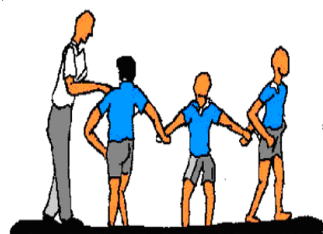


Established in 1936



The Doon School WEEKLY

Saturday, Sep 14 • 2013 • Issue No. 2353



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WHEN DUTY CALLS...

Ambikesh Shukla

A lonely signboard bearing the name of what was once a school is all that remains as a grim reminder of the disaster that struck Uttarakhand this June. Many have died, many still missing but for those who remain, there is often little time to grieve as they put together the pieces of their lives which changed irrevocably since tragedy struck.

In keeping with Doon's commitment to what ex-Headmasters described as 'Being There', School has been trying to do its bit towards ameliorating the plight of the people in the hills. The work is going to be challenging and as our current Headmaster, Dr McLaughlin pointed out, long term. The first step, however, is to identify the needs, areas and nature of help that might be required. It is in the course of taking this first step that on 25th and 26th August, 2013, a team comprising Mr P. K. Nair, Wg Cdr Anupama Joshi, Dr M. C. Joshi and Mr. Ambikesh Shukla started out from Dehradun at four in the morning of August 25th. En route they crossed Srinagar, Rudraprayag, Agastyamuni and finally reached Chandrapuri (the most affected small town in this area) at around 1.30 PM. Beyond Chandrapuri it was almost impossible to proceed further – the vehicle had to be left behind at Agastyamuni and the team trekked up to Chandrapuri. What they saw at these places left them numb – it was evident that all the help that could be extended would be required to help get the lives of those affected limp back to normalcy. They met many people on the way and visited their homes, shops and government schools as well as private schools promoted by the enthusiastic and hard working people of the region. Some private schools were beyond repair and not fit for any purpose.

The team then visited villages of Chaka and Chamrada, where they met many villagers. Chaka has got 90 families and Chamrada 20 families. Dozens of people from these two villages are still living in tents provided by the different NGOs, industrial houses and other donors. The group felt that of the two places, Chamrada was in greater need of help. Therefore, the plan they proposed was that Chamrada village be adopted as it is a small village and here School can help about a dozen families in a phased manner.

Next, the team visited four separate premises of what were schools once upon a time. All of these were in need of help, but the Takshila Public School, SilliSera was the immediate option according to the team. This school had a building with 9 rooms and some other facilities. The school had classes from Nursery to 8th with 11 teachers and 165 students. The promoter is very enthusiastic, sincere and passionate about his students and he has already been helping the poorest amongst the poor, supporting 25% of students on rolls under the RTE act. But the main hurdle is to buy a piece of land for the school building and later construct the new building.

A second reece was done for identifying priorities and a team went to Satagar, Sirva and Parodi villages in Dehradun district on Sunday, September 1, 2013. The reece team comprised Dr. Mohan Chandra Joshi, Dr Amar Lanka, Mr. Ambikesh Shukla and Mr. Devendra Bahugana of Himalaya Trust, an NGO.

Situated on a very popular trekking route to Nagtibba, this part of Dehradun is known as Thatyur. This area has also been among the worst hit in the calamity and has suffered a large loss of property including cattle heads. Fortunately there was no loss of human life but people have suffered a lot and will take a long time to recover. In many areas recovery is almost impossible as the cultivable land has been washed away completely and their dwelling units have been razed to the ground.

At Satagar, a village of 22 families, the immediate need is of some income generation since the destruction of their cultivable lands has taken away their main occupation, growing seasonal vegetables. At least 8-10 of these families need new dwelling units as their present homes have developed huge cracks. The school building in this village also needs immediate clearing and repair as flash-floods debris has entered the classrooms and as of now, this school is being run from a nearby ITI. ITI authorities have allowed them to use their premises for about two months only and it may be necessary to relocate the school in the near future. As of now, certain extent of clearing and repairs will allow the students to continue with their studies while other arrangements are being made. This village also needs a community centre as villagers don't have a common place where they can sit together and occasionally use it for other social gatherings. If this were to be constructed, our school students can also stay there and work in the village.

Beyond Thatyur on the Nagtibba route, at Sirva village the team met two affected families. The head of one of the families, a shoe mender who works on the road side in the Thatyur market, is finding it difficult to pull through on his own. His income is limited and his two married sons are also daily laborers but in this area they hardly get any work.

The village Parodi, much ahead of Thatyur on Jaunpur Road saw massive destruction this June. Fortunately many NGOs and other agencies are already working there. However Satagad and Sirva seemed to be in immediate need of help. The visiting teams recommended that School should start work in these two villages as early as the mid-term break in September 2013.

TABLE TENNIS

Following are the results of the Foot vs. Martyn Table Tennis fixtures:

In the team event, Martyn **beat** Foot **3-1** and in the doubles category, Martyn **beat** Foot **2-0**.

Commendable performances were shown in the form of Anuman Goyal, Yatharth Gupta and Aditya Gupta. Well Done!

AQUATIC MEET

The Doon School hosted the 2nd Inter School Aquatic Meet on the 6th and 7th of September. The School **won** the under 15 category and were placed joint second along with **RIMC** in the under 18 category. The school emerged as the winners for the second consecutive year. Congratulations!

SCHOLARS

The following boys have been awarded the **Nikhil Gupta Charitable Trust Scholarship** for securing the highest marks in English, Mathematics and Science in the 2013 ISC and ICSE board exams:

ISC English: Vidit Sadana

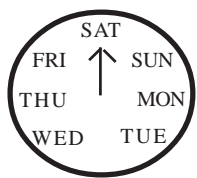
ISC Mathematics and Science: Mahak Sharma

ICSE English: Aditya Bhattacharya, Aditya Gandhi, Pulkit Agarwal, Varun Narain Sinha, Vireshwar Sidhu, Kartikey Jain, Armaan Imam, Abhinav Kejriwal, Divyansh Goyal, Rajkumar Vijay, Ayush Tripathi, Suyash Raj Shivam and Yuvraj Nathani.

ICSE Mathematics and Science: Pulkit Agarwal

The following have been awarded the **Jaidev Singh Memorial Award** for securing the highest marks in Science in the ICSE 2013 Board exams: Preetham Mohan, Sidharth Pahuja, Suyash Raj Shivam and Pulkit Agarwal.

Congratulations!



The Week Gone By... Vireshwar Singh Sidhu

Yes! We will have a holiday after Test Week, or rather, what we hope will be a holiday after Test Week. After all, our debaters won the school's very own '57th Chuckerbutty Memorial English Debates', brushing aside *Vasant Valley*, Delhi. The School certainly has been experiencing a successful period in Inter-School Competitions. Not only did the debaters debate their way to a holiday, but the swimmers swam to victory in the '2nd Aquatic Meet' hosted by the school.

So, here we are. Test Week began and ended before we could even comprehend what it was all about. The PTMs now lurk above our heads and it is an especially dreaded time for the B and A formers as most of their marks will be disclosed right in front of their parents.

Back to the future. Trials are far off and we now have two full months of relaxation (or not). In the meantime, the 'Inter-House Football Competition' is on our heads. Let's play some ball.



Around the world In 80 Words

In Muzaffarnagar thirty eight people have been killed in communal clashes since Saturday. In Philippines, the Muslim Moro National Liberation Front rebels are holding more than a hundred and eighty hostages. North and South Korea have decided to reopen their joint industrial park on a trial basis from next week. Apple has released its latest range of iPhones, called iPhone 5C and iPhone 5S. In Baghdad, a suicide bomber killed thirty and wounded fifty people in a mosque.



Weekly Selects

*The best articles, this week, from
around the world*

Hitting the Jackpot – **The Economist**
What broke my Father's Heart – **The New York Times**
The Child Exchange – **Reuters**
Prep School Gangsters – **New York**
Delhi Rape: How India's other half lives – **The Guardian**

Unquotable Quotes

Everybody knows that the capital of Italy is France.

Sarvagya Dhiman, Geography Teacher.

Report to me back.

MLJ, Right away, sir.

I have a bone-pull.

Rahul Bhagchandani, how did you manage that?

| Junior Poetry |

The Life of A Poem

Rohan Singh

As I see my hands move along this blank page
weaving a tapestry of poetry
I wonder, what if I had left this page empty
what if I had let it be?

Now this page is black and white
like an old TV screen
but what about this page's past
what about the horror it's seen?

Lives are lost just so you can read these words
the trees tremble at the sight
of the woodcutter coming with his axe
and as he swings it with all his might.

The story goes, there was once a tree
which now lies a stump
as the huge, lush green forest
turns into a smelly, stinky dump.

And in this dump my poem lands
perhaps read, rejected, and discarded
its life seeps slowly into the ground
and becomes one with the ground, again.

Bureaucracy: Boon or Bane?

Anvay Grover

The past month's incident with IAS Officer Durga Shakti Nagpal really made many people sit up and take notice of the state the Indian Bureaucracy finds itself in. Indications of this have been going around for several years and its time a major overhaul be done. Also, it is no coincidence that the Indian bureaucracy was ranked the worst in Asia by Hong Kong based Political and Economic Risk Consultancy with a rating of 9.21 (Higher the rating, worse is the bureaucracy) while Singapore had a rating of 2.25. The report goes on to say that 'Indian bureaucrats were rarely held responsible for wrong decisions they took'. But this is not the only reason for the Bureaucracy being in shambles. There is too much political pressure on India's officers. Here I will try and see what goes on in the Indian bureaucracy and how it may be fixed.

This has already been said many times before. The citizens of the country are not the only ones who are suffering at the hands of corrupt politicians; the officers suffer too. There is a difference between political direction and political intervention, and our politicians always look to intervene to see how they can benefit from the bureaucracy's activities. Take Durga Nagpal's case for example. Like an honest IAS Officer she took on the sand mafia in Uttar Pradesh. We all know what happened next. She was promptly suspended and Akhilesh Yadav stated the reason that she had ordered the demolition of an illegally built mosque which would have caused communal tensions. However, the local police was later quoted as saying that she had informed the villagers that the mosque was illegally built and the villagers had taken it down themselves; and peacefully. What Akhilesh Yadav failed to mention was the direct political nexus of his government with the sand mafia. Narendra Bhati, a member of Yadav's government even bragged that all it took was a few phone calls and 41 minutes to get Durga Shakti Nagpal suspended. Social media erupted on hearing this news and immediately more such cases from around the country surfaced. Headstrong IAS Officers are having a hard time getting by in this country. Ashok Khemka best exemplifies this. He has been transferred 43 times in his entire professional career (only 20 years) and the longest stint at one place has been one year and eight months. The message seems pretty clear now, there is no use of messing with people with political influence as no result comes out of it.

These incidents have led to creation of fear in junior bureaucrats that boldness will lead to harassment and thus they always look for a precedent in decision-making. Senior and experienced bureaucrats must lead the way here. The seniors must change things and deal with political masters innovatively. This does not guarantee an immediate impact but having more Durga Nagpals and Ashok Khemkas is likely to put politicians under pressure through the media and social activists. Also, the government must find a way to regulate political intervention in the bureaucracy.

Another problem with the functioning of Indian bureaucrats is that they are hardly judged or rewarded on their work output. In the current performance appraisal for officers, 60% weightage is given to personal attributes and skills and the leftover 40% to work output. As a result 90% of the bureaucrats were adjudged 'outstanding'. In other countries 80% weightage goes to work output and just 20% to personal skills. Also, the pay of an employee could be based on work competency. For example, in Brazil only 40% of a civil servant's pay is fixed while 60% depends on his work competency. This means incompetent government servants will automatically get less pay. This will serve as motivation for them to actually work for the people's welfare rather than being guaranteed their wage even if they are incompetent and do not work efficiently enough. Cabinet Secretary Ajit Singh put it best in a recent conference, "If everyone is outstanding, no one is."

The bureaucracy of any nation, other than serving the government in power and implementing its policies must also maintain the framework of law and see to it that it is not violated. It is for this reason that they are called civil servants and demand the respect of the society.

Logo Man

The Doon School Weekly interviewed *Randhia Malan, an old boy, who helped refresh the visual identity of the School*

DSW: Could you tell us in detail the entire process from the mind map to the presentation?

Randhia Malan(RNM): All the old boys, stake holders, old masters and current boys are fiercely loyal to the school and its identity. If I were to change the brand identity of The Doon School from a lamp to an elephant, there is no way that anybody would listen to me. Because the lamp has, and will always be the main identity of this school. So it wasn't the changing of the visual identity, but the redefining of the visual identity that I talked about today. When I was growing up, if a person wanted his child to have a first class education, he would send him to Doon or Woodstock because there weren't many good schools in those days. But the situation has changed now and the relevance of this type of school has to be reaffirmed. The visual identity is the first step towards this.

DSW: In terms of the logo you chose, were there other options?

Randhia Malan(RNM): There were a lot of options and I think initially we shortlisted about 20 different fonts. I was a little predisposed towards Garamond because I felt it is a versatile font. My concern towards the visual identity wasn't very aesthetic but it was towards being more practical and technical. The reason why we have so many logos today is that they have not been technically suited towards being a logo. They have to be modified to be applicable for a certain context.

DSW: Do you think this logo is here to stay?

Randhia Malan(RNM): From my point of view, this logo is here to stay because if you create a logo in one strong color, it will last for a long time. I know a few companies where logos have lasted for 45- 60 years without being changed. So if this logo lasts for the next 80 years, I would be really happy.

Letters To The Editor

Are We Really Helping?

Aditya Bhattacharya

The Doon School prides itself on being socially responsible and always being proactive when it comes to helping the community. But is our help making a real, long-term and tangible difference? I know this topic has been hotly debated many times, but there are certain aspects of this debate that have remained untouched. I believe that while we may be educated and learned in some areas, we are still ignorant and inexperienced in the field of social service as none of us have had to rely on social service to survive or rebuild our lives. It is not our fault that we cannot empathize with those whom we help, but then there are certain areas where our knowledge and expertise can be of great use and help. I remember having been sent to a social service project because I had not fulfilled the mandatory hours of social service required each term. Moreover many others were in a similar situation and were being sent to complete their social service hours. If that is the case, then the very idea of social responsibility stands

defeated, because responsibility is taken up as a duty or a passion, not as a basis for getting an 'A' in your SUPW section in the ISC or the ICSE, or for fulfilling CAS hours. It should not be forced upon us. I understand that as members of the aristocracy of service envisioned by Arthur Foot and SR Das, it is our duty to help those who are not as privileged as us, but are we really helping? The aforementioned social service project that I attended made no difference at all to the lives of others. We were dropped off at a small slum-like dwelling near Bidholi, without any clear instructions as to what

“If that is the case, then the very idea of social responsibility stands defeated, because responsibility is taken up as a duty or a passion, not as a basis for getting an ‘A’ in your SUPW section in the ISC or the ICSE, or for fulfilling CAS hours.”

we were to achieve or accomplish in the one hour that we were to spend there. Perhaps we had been told, perhaps we hadn't. But what was racing through our minds was not, “I have to spend this time as efficiently as possible so that I can be of maximum utility to under-privileged people,” but, “I hope this finishes quickly so that I can get back to school and attend my practices/catch up on my pending work/collect something/take a nap.” This list of possible things to get back to goes on endlessly. When we asked the slum dwellers what they needed us to bring them which would be of some use, they told us that we were the second or third party from school to enquire after their needs. But no one came with what they needed.

Another incident, one that is fresh in my memory is the time when all the S-formers of K House and J House went to Rasulpur village to help with the Doon-Oakham Project. Having woken up at 7 AM, tempers were short when we boarded the buses and matters didn't get any better when we realised it would take three and a half hours to reach the village. However, after numerous delays on the road, and a lot of grumbling, we reached the village where we walked around for about an hour before we realised that there was no work for us to be done. So, we proceeded to have the lunch that had been prepared by the residents and then retook our seats in the bus, and headed back to school. We had spent almost 9 hours of the day doing quite literally nothing. We could see that any work that was to be done would not be of any use because the rains would wash away all that we had done. The change we work towards is only temporary, waiting to be reverted to its old self before another group comes along and makes a change, and the cycle seems to repeat itself.

Even if we go for social service for an hour every week, it is no big deal. But where is this hour going to come from? The new schedule provides for only half an hour after tea time to get ready for games, and although there are SUPW days allotted to boys, there are always some practices, talks, competitions or even assignments that need to be taken care of first. There are tutorial meetings and society meetings during evening toy, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays there is no evening toy, but boys have evening classes, talks and numerous other things to attend to during this time. So when boys are sent on a Sunday morning to do some work, and it is not done, and most of the time is spent traveling, it does raise questions about the credibility of the service that we do.

I sincerely apologise if I have offended anyone by writing this article, but let me be honest: if I had to choose between going for soccer or music practice or even work an hour in the publication room, and going for social service, I would readily choose the former. Social service should be focused more on our capabilities, our strengths and weaknesses, and the feasibility of spending large amounts of time on a project. In the end, social service is one of the moral duties of all of us privileged enough to study here at Doon, and we do not want to see both the people of our country and the activity itself suffer.



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