Anmol one. After the match, the team also met Mr Dargan, one of the masters of our School who is now at Pathways as the principal of the Middle School. Early the next morning, we played our last match of the trip against Modern School, Barakhamba Road. Again, it was very hot and we were all fatigued by the end of the match due to a mixture of our bad performance and the weather and we were not able to score. The decrease in the level of enthusiasm was visible during the course of the match. Our defenders and goalkeeper managed to keep the ball outside the net and the match ended in a goalless draw.

This trip was a fairly successful one for the soccer team. We managed to beat two out of the three schools which are considered to be among the best in Delhi. More than our performance, it was a step taken by our School to develop its acquaintance with schools in Delhi, through sports. And I believe that this is one of the best ways to interact with students of other schools and more importantly, a learning experience for all of us.



| Interview |

## ART START

The Doon School Weekly interviewed *Lawanshaiba Kharmawlong* and *Tapan Barui*, the new art teachers on campus

**The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Could you please tell us why you took up art as a career?**

**Lawanshaiba Kharmawlong (LKA) :** Since childhood I have always been interested in art. My father had wanted me to pursue it as my hobby and encouraged me to take it after the tenth standard. I went to an art school in Chennai and later landed up in Shantiniketan. I did a bachelor degree and a masters degree from Shantiniketan. My parents have always been a driving force and have helped me do what I have always loved. My association with art started with painting and I gradually moved to sculpture. Over the years I have learnt to play with forms of art, make full figure sculptures and give 3D effects to my paintings. After three to four years I started something of my own- mixed media. Soon, I was giving solo-exhibitions in Mumbai, Delhi and Shillong. I also believe that through sculptures we are able to express a lot more. In that respect, canvas paintings are a lot more restrictive.

**Tapan Barui (TPB):** I got interested in sculpture and art in the later stages of my school life. My parents actually did not want me to take up art. The sole reason for this was that no one in my family is an artist and had any idea of art as a career. I was, on the other hand encouraged by a senior. Some of my seniors guided me and advised me to be an artist. At Shantiniketan, I first did a five year bachelor degree and then spent two year pursuing a masters' degree. After completing my masters' degree, I joined the Ambuja Hotel Works, in the Decorative phase. I started with clay work. I later moved to stone carving in which I worked more on life-sized objects with a human focus.

**DSW: What other interests do you have?**

**LKA:** I have great interest in music. I love playing the guitar and play a little bit of piano too. I was surprised to see the number of children that were involved with music in School. In times to come, I would surely want to be an active member of the music society. I also play football and support Argentina .

**TPB:** I am interested in playing football and like to swim. I also like reading Hindi poetry. I am fond of trekking and the midterm is one thing I am really looking forward to.

**DSW: Why did you choose The Doon School over other schools?**

**LKA:** I see it as a great opportunity for me as well as for the students of School. I see a lot of potential in children and have always wanted to encourage art at an early stage of life. I believe children have a lot of creativity and imagination and a little mentoring would be very useful. When I first came to School, I was very fascinated by the art and media department. I feel that it has a lot of resemblance to Shantiniketan and the environment is very pleasant. I really like the campus, specially its view from the sculpture department!

**TPB:** When someone is talented in something, I believe he should spread it, instead of keeping it with himself. I get a lot of pleasure while spreading my knowledge. I feel proud when I am able to do it successfully.

I think Doon is like Shantiniketan and I can relate myself to the students. It provides a good environment for us to teach and for the students to learn.

**DSW: How do you plan to give art in School an**

**impetus?**

**LKA:** Children at this age do not really know the scope of art. My main aim is to introduce new forms and ideas so that they can take it forward. For example, sculpture is not just about chiseling and carving. There is so much you can do with it – mixing different materials, different sizes and types of sculptures and lots more. I would want to have frequent exhibitions of mine and hope some of the students get inspired by it.

**TPB:** I think that our surroundings offer us a lot of inspiration and we can learn a lot from it. I would encourage students to learn from observing things on campus and, using their imagination, create something of their own. I would want to tell the students about the scope of art and art as a career option. Though, I feel that one should never opt for art if they see it as a way only to make money. Through art we can develop our character and originality. There is so much that art offers us.

Also, one of the best things about art in a boarding school is that it is a place where several different cultures merge and produce something that can not be taught or learnt. We must all appreciate this and make the most of it.

| Poetry |

## Silent Feelings

*Jaiveer Mehra*

All alone in the dead of night  
Sat a boy under dim light,  
Alone was he, alone he wished to be  
For there were things he didn't want others to see.

Broken was his heart and only he knew it,  
Never had he let anyone see  
For not so long ago he had fallen in love  
With a girl whom he thought of much.  
Not a night spared he without a dream,  
Of him and her floating down a stream,  
Of them below and birds above  
But god had plans he did not know.

Quiet was he and afraid to tell  
His deepest feelings his heart yearned to yell,  
He tried his best but was never able,  
With half-meanings he said what he could;  
Things never were how he planned they would.

Along came a day when he decided to tell  
His feelings even if she would curse him to hell,  
But the words were forever lost  
For in the crowd he realized his loss.

And in the minutes that he couldn't tell  
His heart shattered and his mood fell,  
Seldom did he laugh again  
Never did he talk to her again  
Felt like slapping himself again and again  
For now in the world he was lost.

Now, alone as he sat that night  
Cursing himself with every word in mind  
His feelings hidden well from sight,  
He made a decision with all his might.  
Never would he fall in love again  
For the pain was something he couldn't tolerate.

But, now in the deep of night,  
Buried he the love for the girl  
No longer did the soft spot for her remain  
As his heart was reborn again  
Now, only one thought occurred to him,  
Should he try his luck all over again?

# The Other Bills

*Kanishka Malik highlights the flaws in the Food Security Bill and the Anti-Torture Bill*

I recall commenting on certain undertakings of the Government a couple of weeks ago. However, as it was following the Independence Day, I selected only the praiseworthy ones. On this occasion I would like to underscore the flaws in a couple of bills that are currently being discussed in the Parliament.

The solution to the problem seems pretty straight forward (unless of course, the flaws are intentional and the Bill has been put forward by individual political interests).

The anti-Torture Bill is, at least, in the way it has been explained, very restricted in practice. The definition of torture in the Bill itself is narrow as it terms an offensive act (physical or mental) as an act of torture only if it causes grievous hurt for the purpose of obtaining information about a third party or a confession, on the ground of one's religion, place of birth, race, residence, language, caste *et cetera*. This clearly excludes any offensive (physical or mental) act that may be committed by a Government official without the intention of obtaining information or which is an act of forcefulness. This means that if a police officer pun-

ishes a person and physically abuses or intimidates one, it will not be considered as torture. So, by narrowing the definition of torture (which is different from the definition of torture as per the United Nations Convention Against Torture), myriad offensive acts are no longer subject to trial as they don't even qualify as torture any more.

Apart from the flaw in the definition of 'torture', the rule which restricts the time limit of filing a complaint to just 6 months, inconveniences the aggrieved even more. The official procedures in the country are undoubtedly tedious, and apart from that, in the case of say, sexual harassment, the aggrieved does not necessarily file a complaint immediately. Due to the nature of the offense, a person might be compelled to not disclose his or her experience immediately. The solution to the problem seems pretty straight forward (unless of course, the flaws are intentional and the Bill has been put forward by individual political interests). The definition of 'torture' must be the same as the definition according to the UN Convention Against Torture and must include all forms of physical or mental harm caused by Government officials. The other amendment would be to raise the time limit for filing the complaint.

The other Bill that has been much debated is the Food Security Bill. The evident flaw in this Bill is that it restricts the applicability of the Bill to just 150 districts, which it considers to be the poorest. The composers of the Bill are oblivious of the fact that poverty in India is pervasive and not concentrated in just 150 districts.

The Bill affects Tamil Nadu the most where the Public Distribution System (PDS) is universal and supplies food at a rate of Rs. 2 per kg, which is lower than the rate of Rs. 3 per kg being charged under the new Bill.

Apart from the flaws in the Bill, its feasibility has been debated on, with politicians claiming it to be too expensive, especially after bearing the expenses of the scam-filled preparations of the Common Wealth Games. Also, the arrangement of the food grains for implementing the Bill is a problem. Considering the fact that farmers have shifted to growing cash crops rather than food crops and the all-time low agricultural growth, the availability is undoubtedly a problem.

The Bill seems to be more of tokenism than a solution. If the Bill is not feasible, and has received an uproar of criticism from many columnists and journalists, the Government should drop it and instead seek a solution for the stunted agricultural growth. Surplus grains, (like in 2001-2002) and prevention of hoarding and wasting by Government storage facilities could resolve the problem better than the Food Security Bill.

Hopefully, the Parliament consists of members who will make the amendments and resolve the conspicuous flaws in both the Bills architected by the NAC and not let arbitrary decisions be taken.

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