

ESTABLISHED IN 1936



The Doon School WEEKLY



Saturday, February 22 | Issue No. 2365

Regulars

2

Unquotes

2

Reports

3

Viewpoint

4

Yeh Dil Hai Hindustani

Aditya Bhattacharya

'Pakistan's gonna lose tonight, India's future's always bright, blue and white, blue and white, blue and white, blue and white.'

I first heard this spin-off of Wiz Khalifa's hit song back in 2011, when India was to face Pakistan in the Semi-Final of the ICC Cricket World Cup. India went on to win the Cup but the anti-Pakistan image remained firmly embedded in my mind. Almost three years later, I now regard that song with utmost contempt. Of course, a study of Indian and Pakistani history has helped reshape my perspective on this issue.

Before the British came knocking at our door, looking for as much wealth as they could ship back to England, Hindus and Muslims lived in near-harmony. Though the Mughals were Muslim, and the majority population Hindu, there is no evidence of communal feelings emerging, even towards the end of an effective Mughal rule over India, post the Battle of Plassey. Up until 1857, Hindus and Muslims got on well, barring a few cases of violence here and there. But once the British began blaming the Muslims for the Revolt, all feelings of mutual cooperation and coexistence subsided. One could argue that there was no large-scale rioting, but Jinnah's words in 1946 suggest otherwise. "We shall either have a divided India, or a destroyed one." Not exactly the most peaceful of statements to make, but Jinnah never was one to mince his words.

So, when PMV suggested that Amaan Kazmi, Hamza Khan and I interact with delegates from the Lyceum School, Karachi, who were attending the Round Square Conference we were hosting, my thoughts were about how this interaction would play out. I was slightly hesitant as to the kind of strained interaction that we might have with them, and to how politically correct we all would have to be towards both countries. Yet, when I turned up at the Library that rainy Friday afternoon, little did I know that my perspective was heading towards a U-turn. As we sat together and discussed the kinds of issues we all faced in our respective countries, we found out that we had more in common with each other than with most people in our own schools! And there began a reformation, not of belief, but of our inaction.

We instantly connected with each other, and there was virtually no language barrier, barring the difference in our native scripts. We all face the same problems, the same expectations and the same disappointments from our respective governments. Pakistan and India are virtually the same. People may argue that this may be true for all countries, but the fact is that Pakistan and India should never have been two different countries. It was arguably the most heinous crime that our forefathers could have committed. Splicing the nation on the basis of religion has left both communities scarred and experiencing the same feelings that they had for each other at the time of the British Raj in the subcontinent. Hindus and Muslims generally get along well in India and more often than not you hear about Hindus beating up Hindus (that's the RSS and the MNS for you). Of course, tensions between India and Pakistan have been high in the last year or so, and the issues of Kashmir and frequent border intrusions have made worsened the situation.

At a time when both countries act so much like squabbling siblings, who do we rely on to keep the Indo-Pak relationship strong? The Times Of India has had a column called *Aman ki Asha* dedicated to the same cause, and it is quite popular. Yet words mean nothing without action, and without popular movements, too. For there was no discernible difference between Sultan, Jasir, Sobia, Yusra, and Rida, and us. Then why do we remain so apathetic and indifferent to those who were a part of our country just seventy years ago? I found the answer within the question: we, as a generation, simply do not care! Both Indian and Pakistani teenagers are to blame. We are caught up with our busy lives and have absolutely no time to think about Pakistan or India. Is that a good reflection of our education, culture and intellect?

As we bid them farewell on Monday evening, we all felt a sense of loss. After discovering so many commonalities with them, we were not prepared to watch them leave. It was only then that we realized what many felt at the time of partition. We were not strangers, yet we were nothing more than friends from across the border. Then we could empathize with the man from Manto's story 'Toba Tek Singh'.



Regulars

IAYP

The following boys have completed various levels of the **IAYP**:

Bronze:

Ishaan Kapoor, Rahul Bhagchandani, Vihaan Bhatnagar, Rahul Garg, Sikandar Suri, Madhav Nath Gurtoo , Kartavya Nagpal, Yash Killa, Madhav Singhal, Prabhasharan Singh Mamik , Ashish Pande , Samarth and Pratyaksh Singh Parmar

Silver:

Anvay Grover, Arnav Jain and Lakshya Varshney

Sehaj Singh Jouhal has completed the **Gold** level of the **IAYP** and has been awarded the **IAYP Blazer**. Congratulations!

APPOINTMENTS

The following have been appointed as the **Chairpersons** for the **DSMUN Conference 2014**:
Abhinav Kejriwal, Gaurav Kothari, Sachin Mehra, Yash Upadhyay, Prabhur Bal, Vrindam Nagpal, Armaan Imam, Palash Kanwar, Divyansh Goel, Pulkit Aggarwal, Arush Sood, Amaan Kazmi, Devansh Aggarwal, Aditya Bhattacharya and Abhayraj Jain

Vinayak Chaudhary has been appointed the **Boy-In-Charge** of **RLSS** for the forthcoming year. Ayuushman Arora and Vedant Agarwal have been appointed the **Boys-in-Charge** of the **Cycling STA** for the forthcoming year.

Siddhant Gupta has been appointed the **School Choir Leader**.

Dhananjaya Bansal has been elected as the Secretary of the **Study Council**.

Ashutosh Goyal has been appointed **Boy-in-Charge** of the **HAM Radio STA** for the forthcoming year. We wish them all a fruitful tenure!



Weekly Selects

The Dark Power of Fraternities

The Atlantic

Acid Trap

Aeon

On Not Going Home

London Review of Books

36 Hours On The Fake Campaign Trail With Donald Trump

Buzzfeed

Seduced and Abandoned

Vanity Fair

The Facebook Comment That Ruined a Life

Dallas Observer

What I Saw When I Crashed a Wall Street Secret Society

New York

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

The ball was hit by you up.

Bharat Choudhary, did you catch it?

I still haven't understand the definition.

Umang Gupta, let us explain.

The Dodo is a Pokemon.

Pratyaksh Parmar, really?

Reply the answer.

Aditya Bhattacharya, please repeat the question.

I opened the TV.

Nehansh Saxena, the technician.

My pant is loosed.

Chaitanya Gulati, wear a belt.

ASSAN BARRAGE'S BIRDS

Rudra Srivastava

Five boys escorted by VVK went to Assan Barrage for a guided bird watching tour on the 9th of the month and visited the Uttarakhand Spring Bird Festival. We left early morning with growling stomachs and shivering bodies, but our curiosity made up for the same. After enduring a long journey to the barrage, we were welcomed by a spectacular view of numerous wetland birds paddling in the pool and sunbathing on the shore. We quickly registered ourselves and prepared to explore the Timli forest. Following another bus ride, we reached the trail location. The tour was exclusive and indeed, we did see a large selection of birds in the Sal forest ranging from Woodpecker species such as the Fulvous Breasted Woodpecker, Himalayan Goldenback and the Brown Capped Pygmy Woodpecker, to birds such as the Spangled Drongo , Greater Yellownappe and the Chestnut Bellied Nuthatch. Apart from just visually identifying birds, listening to their calls and discerning bird species was also an important attribute taught to us by the guide and his team. After spending an hour of quality time amongst our feathery friends, we returned back to the main festival location and made up our minds to survey the array of stalls put up by various Wildlife related Organisations such as the WWF. After a hearty pizza meal and a tiring day, we boarded the bus to return back to school. In all, it was a great experience and all of us were only disappointed about the fact that we could not stay long enough in order to visit the other enthralling trails.

RSC Cambodia

Mr Ambikesh Shukla and Dr Amar Lanka

The Round Square Leadership Training Project took place from December 7 to 13, 2013, in the Takeo province of Cambodia, about 90 kms south of Phnom Penh. The team consisted of 22 adults of 10 different countries from schools affiliated to Round Square. The team leader was Liz Gray, the manager for Round Square International Service Projects, London. The Doon School was the only school from India. The project took place in coordination with A Mine-Free World Foundation (AMFWF), Canada, and the Banyan Learning Tree Foundation, Cambodia.

Cambodia is one of the poorest countries in Asia and this project was aimed at assisting poor women in rebuilding work ethic and skills. Through a careful selection and interview process, women from families lacking a sustainable income were given vocational training during a three-month period at the Weaving Centre.

The other aim of the Project was to train the teachers of schools to be Leaders or Deputy Leaders in future Round Square projects, which are very challenging and demanding responsibilities. Over the duration of the project, a wide variety of community service was done and the team constructed a weaving centre to employ the poor women of the area. Three looms were bought and installed there. Additionally, a one-stall toilet building with a metal roof and septic tank was also constructed. The team members had also raised USD 11,000 from their schools and associates that was used to further help the economically challenged villagers of the area. This was used to hire expert staff to train the local women in weaving. A woman trained in weaving can earn 4 USD per day, much higher than the usual daily wage of 1 USD of one Cambodian.

Also, 50 bicycles were given to children so that they could comfortably cover long distances from their homes to their schools. Mosquito nets were provided to prevent the mosquito-borne diseases, which are highly prevalent in Cambodia. 11 chicken coops were given to families for micro-business and self-sustenance. Dental hygiene products, including toothbrushes and toothpastes, were distributed after giving awareness talks and demonstrations to all locals, especially the children. During the mid-project break, the team also visited the S-21 museum, the 'Killing fields', and a Vishnu temple dating back to circa 6 BCE that took an hour to reach by speedboat.

It was an extremely enriching and rewarding experience, and we are grateful to the Headmaster for his encouragement and assistance in this regard. We expect to continue contributing more to the Round Square community as a member school, and to keep giving back to the underprivileged, in accordance with our School's proud ethos.

MELODIC DIALOGUE

Madhav Singhal

A duet featuring a Western and an Indian instrument, each from its classical tradition, is a rare combination. The two forms of music are known to be fundamentally different from each other. While Hindustani Music is linear, with improvisation in its very core, Western Music has a more rigid formal structure based on harmonic movements and progressions. The preconception of them being inconsonant lingers in one's mind. Last Sunday evening SPICMACAY organized a concert of a sitar and a cello, and the confluence of the two instruments was strong enough to allay all the scepticism.

Shubhendra Rao and Saskia Rao De Haas, a couple from backgrounds as diverse as their instruments, treated us to fusion of the two. Mr Rao is well-known as a versatile sitarist who has, many on an occasion, crossed the conventional boundaries with his skill and musicality. He also recalled the time when he had first visited the School 29 years ago with his guru, Pandit Ravi Shankar. The legendary maestro, readers will be interested in knowing, actually composed music for our School Orchestra's performance at Founder's Golden Jubilee. Saskia Rao grew up in Holland and is a virtuoso cellist. She is also an ethnomusicologist who has studied under renowned flautist, Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia. She has adapted her music and her instrument to suit the Hindustani style. Her electro-acoustic cello is specially customized, having five strings instead of the usual four and ten resonating strings. These strings, as the name suggests, resonate when tuned to the five strings being bowed. The fifth (higher in pitch) string gives an added dimension to the low and rich tone of the cello. The first performance of the evening was of Raga Bihag. As all Ragas have a certain time and mood to be played in, Bihag is best suited to be played in the second quarter of the night. The mood is both celebratory as well as romantic. The Raga unfurled slowly with the sitar leading and the cello replying with a melodic bass. The theme was like a dialogue between the two instruments where the reverberation of the sitar found its reply in the flowing notes of the cello. Both the artists displayed their virtuosity in the fast concluding jhala which ended with a sparkling tihai.

Brilliant too, was the performance of Mr Durjay Bhowmik who, on the tabla, executed the technically demanding rela at a breath-taking speed. The dialogue amongst the three instruments showcased the unique structure and unfolding of a Raga. Kirwani akin to the harmonic minor scale, had a haunting quality, highlighted by the deep timbre of the cello.

After both the performances, a lively interactive session for the students took place. After receiving their answers from the very best, the students became more musically aware and expanded their musical knowledge. We were truly privileged to be able to listen to artistes who not only expressed their music beautifully but also conveyed their passion for it.

The Third Alternative

Arjun Kamdar and Husain Haider

With general elections fast approaching, the anxiety in national political circles is on the rise. There are many possible coalition and power-sharing possibilities. Political organizations have upped the ante, the government has rolled in 'populist schemes', and the main opposition parties are making the usual promises in order to capture more votes. On the whole, India is gearing up for a political showdown and choosing from among the prospects available will be a herculean task for the common voter. Much like previous Lok Sabha polls, voters will be required to make choices influenced by public welfare, economic policy and socio-economic development schemes. The opinion polls suggest bleak chances for the incumbent Congress led UPA government, with the Narendra Modi-headed opposition riding high on its successful 'Gujarat development model'.

However, the growing prospect of a non-Congress and non-BJP alliance has further complicated the already speculative political dilemma. All forms of Media are pointing towards one prospect: that of a 'Third Front' or 'Third Alternative'. The 'Third Front' is essentially a collaboration of regional and semi-national parties, which presents an electoral alternative to the incumbent UPA (United Progressive Alliance) government and the major opposition NDA (National Democratic Alliance). The Third Alternative seems a promising candidate to bring about change that the country needs. This is probably only because pessimism triumphs over optimism, meaning that people are more likely to join hands 'against something' than 'for something'. Thus, citizens are inclined to vote for the new anti-BJP, anti-Congress option. But history will prove that this cannot be a long term option. After Indira Gandhi's Emergency a colourful coalition of anti-Congress parties achieved a landslide victory. However, as a result of the clash of ideologies and in-fighting, the first 'Third Front', led by Morarji Desai, caved. Again in 1996 when the Third Front (United) came into power, the Congress's external support was withdrawn within a little more than a year's time. Nevertheless, the 'modern third front' sought by Nitish Kumar is quickly becoming a reality in the hearts of the voters. Conversely, the rising popularity of the sprouting regional party alliance has not invited any stiff reactions from the national parties. Speculation suggests that the Congress's 'soft' stance is based on the fact that the alternative formation will be directly cutting the BJP vote share. Hence, the incumbent government will be in an advantageous situation post-election with the required numbers to dictate terms to both a weakened BJP and an unstable third front.

However, national parties have highlighted the inability of such a political collaboration to win enough seats to form a stable central government. Considering this, support from national parties will eventually be required to form a stable government. Another flaw in the electoral agenda of the 'Third Front' is the idea of 'secularism'. This notion appears to be contradictory as major parties of the alternative formation such as AIADMK and JD(U) have been past allies of the NDA, largely considered a communal party by minority communities. Moreover, concerns are being raised against the alliance's lack of an elaborate economic model and foreign policy plan. India is dealing with various problems of social, economical and foreign policy origin. With rising rates of inflation, poverty and unemployment, the nation is facing the heat of a socio-economic crisis. Amidst this worsening situation, the country needs a powerful union government with effective and quick problem-solving economic measures. Hence, choosing a coalition without a well-defined socio-economic policy will be considered an unrealistic choice by the educated class of the society. Also, for a political alliance to function properly it is necessary for parties involved to prioritize a common agenda above individual ideologies. Third party ideologies vary from the communist Left Front to the central-left Trinamool congress and the centrist AIADMK. There are significant differences within member parties themselves. History of political enmity such as the SP-BSP rivalry and the Left Front-Trinamool congress confrontation can be extremely difficult situations for the coalition to handle.

On the brighter side, certain constituents of the upcoming alliance have achieved constant public support and administrative appraisal over the years. Even after losing its strongholds in West Bengal and Kerala, the Left Front has constantly been in power in Tripura under the leadership of incumbent Chief Minister Manik Sarkar. This bears testimony to the common's man faith in the constituent parties of the alternative formation. In conclusion, the notion of a 'Third Alternative' is attractive but premature. It is providing voters with a wider spectrum of electoral choice, but the concept is weakened when logistics are taken into consideration. The constituent regional parties are powerful, but their influence is restricted to their regional domain. Therefore, successfully collaborating together on a national stage is highly unlikely. And taking the variation of political ideologies under consideration, it will be difficult to provide effective governance. At present, the nation and its citizens are unprepared to take such a political gamble.

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

weekly@doonschool.com



IPSS: All rights reserved. **Printed by:** The English Book Depot, 16 Rajpur Road, Dehradun, Uttarakhand – 248009, India. **Published by:** PK Nair, The Doon School, Dehradun.

Editor-in-Chief: Aditya Bhattacharya **Editor:** Arjun Kamdar **Senior Editors:** Husain Haider, Pulkit Agarwal, Vireshwar Sidhu **Associate Editors:** Anvay Grover, Arnav Bhavanani, Devansh Agarwal, Arth Gupta **Hindi Editor:** Vallavi Shukla **Hindi Correspondents:** Rohan Hundia, Vihaan Bhatnagar **Special Correspondents:** Varun Sehgal, CC Chengappa, Jaivir Puri, Madhav Singhal, Chaitanya Kediyal **Junior Correspondents:** Nehansh Saxena, Deep Dhandhanian **Webmaster:** Vishal Mohla **Assistant Managers:** Shrey Nagalia, Anamika Ghose, Arvindanabha Shukla, Umung D Varma **Technical Assistant:** KC Maurya