



Established in 1936

The Doon School

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Talking Turkey in Mussoorie

Shikhar Singh reports on the Model United Nations meet at Woodstock School

“Diplomacy is to do and say the nastiest thing in the nicest way.” With these words Bisaac Goldberg, summed up forty-eight hours of activity at the Model United Nations at Woodstock School. A group of eight boys from Doon participated in the event as representatives of Turkey, and used the opportunity to understand the dynamics of international politics, negotiations and functioning of the various organs of the United Nations.

An Ambassador taxi drove the group to Mussoorie. Inside, Turkish foreign policy, use of tact and policy statements dominated the conversation. On arriving at the Hannibal Centre, where our accommodation had been arranged, we quickly dressed for ‘high tea’ and our first session that evening. While Rohan Gupta represented us at the Economic and Social Council, Skand Goel led the delegation in the UNEP, Akshit Batra in the Human Rights’ Council and I in the Security Council. Each of us, accompanied by our deputy-delegates (observers) had hurriedly put together Turkish stands on water disputes, human rights records, UN reforms, nuclear proliferation and other matters of global concern.

At 6:30 that evening, the ice was broken as we commenced our meeting. The next two days were marked by day-long discussions, deliberations, hectic lobbying and heated debates. The first lesson learnt was to be as evasive as possible and mask oneself in social niceties and mannerisms. Quite Victorian, and not surprisingly, the restrictions on the use of personal pronouns and un-parliamentary language (colloquial or slang) seemed easy on paper but a mammoth task in practice. As Robert Frost had remarked, “A diplomat is a man who always remembers a woman’s birthday but never remembers her age.” This was to become the norm of the day. While on the one hand, one was found battling with such superficialities, at the other, it came to one’s rescue by camouflaging grey areas

and loopholes in foreign policy. Perhaps, this attributed to the ongoing uncertainty and excitement of the entire exercise.

Throughout, there was an educational aspect as well. As a defender and interpreter of the foreign policy of an

alien country, our delegation expanded their knowledge of Turkey. Similarly, the event built the ‘internationalist’ in each individual. It is easy to be swayed by patriotism and sloganeering in support of India. However, it is a completely different ball-game to secure the interests of a different culture and people.

Perhaps, the ground work

done on the history and geography of Turkey gave both perspective and context to our debates. There were unusual circumstances when one would be opposing India, but the entire event built multilateral thinking in each one of us.

Diplomacy is often criticized for its strict social codes and many cynics have questioned the relevance of diplomacy today. However, I feel that diplomacy, necessarily bound by its doctrines, facilitates the smooth and just transaction of views, debates and dispute resolutions. The United Nations, in this regard, provides only a meeting place and ‘given time’ for such deliberations. It is really the initiative and willingness of its member states to progress in dialogue or action.

To conclude, the two days at Woodstock School were highly enriching in the understanding of international systems. It taught us to impersonalize, remain firm and use tact extensively to garner support on Turkish stand-points and policy initiatives. During our stay there, we were not mere participants, as we used the opportunity to understand the organization behind a Model UN. In the near future, this activity, which was recently started by the Historical Circle, can provide an excellent exposure to boys in diplomacy, international politics, public speaking, representing and understanding democratic systems.



REGULARS

BATTLE OF WORDS

The following are the results of **The Gombhar Speech Trophy Contest** held on March 31 in The Kilachand Library:

In the **Senior** category:

1st: Ankit Durga (75.5 pts)

2nd: Eeshan Puri (66.5 pts)

In the **Junior** category:

1st: Eeshaan Nagpal (72.5 pts)

2nd: Vatsal Khandelwal (72 pts)

MUSIC, NATURALLY

The Rose Bowl was the venue of an unusual event on Wednesday, April 10: a musical performance on the theme: 'Music-Ecology-Nature'. Presented by Baljit Malik, an Old Boy and former Master of the school, and supported by a jazz band, the programme featured old jazz favourites like *In the Mood*, the evergreen spiritual *Amazing Grace* and some anthemic rock songs. School Orchestra leader, Harsh Mall (drums) and Popular Band leader, Gaurav Sood (guitar) joined in the music-making. The presenter spoke informally, but eloquently, on issues like environmental degradation and the welfare of India's indigenous tribes.

CARNIVAL OF COLOURS

The **Art Gala** for Masters was held outside the Music School and Rose Bowl during the 6th and 7th schools on Saturday, March 31. The Masters came up with a variety of creations, including landscapes, caricatures and abstracts. A festive note was provided by musical performances by students.

AFZAL KHAN UPDATE

The **17th Afzal Khan Basketball Tournament** got underway on Monday, April 9. The following are the results of the various matches played by The Doon School over the week:

- ◆ against Mayo College Boys School 45-43
- ◆ against Cathedral School 39-19
- ◆ against Delhi Public School 42-65
- ◆ against Welham Boys' School 40-39
- ◆ against New Public School 53-80
- ◆ against Delhi Public School 34-49

A detailed report will follow in the subsequent issue.

WELCOME TO DOON

We welcome **Mona Khanna** to the school. She was, previously, at the Step By Step World School, Jaipur, and will be a teacher in the Mathematics Department. We wish her a fruitful tenure at Doon.

IAYP NEWS

The following boys have been successful at completing the **Bronze level of the IAYP**:

Kushagra Agarwal
Shrey Gaurishankar
Ayaan Patel
Tushar Aggarwal
Arjun Kapur
Well done!

STUDENT DIPLOMACY

The Doon School team, consisting of Shikhar Singh, Skand Goel, Rohan Gupta, Akshit Batra, Abhimanyu Chandra, Keshav Prasad, Pranjal Singh and Shoumitra Shrivastava represented Turkey in the **Model United Nations** held at Woodstock School on March 30 and 31. The team did exceedingly well, winning three out of four awards. Shikhar Singh was adjudged the **Best Delegate in the Security Council**, Rohan Gupta was named the **Best Delegate in Economic and Social Council** while Skand Goel was given the **Best Delegate Award in the United Nations Environment Programme**.

Well done!

MARTIAL APPOINTMENT

Kenilworth Yambem has been appointed **Boy-in-Charge** of the **Tae Kwon Do STA** for the year 2007. Congratulations!

ON CAMPUS

His Excellency **David Malone**, Canadian High Commissioner to India, visited the school on April 9. An interview runs in this issue.

CAREER CALL

The careers' notice board will focus on Information Technology this week. All those interested should look it up.

Unquotable Quotes

My throat is not well today.

RKG needs a cough syrup.

The Smilies in the CDH are rusted.

Aditya Kothiwari frowns.

You all cheaters!

SSG is disappointed.

Actors are a fashion statement.

Arjun Singh Badal feels trendy.

Form a right-angled circle.

Anirudh Kapur makes a small mistake.

Hurry up: the whistle has rung.

Arjun Midha, positively punctual.

Steer the water and drink it.

Amitav Jha at the helm.



Opinion Poll

Do you think that the midterm budget was adequate for your requirements?



Yes 67%

No 33%

172 students participated in the poll

Next week's question: Do you think there should be a Discipline Committee?

The Minutes of the School Council Meeting

1 March 2007, 2:30 pm, in the Nandlal Kilachand Library

The following members were present:

1. Dr. Kanti Bajpai	Headmaster (Chairman)
2. Mr. Philip Burrett	Deputy Headmaster (PBR)
3. Dr. Mohan Chandra Joshi	Dean of Activities (MCJ)
4. Mr. Deepak Sharma	Dean of Sports (DKS)
5. Mr. Prabhakaran Nair	Dean of Academics (PKN)
6. Mr. Arvind Chalasani	Housemasters' Representative (AKC)
7. Mr. Sanjiv Bathla	Masters' Representative (SJB)
8. Ashish Mitter	School Captain
9. Shikhar Singh	Hyderabad House Senior Representative (Secretary)
10. Eshaan Puri	Prefects' Representative
11. Ankit Durga	Hyderabad House Senior Representative 2
12. Ashray Batra	Hyderabad House Junior Representative 1
13. Udai Shriram	Hyderabad House Junior Representative 2
14. Kaustabh Verma	Jaipur House Senior Representative 1
15. Rohan Gupta	Jaipur House Senior Representative 2 (Stand-in)
16. Bharat Ganju	Jaipur House Junior Representative 1
17. Arnav Sahu	Jaipur House Junior Representative 2
18. Harsh Mall	Kashmir House Senior Representative 1
19. Saket Mahajan	Kashmir House Senior Representative 2
20. Shoumitra Srivastava	Kashmir House Junior Representative 1
21. Devashish Agarwal	Kashmir House Junior Representative 2
22. Dilshad Singh Sidhu	Oberoi A Senior Representative
23. Vivek Santayana	Oberoi A Junior Representative
24. Kshitij Paliwal	Oberoi B Senior Representative
25. Vahin Khosla	Oberoi B Junior Representative
26. Vivaan Shah	Tata House Senior Representative 1
27. Anant Johri	Tata House Senior Representative 2
28. Gursahaj Oberoi	Tata House Junior Representative 1
29. Naushad Khan	Tata House Junior Representative 2

The Chairman welcomed the newly elected members of The School Council and provided a brief background of the body and its relevance in school governance. He then proceeded to the agenda.

(1) Appointment of the new School Council Secretary

The Chairman noted that electing the Secretary of the School Council had been a rather mixed experience. He proposed the name of Shikhar Singh as Secretary. Since none of the members raised any objections, Shikhar Singh was appointed the Secretary of the School Council for 2007.

(2) Matters arising out of the previous Minutes

(a) Increasing the number of telephones in school

The Chairman informed members that the cost of new telephone instruments and lines was being investigated by the Head of Finance who would get back on this issue.

(b) The setting up of a Discipline Committee

The Chairman explained the purpose of such a body. He said that day-to-day disciplinary cases were not to be dealt with by this body. However, serious disciplinary cases would be recommended to the body, which could provide non-binding advice to the Headmaster. The Chairman explained that such a proposal had been accepted by the Board of Governors. It had been worked on by two Prefects' Councils (in 2005-6 and 2006-7) and was pending in the Housemasters' Council. The composition of the Committee was an important issue and would be a combination of Masters and boys. Once a scheme has been worked out, the School Council would consider the proposal.

(c) Future of The Doon School Cup

The Chairperson informed members that the Cup, set up three years ago on a trial basis by the Education Committee of the Board of Governors, would need to be re-examined this year. He said that the School Council would have to review the original scheme, principally in terms of its objectives.

(3) Proposals and Issues for the Current Year

(a) The working of the School Council

The Deputy Headmaster commented on the alleged slow working of the body and public perception regarding its functioning and usefulness. The Chairman felt that the School Council was not a “token body” and served as a “transmission belt” of ideas and concerns from the boys to the school and vice versa. The Chairman added that the slowness of work was characteristic of governance bodies and that members must exercise patience to avoid hasty decision-making.

(b) The Honour Code and recommendations for a new Vision Statement

Mr. Sanjiv Bathla (Masters’ Representative) informed members that Mr. Debashish Chakrabarty (DEB) had emailed suggestions to him that included the preparation of a document that encompassed the basic tenets and objectives, rules and norms of school life. The Chairman informed members that the school was in the process of publishing its Academic Honesty Policy, Information Technology Policy, and Journalistic Code of Ethics. These are aimed at codifying school policy vis-à-vis cheating, plagiarism, use of electronic resources, and publishing. The School Captain added that a Rules Book already existed but needed revision as many rules had been changed. The Chairman suggested that as a beginning, the Council could work on a code that would lay down the fundamental tenets and objectives of Doon School life. It was decided to form a Sub-Committee that would produce a draft. The following would serve on the Sub-Committee:

- ◆ Dilshad Singh
- ◆ Udai Shriram
- ◆ Eshaan Puri
- ◆ Ashish Mitter
- ◆ Bharat Ganju
- ◆ Mr. Sanjiv Bathla (SJB)

The Chairman requested the Deputy Headmaster to chair the Sub-Committee and accepted a proposal to invite Mr. Debashish Chakrabarty (DEB) as an invitee to it.

The Chairman felt that Mr. Chakrabarty’s proposal also contained the idea of a Vision Statement for the future. He informed the members that the school had accomplished many of the targets set out in the original Vision Statement which had been prepared by the Board of Governors in 2003 in consultation with the school community. He asked the Council to explore the possibility of re-framing a Vision Statement for which purpose an Exploratory Committee headed by Dr. Mohan Chandra Joshi (MCJ) was formed. The following were to serve on the Committee:

- ◆ Anant Johri
- ◆ Arnav Sahu
- ◆ Ankit Durga
- ◆ Shoumitra Srivastava

(c) The new School Bag

The Chairman asked members for their views on the new school bag. It was felt that the new bag was better designed and had more utility and justified its price. The School Council thanked the Deputy Headmaster for his efforts in this regard.

(d) The pricing of food in the Tuckshop

The Chairman sought the Council’s views on the new menu of the Tuckshop. Bharat Ganju informed members that the high price of products reduced the purchasing power of students. Mr. Arvind Chalasani (AKC) informed members that students could withdraw a maximum of Rs.100 as coupons. This, it was felt, was an inadequate sum, given current price realities. The Chairman concluded the debate by increasing the maximum amount that a boy could withdraw from Rs.100 to Rs.150 on an experimental basis on Sundays and holidays. He, however, cautioned members that a substantial increase could lead to obesity and poor eating at school meals. Quoting the hospital records, the Chairperson said as many as 20% of the boys were, by the Body-Mass Index (BMI), overweight.

Several members also raised the issue of a shortage of food in the Tuckshop. Mr. Arvind Chalasani (AKC) associated this with the Sc Leavers being permitted to visit the Tuckshop everyday. Dr. Joshi (MCJ) added that once the ISC/ICSE examinations ended, this temporary increase in demand would subside.

As there were no other matter, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting was scheduled for March 23, 2007.

Secretary
(Shikhar Singh)

Headmaster
(Dr. Kanti Bajpai)

| Interview |

Diplomatically Speaking

Shikhar Singh and Ashish Mitter interview the Canadian High Commissioner to India, during his visit to Doon.

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Are you a career diplomat?

David Malone (DML): Technically yes, but I have branched out into research fairly often. In fact, I have left the Foreign Service five or six times to study, teach and write. I joined the Service when I was only 21, but left after doing a stint in Egypt, to go back to University. When I was 40, I went to do a Phd at Oxford. After that I spent six years at a think tank in New York. So, in reality, I have spent 8 out of the past 11 years out of diplomacy. But I would like to add here that this is not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, my constant coming and going from the Service exposed me to a lot of things. I returned to the Service energised, and I now serve as

“ **A diplomat can frame economic and political strategy and encourage mutually beneficial relations between countries** ”

a diplomat because I want to, not because I have to. Of course, it was easy for me because I am single, and don't have a family to look after, but in the future, I am sure most diplomatic services around the world will allow their cadre to take periods of extended leave.

DSW: In today's world, is diplomacy still relevant?

DML: Diplomacy as it was practised 50 years ago is probably irrelevant today, but then diplomacy has changed over the years. Commentators on international affairs, the media and NGOs have a major say in deciding foreign policy. While the role played by modern communication is probably exaggerated, it is true that if a problem crops up, world leaders have a chance to get in touch with each other immediately. So diplomacy has kept up with the times. Of course, certain things remain the same. A diplomat, even today, is extremely valuable if he can build up a strong knowledge base. He can frame economic and political strategy and encourage mutually-beneficial relations between countries. For example, a large chunk of my time in India is spent convincing Canadian companies to invest in India, or marketing our universities to Indian students. Diplomats also create a sense of goodwill between two countries. For example, I see that India and Canada have so much in common: a common system of government, an almost identical judicial system and a vibrant multicultural society. These similarities help in establishing strong ties between the two countries.

DSW: You have worked in the UN and have written extensively on it. What role does the UN play in world diplomacy?

DML: Well, ultimately the United Nations is the ultimate meeting place for world leaders. Governments interact with each other on multiple levels at the UN, and a number of conflicts are resolved there. Also, a lot of research into various world problems is done at the UN, and many of the international treaties that we live by have been negotiated under the banner of the UN. Of

course, there are a number of problems with the working of the UN. The most recent attempt at reform, that of the G4 (Brazil, India, Japan and Germany) to attain permanent membership in the Security Council, failed, because each country faced a host of individual problems and was not able to sell its case to the rest of the world very well.

DSW: Have you chosen to come to India, or were you compelled to come here?

DML: Generally in the Foreign Service we don't get a chance to choose our postings, but when I returned to diplomacy after my extended sabbatical, I was asked where I would like to be sent. I said that I was interested in India. For some time I remained in Canada, and then the post of

our country's Permanent Representative at the United Nations was offered to me. While I was excited at the offer, when I realised that I had a choice to go to India, I chose the latter. The reason for this is simple. I first came to India at the age of 10, when I was living in Iran. Iran was a wonderful place, but slightly dull. India in contrast was colourful and exciting and I was taken by the country right away. I returned with three friends when I was 21 to spend a summer in Kashmir, loved it, and have come on a number of holidays since. In my research, I actively looked for Indian research partners, and even ended up doing a book with Dr. Bajpai. So it was a very easy decision to come to India. I am here simply because I want to be here!

DSW: Having seen the Chandbagh campus and observed life in Doon, do you see any similarities between your boarding school in France and The Doon School?

DML: Well yes, there are tremendous similarities. Although I went to an ancient, clerical, Catholic school, I see a lot of my school here in Doon, and that is why it is quite a moving experience for me to be here. The campus is very similar. We lived in dormitories like you do, and sports were important. The friendships I made in my school have lasted a lifetime, as I am told friendships made at Doon do. In fact I am godfather to a number of my friends' children. Boarding school was also tremendously important for me. I joined a French school because my parents thought that every Canadian should know how to speak French, and as they were based in Iran at the time, France was a lot easier than Canada. I joined the school at 13 as a disorganized, slightly spoilt child who was also a weak student. I hated my first year in school but slowly realised that I had one choice: to sink or swim. I became tougher, self-reliant, and ultimately, despite the fact that I never really was very sporty, I became school captain. I was able to prove to myself that while I was no good at some things, I was very good at others.

| Viewpoint |
To Be A Footie
K. V. Arjun Rao

I have always marvelled at the concept of the Holding House. Students seem to remember their first year at Doon with far more fondness than I did my first year at school. Indeed, I have encountered some students who seem to remember their time at the Holding House with more affection and attachment than they do their final years at the school, something with which I am completely unfamiliar.

At first, I scoffed at them. Later, I was amazed. As I saw seniors coming back to the Holding Houses – even if just to sit under the same tree or in the same courtyard – I started doing the math. I compared – not scientifically at all – students who had not been in a Holding House (they had gone directly to the Main House or joined in C form) with those who had, and found that the former took longer to settle down in school. And then I observed, some time last year, hardened seniors move (in some cases, back) into Foot and Martyn Houses. And I watched in amazement as they giggled (some even blushed!) every time they were called ‘darling’, responding in the manner they had when they had just arrived in Chandbagh. I watched as they allowed juniors to speak up and actually listened. And I gaped as they started looking smarter (and cleaner!) and as they stopped coming late. For anything.

At first I thought this was some great anomaly, gaping holes in the matrix. It took me four years to realize that, after all, there must be more to this. And so, I decided that for five days, I too, would become a Footie (or is it Footy?). Another person to be initiated.

There I was. Seasoned trekker (halfway to Kush Kalyan and Har-ki-Dun) and a tutor of, finally, S form. These ‘New Boys’ (to use a term coined by someone far more knowledgeable than me) would be no match for me. Five days later, I am seeking refuge at home, not daring to emerge from this safe haven. I have been frightened out of my wits. Why? You actually ask me why?

The following is a very carefully created five-point guide for anyone who wants to survive a Holding House midterm:

1. **Fear.** For the record, eleven-year olds know no fear. You warn them about ghosts and they shout and scream so loudly and at such disturbing decibel levels that even the dead will run away. You warn them about tigers and they will sleep through safaris in Chila. You threaten and yell at them and they pull out their greatest weapon. Tears.

2. **Tears.** Eleven-year olds are never short of them. And they will use them. So be afraid. Very afraid. If they see food they aren’t used to, they will cry. If someone sits in the chair they had occupied earlier, they will cry. If they fall, they will cry. The only way to keep them from unleashing this fearful weapon

on you is by keeping them occupied at all times. Exhaust them, I cleverly thought. Little did I realize that when kids get tired, they get cranky. When they get cranky, they are always on the edge. Of tears. The smallest provocation and the floodgates will open. By the time you are done dealing with one such specimen, *you* are on the verge of tears. And they? They’ve just got up and walked away as if nothing has happened.

3. **Energy.** They always have it. Endless supplies. You try and sap some of it by taking them on treks to herbal parks and across dodgy bridges and you will find your own levels dwindling. But it will all be worth it, you tell yourself, as you imagine hours of blissful sleep that must surely follow. And then, seeing them panting and going red in the face, you take pity on them and give them something to drink, maybe even some food. Bad idea! Don’t give kids sugar! For the next three hours they’re wired and by the end of it they’re sitting on your head and you’re cursing the bright and humanitarian idea your colleagues and you had.

4. **Questions** (or the ‘Are We There Yet?’ syndrome). These are endless and always repetitive. Each kid will ask the same question and you will have to play it cool despite the fact that you are getting very, very irritated or you will find yourself dealing with a bawling child. They always want to know where all the teachers are at all times (targets in sight), where they’re being taken and always fail to see the logic behind a good, healthy trek. Some even asked me about when and what kind of homework they would be given once back in school! By the end of it, you are asking questions of your sanity (“I volunteered to go on this?”). The only way to survive is to play the game better than them.

5. **“Hello boys!”**. An expert in the field once told me, “If you want to look after eleven-year olds, become one”. They know no responsibility, will go where they’re led and if they think you’re the grown up, each of the four points will be staring you in the face. Managing this lethal group is clearly an art and not for the faint-hearted. If they miss home, give them a hug and tell them, “Now you won’t miss home”. And you know what? Bizarrely enough, it’s true.

So what did I do in the midst of all this? I helped get the group lost in the middle of a forest, I served and ate the worst *kadi-dawal* in the world, I had my future told (I am a bit worried), I called someone *beta* for the first time (and you were wondering why I’m worried), I organized and even demonstrated how to take part in a caterpillar race for the first time since 1987, and I learnt how important it is to be called ‘darling’. So for all out there who will eventually go out on a Holding House midterm, if you really want to make it back in one piece, all I can say is this: put on your shorts, your dark glasses, leap onto a bus and yell, “Hello boys!” and maybe, just maybe, they’ll keep coming back.

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