



Established in 1936

The Doon School

WEEKLY



Saturday, February 26 • 2011 • Issue No. 2273

BINDAL ACTIVITY
2

CAMERA
SCARE!
3

COLLEGE
TIPS
3

SHORT STORY
4

Letters To The Editor

Admin Strikes Back!

In the last issue of the *Weekly* (issue 2272), there was an editorial titled *Troubleshooting* which spoke of the difficulties faced by students and staff because of the poor maintenance of computer equipment. As the System Administrator of the School, I was surprised by some of the concerns that had been expressed in the editorial. This is because in the IT council meetings, never had such an opinion been expressed nor had I sensed such a sentiment during my interaction with various students and staff on campus.

As mentioned in the first paragraph of the editorial, I whole-heartedly agree with the fact that our School has had the desire and resources to implement a world-class technology infrastructure. The process to upgrade started as far back as 2003 and it reflects the intent of the Board of Governors to support any improvement that takes the School forward. I can comment on this as I was part of the planning to implement a robust IT infrastructure which included the mailing system, the Domain system, The ERP, and various other sophisticated technologies.

In the editorial, mention has been made of the technical difficulties faced in the 'Smart Class' rooms, Publications Room and the new Art Center. I do agree that the Math class, where the Smart Board has been installed, has had a problem for some time now, but we have to understand that this has more to do with the integration of the projector with the interactive board and the video connection for the same. I think it would be unfair to blame the server room people for this as it is outside their preview. The mention of Publications Room came as a surprise as, to my knowledge, problems have been timely attended to there whenever they have been reported. What I would like to mention here, however, is that various pieces of hardware equipment such as patch chords were found to be missing from the Publications Room when the maintenance people went there to address technical difficulties. I would like to ask the students working in the Publications Room: are they not responsible for the safekeeping of computer hardware in that room? How can School IT equipment go missing from a lockable room to which only they have access? Furthermore, on making enquires and visiting the Publications Room, I have not found any computer that has been lying dysfunctional, nor has any call been received for the same. On 22 February, I met the HOD, Art Center, and he too expressed his surprise over the mention of the Arts Center in the editorial, as his department has not faced any technical difficulties yet.

I wish the editor and reporters who worked on this editorial had got their facts right or at least made the effort to contact the concerned department to get their views on the matter before publishing the editorial.

Having said this, I do agree with the fact that there is always scope for improvement. Through the medium of the *Weekly*, I would like to inform the School that fresh initiative has been taken by AKS and me to put into place a new scheme for call logging, reporting and monitoring. However, I would again like to reiterate that missing, damaged or unplugged items are a major reason for downtime and if we talk about accountability, then it is the accountability of all who are involved in the usage and maintenance of the equipment.

I would also like to mention the fact that several times we have tried to organize orientation sessions for the staff but the dismal attendance has only but discouraged us. I firmly believe that a little orientation on technology can go a long way towards trouble shooting some basic technical difficulties.

Finally, I would like to close by assuring you that the technology, on which the School has spent a good amount of money, would never be allowed to go waste through neglect or shoddy maintenance. But yes, everyone's co-operation is needed if we want to utilize these resources to the fullest.

-Vickram Sabharwal (System Administrator)

Restless Audience

On Saturday, February 12, I attended a talk given by, Vijay Simha, Senior Editor of *Tehelka*. The talk was very informative and the speaker spoke extremely well.

The disturbing part was that many students got up during the talk and left. The speaker even had to stop addressing the boys for a while and wait for some boys to leave. I felt that the speaker though offended, continued with his talk. I believe that once seated for a talk, students should sit till the end, regardless of what the situation might be. When someone leaves the room in the middle of a talk, the speaker feels that what he or she is saying is uninteresting and this is also a sign of disrespect. This is surely not what we want to convey to the guests. If the student has already made up his mind to not pay attention, he need not attend the talk at all.

This problem has become very serious over the years. The prefects are not able to do much as many times the students walk out without asking for their permission. When I was a junior, we could not leave the hall without the permission of a Prefect or a master. But now, it seems that the rule of the day seems to be leaning towards plain indifference.

This issue needs to be addressed very firmly in School. Is it because talks are compulsory or is it an attitude that needs introspection or are we spoilt beyond redemption.

-Apurv Aggarwal

SQUASH OUT

The Doon School reached the **finals** of the **Inter-School Squash Championship** and the **Open Squash Championship**. The Doon School A team beat The Doon School B team in the **semi-finals** of the Inter-School Squash Championship while in the Open Championship, The Doon School A team beat RIMC and The Doon School B team. The School played RIMC and IMA in the finals of the Inter School Squash Championship and Open Squash Championship respectively, and emerged **runners-up**. Well tried!

APPOINTMENTS

Vikram Kejriwal has been appointed a **School Prefect**.

The following boys have been appointed boys-in-charge of their respective activities:

Electronics and Robotics: Utkarsh Garg and Vaibhav Bahadur

Archives Gallery: Rishi Aggarwal and Apurv Aggarwal

Quiz Secretary: Shubham Agrawal

Doon School Stock Exchange: Udai Bothra and Rishi Aggarwal

Business Club: Rishi Aggarwal

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

CRICKET WEEKEND

The School Senior Cricket Team played a match against the **Asian School** on Sunday, February 20 and scored 183 runs, winning the match by 59 runs. Ashwin Dokania scored 66 runs while Siddhant Sachdev and Vigya Singh took 3 wickets each.

The Junior School Cricket team played the **Abhimanyu Cricket Academy** and lost the match by 6 wickets. Aaditya Vir Roy scored 38 runs and Ritesh Devnani took 2 wickets.

Well tried!

IH DEBATING

The following were the results of the **preliminary round** of the **Inter-House Senior English Debates, 2011:**

Jaipur vs Oberoi (Saturday, February 12):

Best Speaker: Abhinav Mittal

Most Promising Speaker: Raghav Puri

Winner: Jaipur

Tata vs Hyderabad (Saturday, February 12):

Best Speaker: Vihaan Khanna

Most Promising Speaker: Vikram Kejriwal

Winner: Hyderabad

Tata vs Jaipur (Saturday, February 19):

Best Speakers: Shashvat Dhandhanian & Revant Nayyar

Most Promising Speakers: Utkarsh Jha & Vikramaditya Kapur

Winner: Tata

Oberoi vs Kashmir (Saturday, February 19):

Best Speaker: Sachit Taneja

Most Promising Speaker: Piroune Balachandaran

Winner: Kashmir

Well done, all!

Unquotable Quotes

He scored the highest number of wickets.

Saarthak Gupta, really?

Manchester United scored two baskets in that game against Miami Heats.

Shubham Agarwal, soccer fan.

I'll break you into one piece.

Harsh Singhania, beware.

He is good in studies and decent in academics.

Siddharth Suri, synonymous.

Did you eat your chots at lunch today?

Namanshree Jain, mess committee.

IAYP

The following students were awarded their respective levels of the **IAYP**:

Bronze: Kunal Kanodia, Rahul Srivastava, Banda Maan Singh Lamba, Devesh Sharma, Apekshit Goel, Karan Chhabra, Tanmay Kapoor, Harsh Vardhan Bansal, Suyash Bishnoi, Vatsal Goenka and Sumer Sehgal

Silver: Raghav Nath, Sidhant Dixit, Madhavan Saklani, Sharan Seth, Mohit Gupta, Akshay Yogendra Sharan, Ujjwal Dahuja, Mudit Aggarwal, Abhishek Pande, Vaibhav Bahadur and Neelansh Khurana

Gold (and IAYP Blazer): Siddharth Bathla
Congratulations

| Report |

NOTES ON BINDAL

Kanishka Malik writes about the observations he made while visiting the social service site at Bindal

Apart from RSIS and the Microfinance project, another activity in which our participation has increased is the social service at the *Bindal* slum site is one of our most important social service projects. Important because geographically, the *Bindal* slum is our next door neighbour. The project operates from the basement of a building, accomodating about 8 to 10 classes. The Doscocs (usually escorted by MTS, KLA, MMR, MLB, RLR, BND and KPS) go every Friday to teach the children in the slum school. The project is actually managed by an NGO Aasra, under the leadership of a lady named Shyila.

Last Friday, on the School's third visit this term, I visited the site. While the juniors conducted lessons with students, MMR and I made some interesting observations.

We noticed how even one uninterested person could spoil the entire group's concentration. The reluctance and disinterest of some individuals were attracting the attention of those who otherwise, were enthusiastic about taking part in the activity. This phenomenon is noticeable in School too, where one disturbance can spoil the entire group's concentration.

I also learnt that some of the children were exposed to gambling and were even gambling. They probably picked up these practices by observing their elders in the community. However, I am quite sure that Aasra, with support of the School can prevent this to a great extent.

As for the positive aspects of the project, I saw an activity similar to that which takes place in the Doon School Microfinance (DSMFI) Projects. There were women being trained to use sewing machines. The only difference between this and DSMFI is that the work of these women were not being used for any kind of commercial purposes. To me it was the best form of training essential to help these women. Once the women start stitch well, the implementation of the DSMFI concept could have a successful start at *Bindal*.

I even observed the slum around the school. The slum is one of the garbage dumps of this beautiful city and a common sight to be observed is children and pigs scavenging in the garbage. Standing on a mound it was hard to accept the fact that this area is just a few yards away from School.

Hopefully, the project will continue to see greater involvement by the School, especially because the project is so close. As I remarked while returning to School, if The Doon School is an island, this site is at its beaches.

Dr Snedcoff's Advice

The Doon School Weekly interviewed Dr Harold Snedcoff about the problems and prospects of the college admissions process

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): What did you note about last year's batch when it came to going about the college admissions process?

Harold Snedcoff (HRS): The first thing that I observed was that there was willingness to learn. A majority of the Scs realised that they did not know as much as they wanted to know. People realised that the college admissions process is not some cramming process where one had to memorize magic answers but one which required intense research. The people who didn't realise this were extremely frustrated. I think that a lot of the people didn't understand the common application. They didn't realise that the common application wasn't a CV and did not understand its ingredients. The people who came through the process did well because they realized that the Common Application involved understanding and expressing oneself well. Also, the students did not understand the Early-Decision Program well.

DSW: After noting last year's problems, what changes would you like to bring about this year?

HRS: The biggest change is to start earlier. The second change is to get the boys out of their houses for research work. Also, I have seen that Doscos have great stories to tell but are not good story-tellers. This shows their writing component, which has to be improved. My recommendation to the current batch is that you must bring a completed Common Application; a completed essay and your first early decision choice.

DSW: Do colleges want students who specialise in a certain field or students who have a foothold in every activity?

HRS: Yes definitely; they don't want people who put their foot in every activity. They want someone who connects a thread with all activities. They want people who do few activities but should excel in them. For co-curricular activities one can try few activities in his earlier forms, but by the time you reach A-form, you have to figure out the activity you want to excel in and then carry on with only that activity.

DSW: Do you recommend that Doscos should begin specialising instead of being involved in all-round activities?

HRS: I think that you should experiment when you join school, but if you are still experimenting by the time you reach S or Sc-form, it's a problem. By then, you should realise what you are good at and pursue that activity. Also, you have to connect all the activities you do in School.

DSW: How do you find out which college is best for you?

HRS: To know which college is best for you, first you should know yourself very well. To know yourself well, you should fill up the Common Application form as it works as an MRI to know yourself.

DSW: What is unique about US colleges?

HRS: The best US colleges have made three commitments which are very important. One is requiring in the first two years of the students time, an exposure to a variety of disciplines, arts, sciences, and humanities. The second thing that they made a great commitment to is small classes where discussion and questioning is encouraged more than memorisation. The third commitment they made is for professors to have their major mission as teacher rather than as business consultants or researchers.

CAMERA SCARE!

As the vote results point out, the installation of security cameras is not a popular decision. Most of those who voted 'yes' were making remarks referring to how the people monitoring students' actions would misinterpret petty antics as serious incidents. The voters probably have a premonition of how the installation of cameras would make their lives "robotic", as one voter commented. The issue of maintaining these cameras and their impact on our privacy probably encouraged the voters to vote against their installation. Someone also pointed out that the regulation of the School was the "job of the prefects and masters and not of the cameras".

On the other hand, Security cameras have their merits. They act as deterrents for those intending to vandalise School property. After all, their primary purpose is not to invade our privacy, but to regulate activities and ensure our safety. They provide a certain amount of assurance to the School authorities and our parents. As for the argument that cameras will lead to misinterpretation of events, a counterpoint is that a video recording will not be the only factor while determining the disciplinary action.

The installation of cameras, as misconstrued by many, is not to jeopardize the School's conventional way of functioning or invade the privacy of any student.

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Madhav Dutt



Opinion Poll

Do you think talks should be compulsory?



(346 members of the community were polled)

Next week's question: Do you think that attending talks should be made compulsory?

Killing Conscience

Utkarsh Jha

Aged only 15, Chris looked far older for his age. He was gaunt, ill-clothed, unkempt and had an air of worry around him. He lived in a village high up in the hills. The village had fallen on hard times. The face of the hill had been maimed from years of mining and the soil was dry and parched. The villagers had a miserable existence, walking dusty miles with their flock of thirsty and hungry cattle, seeking the few tufts of weedy grass that remained. They were often forced to spend days in the mountains. Chris scrubbed dishes and cleaned chimneys to help his family scrape together a living.

To add to the woes of the miserable villagers, the rains had been scant for the past few years. The population of the village had dwindled with the passage of time. Many died of ill-health, others perished in the mountains, often taken by the wild animals that picked on human prey. Some, who saw no end to their deprivation, even went to the extreme of putting a noose around their brittle necks.

There were a few brave and stout-hearted though, who managed to reach the City below. The City spewed smoke from towering factory stacks that skewered the clouds, countless chattering hammers expanded its girth, the humming power plants lit a million lights at night, which from the village appeared to be alive and breathing.

Clutching to his hopes of a better life, Chris joined the lucky few who found employment in the City below. One day, as Chris scrubbed sparkle into the already gleaming floor of the city-house he worked in, he chanced upon six hundred dollars lying on the marble. The bills were crumpled and torn at the corners, but their discarded looks could not conceal what was a treasure for Chris. He carefully picked up the riches from the floor, gently folded them together and slipped it into his pocket.

Though his heart felt light and his breath was quick, his pocket felt heavy with his new found wealth, weighed down even more by his worry and guilt. Chris hoped that the missing amount would never be noticed and would cause no grief. That was true to an extent.

Years later, Chris was a flourishing business man. He owned vast tracks of farms that disappeared into the horizon. On these he grew the country's finest crops. Though his chanced wealth had been small, Chris had toiled tirelessly through the years to reach his position, that of an eminent farmer and a respected citizen.

His life had been beyond reproach, built on industry and honesty, even if the seed had been tainted. He had no questionable dealings nor was his life poisoned by liquor.

However the poison of his beginnings coursed through his conscience, flowing deeper with every success, though these were built on virtue. He tried hard to cleanse the

toxic start through donations, charities, schools and deeds beyond what was called for, but he was always drawn back to the inglorious deed on which his success was founded.

He hardly slept any better than when he had been 15 and hungry. Though his face was fleshed out now, the gauntness spread to his soul. Clothed though he may be in fine silks, he felt naked and chilled in his guilt. Though his accounts were well maintained, the balance of his life was off. He lay awake many nights in cold sweat, and walked through the days in a trance. He was haunted by memories of the men of the hills hanging from trees with their necks horribly bent. He could not bear to sit in the shade, he would see throttled ghosts of his past. There was a day when Chris ordered a rope. The next morning, a large crowd gathered at the orchard edging his farms, staring at the body swinging at the end of the noose.

| Cricket |

Asian School bowl out!

Mihir Kiran reports on the match played by the School Senior Cricket Team against the Asian School, on Sunday, February 20

Last Sunday an enthralling cricket match was played out between the School Senior Cricket Team and the Asian School. The weather permitted the match to be played without any disturbance. The home side chose to bat first after winning the toss. The slow pitch and consistent bounce gave the batsmen an advantage. The opening batsmen were Ashwin Dokania and Kabir Sethi. The home side batted remarkably in the beginning, with Ashwin leading the way and scoring a half-century. After the fall of Kabir's wicket, Waseef and Ashwin built on a big partnership and put the team in a strong position. Wickets started falling after this, but the boat was steadied by Pranoy Bohara, who scored several boundaries. The most effective way to score runs was by playing straight and not with a cross bat. The medium pacers and the spinners of the opposition weren't effective. The other team mates did their bit and brought the team to a total of 183 runs for 8 wickets, in 35 overs. After lunch, when it was Asian School's turn to bat, Rohan Gupta boosted the moral of the team by taking an early wicket. The ball was swinging quite a bit and this helped our pacers. Vigya Singh and Siddhant Sachdev took 3 wickets each, taking full advantage of the slow wicket and not allowing the opposition to build partnerships. The School Team's match preparation was clearly noticeable during the match. The opponents were bowled out for 125, losing by 59 runs. The match really boosted the confidence of the senior team and we look forward to an action packed season ahead.

Online Edition: <http://www.doonschool.com/publications/the-doon-school-weekly/latest-issue> weekly@doonschool.com



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