

Established in 1936

# The Doon School WEEKLY



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*The Doon School Weekly wishes the very best of luck to all boys and girls of AT and ScL forms who will be appearing for the ICSE/ISC Board Examinations which start on Monday.*

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## Carry On, Cambodia!

*STK reports on the Round Square Leadership Workshop held in Cambodia between December 8 to December 22, 2011*

Cambodia is rebuilding itself – literally and figuratively. Every second shop along the market streets of district towns such as Takeo, as well as the capital city, Phnom Penh, stocks building materials and equipment, and there is a busy hum of activity and a sense of renewal everywhere. Cambodia's progress was driven back by almost three decades thanks to Pol Pot and his Khmer regime which sought forcefully and violently to establish an agro-rural economy and cultural identity for Cambodia which was already bearing the brunt of the conflict in neighbouring Vietnam. It has taken this small, peace-loving, Buddhist, landmine and poverty-ridden country a long and arduous journey to begin reconstructing itself. NGOs from France, Germany, England, America, Canada, Australia – you name the country – are pouring in volunteers and resources to help in sectors like education and the rehabilitation of war victims, as well as the cottage and handicrafts industries.

I got to see all this firsthand when in December 2011, ASH and I had the opportunity to travel to Cambodia and participate in Round Square International's Project Leader Training Programme. Twenty-two teachers from Round Square affiliated schools in nine countries attended the two-week long programme. Through the planning and building of a schoolroom building in village Bakot, two hours drive from Phnom Penh into the Cambodian countryside, we were taught by our Project Leaders, Liz Gray and Rod Summerton, how RSIS projects for school children are undertaken. The logistics concerning the choice of a project site, liaising with the local community, making transport, boarding and lodging arrangements for the student group, ensuring health and safety standards, sourcing construction materials and local builders etc., were explained to us. In a neighbouring village a team of three previously trained adult Project Leaders was putting such learning to practice by conducting a RSIS project with twenty-one students from around the world, including Doon's Aakansha Mohan. They too were building a school house for the local children, who like many in India, were walking miles each day to get to a school. Both groups finished their projects on time and had the privilege of naming them in consultation with the locals. Our school was christened 'Happy Gecko' (my fear of the gigantic ones that flourish in Cambodia perversely inspired my team mates!) and a wall painting of one with the alphabet and math numbers written on it was made on the outside of the toilet block to serve as the logo.

The building task was certainly an intensely physical activity – digging, ferrying bricks, rocks, cement and water, mixing cement for mortar, bricklaying, plastering and painting – all in pretty warm weather. The local builders understood not a word of English and our communication was mostly via sign language (which more often than not ended up in expansive smiles and endless, respectful nodding – a trademark of almost every Cambodian we met) or our interpreter, Om Chamnap.

If the name 'Om' surprises you as sounding too Indian in a foreign land, you only have to visit the temple complexes at Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom and the surrounding ruin-scattered countryside to realize how much influence the Hindu dynasties that ruled the region from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> century have left behind. The architectural layout of the temples resembling the Himalayas with mythical Mt. Meru at its centre, the bas reliefs of apsaras and asuras and the legends from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the Tamil script inscribed on the pillars, the Tamilian Brahmin priest family that still resides in the complex – all reveal a deeply embedded Hindu cultural legacy.

In our spare time, from weaving bracelets to cooking a Khmer meal, from distributing a hundred bicycles to the village children to teaching them dental hygiene, from being rendered speechless at Tuol Sleng Prison and the Killing Fields to dancing the 'Macarena' with orphans in a primary school, from eating frog to saying 'No' to deep fried grasshoppers and beetles, from watching the sunrise at Angkor to sipping sundowners by the Mekong on the terrace of the FCC (the Foreign Correspondents' Club which had been the only refuge for journalists in the final weeks of the Khmer Rouge's evacuation of the capital) – we did it all. At the end of the two weeks one could only say that any occasion to travel to a new country and to get to know its culture and its people is a special privilege, and one that makes for lasting memories.

## APPOINTMENTS

The following are the appointments for the forthcoming year:

**Senior School PT Leader:** Dhruv Aggarwal

**Boy-in-Charge of Design and Technology:** Avik Gugalia

**Boy-in-Charge of the Senior Chemists STA:** Gaurav Garg

**Boy-in-Charge of the Motor Mechanics STA:** Shubham Khemka

**Boys-in-Charge of the Archives:** Abhishek Pande and Aditya Vikram Gupta

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

## MUN

The following are the appointments for the **Doon School Model United Nations** for the year 2012:

**Boy-in-Charge:** Shrish Srivastava

**Secretary General:** Siddhant Sachdev

**Heads of Media:** Dhruv Singhal and Rayhaan Imam

**Chairpersons for DSMUN 2012:** Kunal Kanodia, Abhishek Bansal, Ujjwal Dahuja, Nabeel Shah and Sookrit Malik

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

## DUKE OF EDINBURGH

The following boys have been awarded the **Silver Award** of the **International Award for Young People (IAYP)**: Avik Gugalia, Himanshu Todi, Suyash Bishnoi and Rahul Srivastava

Well done!

## INTER-SCHOOL SPORTS

The **Senior School Cricket Team** played a match against the **Selaqui International School** and **won** by **10 wickets**.

The **School Table Tennis Team** played friendly fixtures against the **Kasiga School**. In the singles team event, the School team **won 3-2**. In the doubles event, the team played two fixtures, and **won** one **3-0** and **lost** the other **3-1**.

Congratulations!

## IH RESULTS

The following are the results of the matches of the **Inter-House Cricket Competition**:

House XI	Leagues
T vs O: Tata	T vs O: Oberoi
H vs K: Hyderabad	H vs K: Hyderabad
H vs J: Hyderabad	H vs J: Hyderabad
T vs K: Tata	T vs K: Tata

Congratulations!

## Opinion oll

Do you read the newspaper daily?



(353 members of the School community were polled)

**Next Week's Question:** Should Prefects be given more liberty in the running of Houses?

## SCHOLAR

**Ujjwal Dahuja** has been awarded the **Scholar's Blazer**. Congratulations!

## EX-DOSCO NEWS

**Abhinav Kumar** (ex 285-T '91), Indian Police Service (Batch of 1996), presently posted as the DIG CID, Uttarakhand Police, was awarded the **President's Police Medal for 'Meritorious Services'** on Republic Day, 2012.

Congratulations!

| Report |

## BIRD WATCHING

**Yash Dhandhan** reports on the trip to Asan Barrage on February 11, which was organized by the Nature Club

Birds have always fascinated me and so, on getting the opportunity, I decided to go for the bird watching trip to Asan Barrage. We were accompanied by SPK and VVK. The journey, which was an hour and a half long, turned out to be fairly tiresome.

On finally reaching the sanctuary I discovered that it was nothing like what I had expected. There was a massive lake with reeds bordering it on all sides but one. The "Gadwall", a bird which looks like a duck, was seen to be swimming on the surface of the lake. We were disappointed to hear that birds like the Greylag, Brahminy and Mallard had migrated just a couple of days before our arrival. Though we were disheartened, we waited to see the birds that were still there. We got into boats to go around the lake. Although we were extremely enthusiastic, we were unable to paddle for more than a hundred metres. I took a few pictures of the Gadwall but it was very difficult as they were swimming in a restricted area of the lake.

Other than interested students who were there for the bird watching, a couple of IB Sc form students were also there to conduct an experiment.

After roaming around the lake for about half an hour, we came back to School. On the whole, the trip was a great experience. Though tiring, it was good to get a chance to appreciate nature outside the walls of the campus.



| Reports |

# To CERN AND BEYOND

*Sachin Mehra recounts his experience at CERN during the holidays*

These winter holidays, a group of boys from school had the rare opportunity of visiting the 'Conseil Europeen pour la Recherche Nucleaire', commonly known as 'CERN', in Geneva. It is the biggest Physics laboratory in the world and is home to the Large Hadron Collider (LHC). Having a circumference of 27 kilometers and built a hundred metres below the Earth's crust, the LHC is the largest machine in the world. CERN specializes in particle physics and by colliding different particles in the LHC, they seek to discover new particles. The machine works on the principle of something like a car crash. At times when two cars crash into each other, mechanical parts from the bonnet come out. The only difference is that at CERN they use hydrogen protons instead of cars. CERN is a very open organization and any qualified and eligible person from any part of the world is allowed to go there and use their advanced provisions to do his research work and contribute to Physics. This organization works for nothing but the progress of physics and that is why CERN gives away all its research to the world for free. For example, World Wide Web was invented by Tim Berners, a Physicist at CERN, who gave it away for free.

We spent a total of two days at the laboratory, and owing to its size, all of it could not be visited in such little time. Actually, the laboratory is divided into many sections built above different parts of the LHC. We only visited the main headquarters in Geneva. Since it was built in 1954, one can see how science and technology have progressed over the years. We saw the old equipments safely kept in museums and the latest technology being used in front of our eyes. We saw the server of the WWW and the best technologies available to man. Scientists at CERN have the technology to create the unimaginable. They experiment in temperatures ranging from 10 million billion degrees Celsius to almost absolute zero. They collide a hundred million particles forty million times a second in a vacuum emptier than space and all of this in a 27 kilometre circular tunnel a 100 metres below the ground!

We got the opportunity to interact with the people working there and they were quite amazed to see that we had quite an in-depth knowledge of their subject. We felt proud when they said that they could see a bright future for physics in "these young budding physicists," (as they encouragingly called us). The visit's experience was a very enriching one and I believe that any and every physics lover should visit that place at least once. It's like the temple of physics and it is said that if ever one wants to meet the ghosts of Einstein or Newton, in all probability one would see them at CERN, maybe peering over an instrument and taking down readings.

This very enriching and fruitful visit was followed by a relaxing trip to Rome, the city of seven hills. In a short span of two days, we managed to visit many of the famous places like The Collosium, The Trevori fountain and of course, The Vatican City. We all had heard a lot about The Basillica and the Church and various other structures but seeing them with our own eyes was something completely different. We marvelled at the paintings and the grand architecture left us breathless. Neither did we ignore the delicacies of the country, and enjoyed those yummy Margaritas and Gelatos to the maximum.

The trip was very well planned, with a full share of education as well as enjoyment. The only problem was that it was difficult to see so much in such less time, especially when we were enjoying every moment of it.

\* \* \*

## RSIS Katapathar

*Ujjwal Dahuja reports on the RSIS Katapathar project held from December 7 to 22*

Nick fell in the pond while talking about fish. We were made to do yoga early morning, and later we meditated in the presence of a guru who had not spoken for twenty-seven years. We cooked food for the 'langar' in the gurudwara and gave each other Secret-Santa gifts for Christmas. Finally, we worked together as a team to build the foundation of a to-be school for village children using recyclable debris of the erstwhile pharmacy. That, in a nutshell, was what happened at the Round Square International Service Project 2011 held at Katapathar.

The project kicked off just a week after the autumn term had ended with the arrival of, a bunch of international students at the Dehradun airport. With Indian students joining in the same day, the project comprised of about thirty students, eight from India and twenty-two others from various schools in Canada, South Africa, Kenya, Australia and England. At the helm of the project were two school masters from Australia and Canada, supported by AKS, MCJ, NTC and ALA. We spent the first evening getting to know each other through various icebreaking activities and challenges. As Doon was the host school for the project, Dr Mclaughlin declared the project open, one that was going to give us an opportunity to give back to the community. The team embarked upon four to five days of strenuous physical labour, transporting bricks to the project site, mixing cement, recycling bricks by chipping off the concrete while also getting involved with the local community and taking turns to teach children at a nearby school. Each day started with yoga, followed by a day of service, and the evenings witnessed the blossoming of new friendships, with Indian students teaching Hindi to the international ones and learning from them things about their countries. Each night, the team also reflected upon the day's work and every school presented to the entire team an aspect of student life at their respective schools or facilitated discussions on debatable issues.

After a few days of hard work came the much-awaited mid-project break, in which the team was to climb the Bhadraj hill and visit Mussoorie and Rishikesh. The trek definitely enervated many a soul, but at the end of the day, the team was happy to have reached Mussoorie and have an extravagant meal.

The following day, the team rafted on the river Ganges in Rishikesh and also attended the 'Aarti' in the evening. On the following day, the team visited the IMA at Dehradun and saw a Bollywood movie.

We soon returned to the project site where more work awaited us. Over the next few days, work picked up speed and finally, what looked like a heap of debris was now the site for a solid foundation for a school. On the final day, some students from the group presented a regional dance-form which they had learned from the locals. Each student

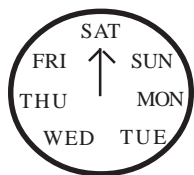
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(contd. from page 3)

also handed out small gifts to the members of the village community, after which Secret Santa gifts were exchanged among the team members later that day. We celebrated the last night at the site by bursting firecrackers and dancing to the sound of some music. The following day was spent in Dehradun from where the Indian students went back to their respective schools and the International students embarked upon the cultural phase of the trip.

The day I returned home, I sat reading the *Catcher in the Rye*, and I understood exactly what J.D. Sallinger meant when she said “Don’t ever tell anybody anything. If you do, you start missing everybody.”

\* \* \*



## The Week Gone By...

This last week has been a thoroughly enjoyable one, mostly because studies took a back seat (and don’t we all love that, masters included!) due to the extra holidays. On Monday, which happened to be the *Mahashivratri*, we were able to see enthusiastic A form boys on their first private outing. We wonder how that turned out: romancing, watching movies, eating lunch- maybe some Sc’s will be rather envious. The Inter-House Cricket Competition has been in full bloom, and the School Cricket team was seen performing its best, winning two games by ten wickets. A certain member of the team seems to be on a roll. After his hat-trick last week, he has kept up the paces and narrowly missed another hat-trick this week. In his place, an S former, sorry, AT former, took a hat-trick. That was not the end of the Competition. Other than a few nail-biting finishes, both at the House XI and Leagues level, a young B former managed to make a century, though he too, missed the Oberoi Housemasters’ window. The LAMDA examinations rolled through the week and we hope that all boys and girls were able to perform their best. Speaking of LAMDA, a certain prefect has been bagging an innumerable amount of important appointments and we sincerely hope he does have a fruitful tenure ahead.

PT too had a flourishing start, especially with the weather becoming warmer and the sun being visible in the morning. Also, we saw the appointment of the PT Leaders. Definitely, no surprises there! Lastly, other than hearing an assembly song with an unexpected twist, or rather an unexpected stop (because two members of the orchestra thought that the song had finished before it actually did!) and lots of boys being awarded IAYP awards, it is time we get serious about our studies. Test Week is around the corner and the Board Examinations start this Monday. Best of Luck!

| Report |

# MUSICAL VISIT

**Parth Vohra and Vallavi Shukla** report on the music concert conducted by **Pt. Shukhdev Prasad** and **Pt. Arunangshu Choudhury**.

Hindustani music, with its universal nature has imbibed, over the centuries, many terms of Arabic, Persian and European classical music, which have added to its complexity and depths. Keeping all these aspects in mind, the music department arranged a workshop conducted by violinist Pt. Sukhdev Prasad Mishra, who comes from an illustrious musical family of the famous *Banaras Gharana*, and Pt. Arunangshu Choudhury, a young vibrant percussionist and composer from the *Farukhabad Gharana*. The workshop was attended by C and B form students who were eager to improve their playing skills and to have a better understanding of music. As a part of our learning we were exposed to different styles of playing the violin and tabla and tried our hand at some challenging techniques such as *Meend* (sliding from one pitch to another), *Gamak* (rapid repetition of a note), various styles of *Kaidas* (a theme with limited strokes) and *Tukdas* (short, fixed composition) of different *Gharanas*. We also explored the true value of sound through different kinds of sound-producing activities and music-making. The two days of intense music sessions concluded with a mesmerizing concert by the two artistes, who, joined by PRY and ABC, performed a *Jugalbandi* (duet) that left the audience spellbound.

The *raga* chosen for the concert was *Raga Jog*, an apt, late-evening pentatonic (5-note) *raga*. The *raga* now enjoys considerable popularity in the semi-classical and light genres as well. It was interesting to learn that the harmonic relationship of the five notes (Sa, Ga, Ma, Pa, Ni) is so fundamental that these note-intervals are found in music across the world. For example, a lot of traditional Chinese music uses this scale and it is also found in the folk-music of Scotland. Pt. Sukhdev and PRY’s thoughtful *Alap-Jod* unfolded, and led to the *Vilambit Jhap tal* of ten beats. The *Bandish* (the part of a *raga* which features a fixed composition) was followed by the *Drut Teen tal* of sixteen beats. This section was in a faster tempo and showed dazzling finger-work and complete understanding of this complex rhythm, drawing repeated applause from the audience, many of whom were attending such a concert for the first time. It was truly a learning experience, not only for us, but for the audience as well. The performers gave us an excellent understanding of musical partnership, with touches of humour woven into the ‘question-answer’ segment between the tablas and string instruments. Just when we would think that the composition was coming to an end, the musicians would pick it up and take it to new heights!

This was the Music Society’s first production of the year, and one which was an undoubted success.

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