So, why do we need regional parties? The answer to this is simple. I have always believed that India is an enigma. 28 states, 7 union territories, 1600 regional languages, a geography ranging from mountains to flatlands, more than five major religions and 645 tribes, each following its own practices, traditions, and culture. I find it extremely difficult to imagine India as anything but a federal country. In fact, federalism is not a compromise, rather it is necessary for the survival of this enigmatic nation. And this is where regional parties step in. They reflect the diverse and heterogeneous composition of the Indian polity. If there was a uniform and cohesive society all throughout the Indian land mass, we could have done away with regional parties. But fortunately or unfortunately that is not the case.

I come from an alienated part of India, the North East. Unreachable, unknown, unimportant and unbridgeable, I have no hesitation in saying that the North East does not receive its due importance. Sometimes, the narrow passage linking the Indian mainland to the northeast seems symbolic, reminding me of the weak link between the North East and ‘India’. And it is my strong belief that the North East has inherited such a fragile social, political and economic fabric that the Central government cannot and will not understand the genesis of the problems haunting it. Insurgency, bomb blasts, racial discrimination, underdevelopment or even alienation. National parties do not understand such issues. Bureaucrats and politicians do not recognize the sensitivity of the region. They have tried wearing the shoes of the Northeasterner but have found them uncomfortable. Perhaps, this is exactly why a special central ministry called the Doner had been formed, devoted only to the development of all the northeastern states. As a result the policies which are implemented do not comprehend the Northeast’s specific interests and needs, treating the region as a composite whole with atypical problems. And this is where regional parties step in. I believe such regional parties understand the complexities of each state and can provide the necessary reforms. They represent that ‘Invisible’ India, which would have remained silent if the dominance of national parties continued. The book People Unlike Us calls this, ‘the India that we either don’t see or don’t want to see’. This ‘Invisible’ India comprises not only the Northeast but other parts of the country which I believe have continually being ignored, such as parts of Orissa, Jharkhand, Kashmir and to an extent South India.

As Susanne Hoeber Rudolf and Lloyd Rudolf write, “the states are making themselves heard and felt politically and economically more than they ever have.” Sometimes, I find myself sympathizing with the cause of the ULF. They wanted Assam to be an independent, sovereign state. They too were exhausted with the continued inferior attitude meted out to the Assamese. With no regional parties in the 1980s to reflect their aspirations, the centre ignored their cries. This is why I say that if we do not allow ventilation of regional aspirations, a diverse country like India will see manifestation of centrifugal tendencies or face balkanization such as insurgency. As Siddhartha Deb has written, “The responses of many tribal groups in the North- east especially insurgency movements may be seen as a reaction, an attempt to reconcile or re-imagine the model laid down for them by the nation-state they are ostensibly fighting.” These tribal groups in my opinion need the help of a larger entity to find voice in the already crowded halls of the nation-state. These larger entities are regional parties. Siddhartha believes that such tribal groups express their aspiration in insurgency movements for their own nation states ‘whose boundaries, like that of all nation states, are often blurred and bloody’. Thus, I say you need regional parties to strengthen the Indian Federation.

Now, it is imperative that I discuss the Congress’ dominance in central politics. This period can be divided into phases. Between 1952 and 1967, the Congress had hegemonic dominance in not only the Centre but also in the states. And during this period, layered accountability between the centre and the states dominated. In such a scenario internal conflicts and feuds that occurred were defused within the Congress machinery. But what is interesting here is that the Congress leaders conveniently used Article 356 to their advantage and dismissed any recalcitrant opposition that won state power. To head off regionalist movements, the Centre used safety valves such as reorganisation of these states on ethnic-
Regulars

DSMUN
The following are the appointments for DSMUN 2013:

Boy-in-Charge: Rishabh Tusnial
Secretary-General: Kunal Kanodia

Heads of Media: Utkarsh Jha and Devesh Sharma
Chairpersons: Anay Grover, Madhav Dutt, Rahul Srivastava, Udhvab Agarwal, Karan Kairon, Ishaan Sandhu, Aaryaman Scindia, Aahan Menon

Congratulations!

APPOINTMENTS
The following are the Boys-in-Charge and Secretaries of various societies and STAs:

The Astronomical Society: Agastya Bellad
Science Society: Udhvab Agarwal
Infinity: Udhvab Agarwal
Art Society: Madhav Dutt
Quiz Society: Karan Pratap Singh Kairon
Historical Circle: Karan Pratap Singh Kairon
Public Speaking (English): Karan Pratap Singh Kairon

Well done all!

BUSINESS CONCLAVE
Shivaan Seth, Uday Goyal and Himanshu Poddar were selected for the finals of the SRCC Business Conclave.

Well done!

CRICKET UPDATE
The School Senior Cricket Team played a match against Bar Council and lost by twenty runs.
The School Junior Cricket Team played a match against Kasiga School and lost by six wickets.

Well tried!

Wedding Bells

The Doon School Weekly would like to congratulate Mr. Rashid Sharfudin on his wedding to Hina Sharif.

Unquotable Quotes

This week began with North Korea conducting a nuclear test, which prompted discussions of severe action and international sanctions by the United Nations Security Council. Meanwhile in the Vatican, Pope Benedict XVI resigned, sparking a search for a new Pope. In Colombia, an earthquake of magnitude 6.9 on the Richter Scale struck causing minor destruction. Back home, 36 people were killed in a stampede during the Kumbh Mela celebrations. Lastly, Oscar Pistorius’s girlfriend was found dead at his home.

THE WEEK GONE BY
Utkarsh Jha

The week gone by was undoubtedly ushered in by DSMUN 2013. The appointments to the various posts of the conference certainly delighted many and of course disappointed a few. Thankfully, the master in charge of the show (who also features in this very publication and who the Editor-in-Chief would like to congratulate) did not carry out his quest to find a replacement and will allow the current Sec-Gen to continue (as long as he begins using certain creams). My sources also tell me that we can expect the media team to be savant grade owing to the fact that they are headed by extremely capable and talented individuals (self-promotion does not hurt, does it?)

The appointments also give me a gut feeling that we may see an inordinate amount of action from Russia and China this DSMUN and a sudden surge in Naxal or Communist leaning crisis situations!

Also worth mentioning is the appointment of a certain J House Sc as the Boy-in-Charge of Secretaries and Boys-in-Charge. This person, after a rather disappointing first day seems to have more than made up by literally bagging any and everything that he can lay his hands upon from the field to the dias. This has of course perplexed many experts in the field of scoping and S and Sc form politics. Mails to the person, asking him for his tactics and secret weapons, were (as expected) unanswered.

In other news, Inter House Cricket for seniors has also started after a relatively short time into the term and just a few days of practice. It may be just me, but I distinctly remember that in my junior forms cricket practices only seemed to end in mid-December. However, it is also possible that this feeling was kindled by the fact that I was beyond terrible at cricket. Frivolous matters aside, I wish all the players the very best of luck for what will hopefully be a great season of cricket.

This week the School also played host to the Headmaster of Eton College who spoke to the school on the three E’s, namely excellence, enthusiasm and endurance. Furthermore, in the same assembly the Headmaster challenged us to come up with the three D’s that Doscos could follow. ‘Desire, determination and discipline’ does not sound bad, does it?

Remember, you read it first in the Weekly.

The Doon School Weekly would like to congratulate Mr. Rashid Sharfudin on his wedding to Hina Sharif.

Opinion Poll
Have you heard about the Verma Panel recommendations?

<table>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<td>26%</td>
<td>74%</td>
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(226 members of the School community were polled)

Next Week’s Question: Do you support capital punishment?

Around the world in 80 Words

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Unquotable quotes

The CDH will be in assembly.

Anay Grover, so where is assembly?

There is no logic but some.

Smayan Sahni, logically!

The rebel was rebellion.

Sachin Mehra, the History teacher.
A single party government is almost impossible to achieve due to the rise of so many regional parties

But what I feel is that regional parties need to be powerful. For they represent regional aspirations...

(continued from page 1)
In my capacity as a board member of the Weekly, I have come to realise that reports on school trips have an unceasing ability to bore the reader. Therefore, in order to provide some relief and rejuvenation, in this report I have vowed to forgo the paragraphs where I talk about the tiring forty hour journey and rather irritatingly stress that we had the time of our life (none of which would be false).

But as it would be foolish to write a report without hinting as to where we were headed, it is essential that I mention fourteen of us, escorted by PDT and SDA, were flying to the 60th Session of the Harvard Model United Nations to be held in Boston. Also noteworthy, is the fact that all fourteen of us were determined to win. We had prepared – read through hundreds of articles, written lines of policy statements and resolutions and bought clothes like we were going to represent Hungary (the country we were assigned) in the actual UN. In hindsight, it would be foolish if we had not prepared, for the throngs of chairpersons in DSMUN eagerly awaited the winners and outperformers. Also in hindsight, I believe there was no need for certain people to brave the cold winds of Boston and New York and dress as though we were stepping out for a walk in the middle of summer.

The committees at HMUN were undoubtedly the biggest we had ever seen, with our committee, the DISEC, having over four hundred delegates in attendance. What must be remembered is that large committees have a different dynamic where caucuses (and to an extent even committee sessions) take a backseat and lobbying outside the committee gains unprecedented importance. However, there were also certain smaller specialized committees were delegates such as Aamir Joshi, Pranay Kapoor and Aahan Menon participated. Overall, I believe the quality of debate, though superior to any other MUN I have been to, was not sky high. What was impressive was the unrelenting lobbying and resolution writing skills of the delegates. I truly believe that we must aim to bring such skills and techniques back to our own conference, DSMUN. I would add that our performance at HMUN was moderately successful with the delegation members winning two awards, our highest tally ever. While Aahan Menon picked up a Outstanding Delegate award and Aamir Joshi received an Honorable Mention, I wish that we had managed to clinch a few more laurels.

Our trip to the Americas also involved sightseeing in New York and Boston, a whole lot fun and frolickic and of course the delegate dance. In New York, where we stayed for the first and last day (before flying home to New Delhi), we managed to shop (you might have noticed a sharp rise in sales of Apple products!), take a river tour of the Statue of Liberty (during which we also held a photoshoot), watch the Phantom of the Opera (which would have been amazing, had we not been falling asleep from jet lag), visit the UN Headquarters (where we planned to hold DSMUN) and accept coupons for everything. We also had the privilege of visiting the campuses of MIT and Harvard during our stay in Boston. Furthermore, though I have been asked to write about the delegate dance, I must refrain myself for it truly deserves another article. To conclude in a rather cliched manner, I wish this report could have done justice to the trip, but no report can, no word in the English language can (I am still not proficient with German)

A Literary Adventure

Arnav Bhavanani

This year, a group of boys, myself included, escorted by MMR, AAQ, DEB, MHF, PRC and Dr Lanka visited the Jaipur Literary Festival from January 24 to 27. The Festival, held at Diggi Palace, was hosted by William Dalrymple, and drew crowds of massive proportions, especially for the conversations with influential figures like Rahul Dravid, Javed Akhtar and Shabana Azmi. The first day was quite eventful. It started off with a prayer, quite literally. We all sat in the Tata Steel Front Lawns, one of the various venues in the Palace, and had a peaceful beginning to the day. Half our group attended the Young Adults Workshop while the rest attended various talks and conversations throughout Diggi Palace. The Workshop aimed to make us bond with people of all types. There were people from villages and towns, as well as metropolitan cities. We were told to talk to each other, and find out whatever we could about the others. The other half of the group went for all the talks, and some of these talks, like ‘The Art of the Short Story’ and ‘The Novel of the Future’ really made quite an impression on us. It was on this day that the Man Booker Prize Finalists were announced. That night, we all went to an ex-Doscos’ restaurant for an amazing dinner. The next day was pretty much the same. Half of us went for the workshop and the rest were off attending the talks. Truth to be told, all of us wanted to go for the talks, because we were missing some really good ones. This second day, we were introduced to the dynamic and humorous personalities of Howard Jacobson and Gary Shteyyergart in ‘The Jewish Novel’, and the crowd was packed for ‘An Evening with Sharmila Tagore’. Day 3 of the Festival was one to remember. It was in ‘Republic of Ideas’, ironically, that Ashis Nandy made his comment about the Dalits and brought back controversy to the Festival. Tarun Tejpal was an eloquent speaker, and effortlessly told us what he thought about his book on the moral limits of markets. The second largest crowd puller was one moderated by Barkha Dutt, about the question of failed states. This night, we went to a much awaited dinner at KFC, and went back to the hotel early, as we were leaving the next day. This year’s Festival was a success, and it managed to be fun and enjoyable while maintaining an atmosphere of that seriousness that all authors are synonymous with to some level.

4. The Doon School Weekly Saturday, February 16
The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Could you please explain the main issues faced by women in India? Sucharita Sengupta (SBS): The actual problem begins when a girl is in her mother’s womb and if the family has been informed of its gender, in a nutshell it all starts before the child is even born. Chances are that the girl at that very point may not be permitted to live and hence infanticide will be carried out. Another massive problem faced by women in our country is sexual harassment which can lead to more violent actions such as rape. Often women are also denied their right to possess property and this seems to be another problem stemming in our nation.

DSW: Can gender equality ever be achieved?

SBS: That is a good question, one that I ask myself every day. I personally don’t know how this will end. I like to think of it like an ongoing battle, but one thing I know for sure is that it is not impossible. I am certainly not the first person in this field and definitely not the last. This just goes to say that there are many people working to achieve this goal of equality. I know I can’t say that from 2013 there is going to be perfect Gender Equality but I believe it is something still worth trying. I also know that this battle has to be fought realistically. Obviously no-one can say that all women are suffering without any rights. There are some very lovely women holding high position in all fields and this as I believe is a symbol of change.

DSW: According to you, over the years has the condition and status of women improved or remained the same?

SBS: I would love to say that it has improved and maybe in a way it has but the simple facts are that in various parts of the country women’s conditions have remained the same if not degraded. It has improved in certain ways such as women getting better jobs and becoming more open-minded as well as innovative. Sadly at the same time, there are women still killing their own daughters when they are just in their wombs, remaining the same if not degraded. It has improved in certain ways such as women getting better jobs and becoming more open-minded as well as innovative. Sadly at the same time, there are women still killing their own daughters when they are just in their wombs, not realizing the cruelty of the act. Women are starting to work abroad and though many women are forced to remain at home there is always hope, hope, that one day all men and women can be equals and may pursue whatever career they choose. Finally it has been noticed that women are having the courage and skill to reply and respond to their husbands as equals which I think is a drastic change for the better.
It was a bitter winter night. The wind decided to show no hesitation and blew mercilessly over the entire city. Had it not been for a pale light resonating off the street lamp the entire street would have been engulfed in complete darkness. Houses were made to look deserted for no one wished to offer accommodation to anyone, especially in these times. The creature, being hungry all day, had decided to try its luck on a garbage can, hoping to find some remains that would help him survive. Suddenly the dog took to its heels as this silence was disrupted by a loud shout. “Get that damn camera outta my face!” and the figure lashed out into the darkness only to come in contact with nothing but the cold air. He felt the heat in his body growing intensely. He tried taking a few calm breaths but to no avail. Had it not been long enough now? Wasn’t time supposed to have healed his so called wounds? Some had healed. Some. But there was still that dream. It kept haunting him every second of his remorseful life. As if falling into a trance he slowly shut his eyelids only to relive that one memory that changed his life.

During his youth when he would be asked what he wished to become once he grew up, unlike his fellow classmates, his answer was simple. All he ever wanted was a normal family, a roof over his head, and three square meals a day. Often god favors those who show modesty and it was this very belief that he thought was the cause for his happiness in the near future. He took whatever little savings he had, and he invested them in a firm which did not show much promise at the beginning, however it did make profits later on, thus resulting in his progress as well. Being one of the wealthiest shareholders of his town, he managed to marry the girl of his dreams, live in a house which was considered simple by few and lavish by many others and needless to say, he enjoyed his life. Strangely enough these were the very thoughts that came to his mind that evening. A Saturday evening. There was not a single cloud in the sky that evening. A cool breeze blew over the town. The new movie had taken the nation by storm; many proclaimed it to be a work of genius. He was fortunate indeed to have gotten tickets. This week had been busy and the family was looking forward to spending some quality time together. His children hurried down the staircase looking adorable followed by his wife with that look of joyfulness that can in no way be expressed by words. Like almost any other family going for a movie they too were running behind schedule. His children were sitting at the back of his car while his wife was up front with him. People dreamed of having what he had: a loving wife two happy children but one never truly realizes the value of something until it is gone. He had always valued, so why then, did he stop his car right before a traffic light. He turned around to find his children playing with a stuffed animal one that he had bought for them just this week. Slowly his wife placed her hand on his and for a moment time simply froze. He did not mind staying in that situation for the rest of his life for that was a time he was happy and in peace. The moment was shattered by a piercing horn and he then saw that the light had turned green.

He slowly advanced forward when all of a sudden his wife’s grip on his hand stiffened. Baffled, he turned his head only to see his wife was not looking in his direction instead she faced the window. A bright light illuminated the street and then he saw the gigantic 8 wheeler speeding towards them. He already knew; judging by its speed, that no matter what he tried collision was inevitable.

He saw his wife’s beautiful face breaking into that of terror and slowly morphing into a scream. He looked back to see his children, staring at their mother who had frightened them, not even completely aware of what was going on, the side of the window. Thinking, panicking, doing anything was in vain. He had been told that keeping hope even in the worst of situations could be obliging in such situations. However he did not keep hope for the survival of his family, he just hoped that they would make it safely to the gates of paradise. Then came the loud blare of a truck horn and everything simply became obscure. The smell of smoke and burnt metal filled his nostrils; pieces of broken glass were all around the floor. He slowly opened his eyes to discover himself surrounded by a pool of blood. There were hardly any people there but in the distance he could make out vague figures approaching the spot. He just managed to catch a glimpse of the escaping truck, the driver with no intention to stop or slowdown whatsoever. It was only then that a sharp pain shot up his right leg. The sight of his trampled leg was something that would send any ordinary man to the state of unconsciousness. The moment would have happened here if only he did not seen what lay behind his leg. At first he could not make out what the heap in front of him was. Then he understood that that ambiguous figure was none other than his wife. The grief had dawned on to the stuffed animal but its face was now smeared in blood. He could not even tell which one of his children it was, only just begun for then he caught a glimpse of his children both lying right beside their mother. One of them still held his hand but the other lay motionless in front of her. The new movie had taken the nation by storm; many proclaimed it to be a work of genius. He was fortunate indeed to have gotten tickets. This week had been busy and the family was looking forward to spending some quality time together. His children hurried down the staircase looking adorable followed by his wife with that look of joyfulness that can in no way be expressed by words. Like almost any other family going for a movie they too were running behind schedule. His children were sitting at the back of his car while his wife was up front with him. People dreamed of having what he had: a loving wife two happy children but one never truly realizes the value of something until it is gone. He had always valued, so why then, did he stop his car right before a traffic light. He turned around to find his children playing with a stuffed animal one that he had bought for them just this week. Slowly his wife placed her hand on his and for a moment time simply froze. He did not mind staying in that situation for the rest of his life for that was a time he was happy and in peace. The moment was shattered by a piercing horn and he then saw that the light had turned green.

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