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Regulars **2**

Roving Eye **2**

The Dhoom Experience **3**

LTTE **4**

'Bac' Chat

Shikhar Singh and Ashish Mitter interviewed members of the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) during their recent visit to the school

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Do you think that The Doon School is ready for the IB?

Nigel Forbes (NF): Based on my observations, the answer is yes. One of the several reasons why I think so is that the school has a very similar ethos to that of the IB. For example, I am told that this school lays great emphasis on social service. So does the IB. In some schools, the entire concept of social service has to be introduced before the school takes on the IB.

Christopher Durbin (CD): In some schools, IB presents a difficult challenge, a tough transition. I don't think this will be the case for Doon. I think IB will only serve to enhance an already good school.

DSW: How is the IB better than other education systems?

CD: I think the IB scores over many other educational systems because it lays emphasis on critical thinking over content. We, in the IB, want students to constantly seek different perspectives and to understand these perspectives. We want students to look beyond local events and strive to become international citizens. Of course, we don't want to spread the notion that 'outside' is better than the 'inside.' We don't want children to forget their own perspective, but we do want them to critically analyze foreign developments.

NF: The IB also prepares students very well for college. The extended essay that every IB student is required to write is like a rookie research paper. Generally, IB students don't drop out of university, and are good all-round students who contribute in all spheres.

Farzana Dohadwalla (FD): I think that the IB provides a truly international education. Importantly, it doesn't discount the Asian perspective. There is a lot of flexibility – for example, in English, you can choose to do texts written by Indian authors, and in world literature, you can even study the poetry of Kabir. I would like to state, categorically, that the IB doesn't wish its students to believe that the West is better than the East. The IB, instead, encourages students to value all nations, including their own.

DSW: How does the IB help students wishing to study in India?

FD: The IB gives a mark sheet just like any Indian board, so in that respect, students wishing to study in India are not at any disadvantage. Instead, these students are actually better placed than their counterparts. The IB provides a rounded education and teaches you how to communicate and express your thoughts, which are very important skills in today's world. Moreover, the IB provides students with a wide variety of options – for example, maths is available at five levels of difficulty.

DSW: What qualities must the average student have to be successful in the IB?

NF: I think reading is one quality which is essential, but then again, I must lay stress on the fact that the IB is not an exclusive club. IB gives mediocre students ample opportunity to find their fields of interest and do well in them.

CD: The nice thing about the IB is the fact that you can achieve a lot in different ways. You can specialize in a particular subject and do really well in that, or you can do well as an all-rounder. The IB is great for students simply because of its flexibility.

DSW: How has the IB experience changed each of you individually?

NF: Well, one notable difference I find in myself is that IB has encouraged me to read much more than I ever did. I have shifted my reading focus from a local one to an international one. As a teacher, the IB challenges me all the time and I have to prepare myself for each and every class. I enjoy this.

FD: The IB believes in the philosophy that 'to teach is to learn twice.' I read up on my subject before each and every lesson. The IB has also helped me in my personal life. When my children used to ask a question to which I didn't know the answer, I used to get very worried. IB has taught me to acknowledge the fact that there are things that I don't know and now, I encourage my children to read or surf the Internet to find information.

CD: Personally, I was very disillusioned with the British education system, as it has fixed ideas on education. I didn't want my children to study in such a system. As a geography teacher, I didn't want to teach in such a system. As a result, I turned to the IB. The IB has ensured that my children are sensitized global citizens (or so I believe!), and that my horizons as a teacher are constantly pushed. I never stop thinking about my subject.

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#)

[Next Page](#)

[Previous Issues](#)

Regulars

'Bad' Boys

Shubham Gupta, Abhimanyu Chandra, Anant Jangwal and Pranay Kapoor represented the school in a badminton tournament organised by the Sports Authority of India. Shubham Gupta and Abhimanyu Chandra reached the quarter-finals in the singles category and semi-finals in the doubles category. Well played!

Soccer Studs

The Doon School **soccer team** played against the **Old Boys'** team on August 15, and lost 1-0. Congratulations to the old boys who are still going strong!

The Doon School **Junior soccer team** played against The Asian School on August 14 and beat them 6-0. Well done!

On Independence Day---



“Unquotable Quotes”

My cousin has been topping the ISC for the last five years.

Vansh Bhatia is full of pride.
I am a man of words.

Vinayak Paliwal pontificates.
Michael Games is the games-in-charge.

Rishabh Bir Singh updates us.

Chief Ed's Roving Eye

YAWN! Please do not expect any more social hangovers, if they turn out to be like Tuesday night. Since I committed myself to giving a report, I have to fulfill my duty for this week. So here goes...

Bheecias... Wonder what that means?! Poor old *pandit* was at the receiving end as the buses raced through Suicide Alley, making sure, at least trying to make sure, that the 'handsome' Fionas weren't kept waiting. The School Tennis Captain was at his brightest as we entered the dim auditorium. I must mention that the junior Welhamites on seeing such a spectacular show of lights ('588' watts), were feeling jealous of their seniors and decided to bombard us with chalks of various sizes. The Doscocs weren't going to cower as Anju and Bhofa did the school proud, picking up the ammunition and starting a counter-attack. Many bled that night! The Welhamites can expect the same welcome. Many girls were seen chasing after 588 watts, wondering what made him such a 'bright boy.'

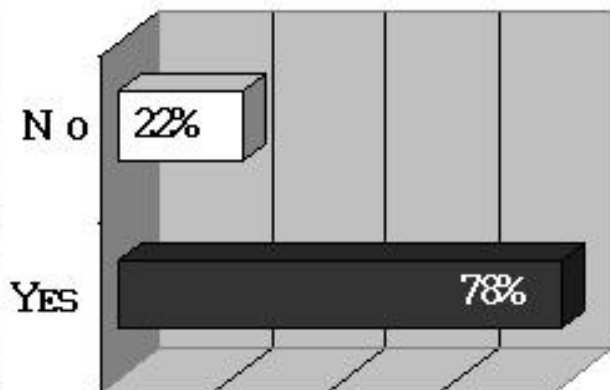
Moving on to some *masala*... Khandu decided to 'terminate' the ice and shook his bon-bon. Relationships were mended, hearts were broken and ears had to suffer the mazik of the rocking nasal mania, GO HIMASSSS! I couldn't understand what was going through the DJ's head. Vignesh, for once, did not keep an arm's distance.

Chicken Little nibbled on papaya throughout the night. The papayas were specially sent from Yam Nagar. The Tongue Express was at his fastest best. Last heard he had managed to shoot off 200 w.p.m. (words per minute). I wonder if Adi got any of it. After getting energized by the *re-shamiya* songs, *Chadz*, the lad from the city of K-pur, let himself loose (literally!) with some suroooooor steps. He was seen jumping around, to the amazement of the Doscocs and Welhamites alike.

Stop playing like Fele and Madonna.
NTC remembers the soccer legends.
I got to eat only a glass of water.
ARY, the disappointed gourmand.

OPINION POLL

Do you think a Dosco considers himself superior to his peers from other institutions?



Next Week's Question: How much time do you take grooming yourself before an outing - 5 mins, 15 mins, 30 mins, 45 mins, 1 hr?

Yes, Sengar has finally lost his rash, as Charm School really paid its dividends for Neelu as he is in the process of acquiring a rash himself. The COP was flying 'high' on Sahara Airlines in an attempt to escape the wrath of the Ch. Ed. (Me!!!!). I bet he loved the airhostesses. Bro Ro tried his broken best to find himself a companion but only ended up with a Sister (do we congratulate him for that?).

Although my loyalties are with the school where 'I was at', the native students *apparently* found my fidelity questionable. A mysterious letter in the hands of a *charismatic* messenger was unveiled to all the students, much like the stuff that Page 3 is made of. To my disappointment, I realized that *pet mein baat rehti nahin*.

When the dance floor went cold, Suseeel stepped forward to warm it with his *garma-garam* item numbers. One thing it succeeded in was keeping the girls away. Even Suseeel's dance partner, Hiru/ Bajri, decided to stay well away, so much so, that he stayed back in school.

The Socials slowly faded into the night and much to our liking (or maybe not), we were back in school with Mr. Chill reliving his good old days.

After having dug my own grave this week, I send out a plea for a rocking obituary. (By a special someone? – Sp. Cpdt. Sethia, perhaps?)

For now, it's ciao from me, until I say 'Al'oha again.

[Previous Page](#)

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#)

[Next Page](#)

[Previous Issues](#)

Breathless in Pang

Aaron Jacob recounts a thrill-packed biking trip into Ladakh

If someone were to ask me what the wildest thing I had ever done in my life was, my answer would be: the trip to Leh. I would suggest this route as a form of therapy to anyone who would like to be as crazy as me and the rest of us who attempted to reach Leh on our bikes but had to unfortunately stop about 150 km short of the destination. But who cares! It was the journey that mattered to all of us, and the safety of our team.

The trip was planned for July when the roads are open and school closed. In May 2006, PBR and I got serious about chalking out our schedule, and we had more company, with VRW, SSM, Anju Mann and Salil Rawat joining us for the trip. SSM had purchased a Maruti Gypsy for the trip and this was good for the bikers, because we could travel light and carry more spares for the bikes.

So there we were, getting our bikes tuned and serviced, buying our raincoats and accessories and confused because everyone was giving us information which was scaring, rather than helping us. Everything finally in place, we left on July 3. PBR and I had our *Unicorns*, Varun his *Bullet* and Salil his *Pulsar*. The route we planned was Dehradun, Chandigarh, Manali, Patsio, Pang and Leh. D-day dawned and we were flagged off at 9:30 am by KPB.

The road to Chandigarh is boring and dry, except at Kala Aamb. Going at an average speed of 55 km, we reached Chandigarh in the evening and headed straight to Ravibir Singh's house. I had heard of Dosco hospitality and, believe me, this too was straight from the heart.

Chandigarh to Manali is a long route, so we decided to leave early. The roads were good but dusty. After Mandi, the hills kick in, and the scenery changes. We were making good speed, though we had to stop every 50 or 60 km because the bikes do rattle you up. Tea at General Verma's place took us right into the apple orchards of Kulu. The team reached Manali late in the evening. It was raining, but we managed to find the army establishment, with PBR leading the pack.

Tandi is the last petrol station for another 365 km and all the vehicles stop here to top up before heading into the wilderness. We reached Patsio before last light and we were tired with having been so long in the saddle. I just needed a place to sit which would not rattle. The road had left us shaken and we had another eight days of riding! We were doing fine, except that we were tired and needed to rest. Patsio is an army transit camp in the middle of nowhere at 12,500 feet. Over tea at the Officers' Mess, we were discussing the road ahead and MTS (who met up with us at Patsio) just shook us up again by informing us that worse roads awaited us. The Bullet boys, with SSM, were still very enthusiastic. PBR and I were, in contrast, cribbing that the bikes were not meant for such roads. We had, optimistically, thought that it would be plain cruising and a smooth ride among the clouds.

Late in the evening, talking to the passing truck drivers, we decided to move ahead to Pang, our next pit-stop, though we knew that we only had a bumpy ride ahead.

The next day we left camp at first light; we had left the trees behind after Tandhi and the wilderness beckoned. The rugged landscape is like a Wild West movie set and I felt like a cowboy riding my steel horse. We reached Bara Lacha La, another pass at 16,500 feet. We were advised not to stop at the passes for long, so we just stopped to take the mandatory pictures and then rolled down. Right on top of Bara Lacha La there is a crater lake where the water is turquoise blue. I wanted to stay there for some more time but was forced to move on because my breathing started getting laboured.

All the bikes had run 500 km by now and we had to oil the chains and check our machines. It was fun doing it under the streetlights at the rest house after dinner, and planning for the journey ahead, which started early next morning.

Having a quick breakfast at Manali, we headed towards Rohtang, the first of the passes at 13,050 feet. Staying a while to take some photos we headed downhill again, and then the road got worse. We lost the tarmac at Rohtang and after that, we had only bits and pieces of road all through the route. I was cursing myself and praying that we would get back in one piece.

The interesting parts were the water crossings, seven of them till Patsio, some of them treacherous, because I could feel the bike slipping over the rocks. So the trick was to put the bike on first gear, rev hard, keep praying, try to cross, and not stop praying till the crossing was complete! We had water come all the way up to our exhaust pipes. Wherever we found tarmac, we put on some speed, and slowed down when we had to offroad. The sprint to Tandi was splendid because we got a stretch of good road and we had the Beas flowing down below and breathtaking views of the hills ahead.

Approaching Shishu for lunch, the scenery took on a different colour and for me this was the best part of the journey. This is the Moores plain and the wind has sculpted this place to such splendour, it's a sight to behold. We stopped there and started clicking our cameras. We then reached Shishu for lunch at another army transit camp, courtesy MTS, and got ready to take on the Gatta loops. The Gatta loops is a series of 21 hair pin bends which take us to Lachulung La, the next pass at 16,800 feet. They should rename it Killer Loops because they gave me the jitters. I had Shivam as my pillion and I had to stop after 10 loops to pass him into the jeep. To add to the dangerous hairpin bends was melting tar which threatened to make us skid.

Pang is another army transit camp and we had the officers' rooms for the night. Breathless took on another meaning because of the high altitude. Two of our teammates found it tough to breath and suffered nausea and headache. All of us, in fact, were showing signs of altitude

(cont on next page)

[Previous Page](#)

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#)

[Next Page](#)

[Previous Issues](#)

(cont. from last page)

sickness. Perversely, PBR, the hypochondriac in the group, had no symptoms, and was in the pink of health, but worried that he would die of pulmonary edema! Only after the army doctor reassured him, did he start smiling again.

This turn of events left us thinking of the day ahead and another 150 km to Leh. With team-mates falling sick and the army doctor cautioning us, we decided to sleep over it and decide the next morning. However, the day saw the condition of the two team-mates no better, and we decided to descend immediately to low altitude.

The 'Bullet Brothers' were the only party which made it to Leh. Coming down was zippy and fun. Being down at the lower altitude was a great relief because our team-mates were feeling better. Deciding to cover more distance in that day, we did not camp at Patsio, but kept going till Shingri, and camped at the Border Roads' Organisation Camp for the night. It was good to get back to civilization, to have a good bathroom and to see trees. This last was very important for me, because the desert was depressing me.

After a good night's rest, the team was back on the road to Manali. The roads being good, it was speed-testing time for the *Unicorns* and the *Pulsar*. Riding at high speed got us to Chandigarh earlier than we expected. All through the journey, our bikes gave us no problems (not even a puncture which we were worried about) and they brought us back in one piece. Salil's *Pulsar* did produce some squeaky noises and I had to tighten a nut in my bike where some oil was dripping.

There is no fun on a road trip if we keep planning too much and don't take a risk. I would recommend this road trip to any adventure-loving Dosco who wants to get to know his stamina. At the end of the day, it truly tests the endurance of the man and his machine.

Letter to the Editor *Of Censoring and Censuring!*

Some time ago, an 'underground publication' known as RATS, was circulated in school. Although the authorities chose to downplay the entire matter and, in my opinion, managed to suppress the 'would-be' effects of the publication, its purpose was served. Boys expressed themselves and, rather surprisingly, were not very explicit in their expression. This merely points out the fact that our students know how to take responsibility for things, and the authorities should acknowledge that! Moreover, masters got an opportunity to see the way we look at things and the goings-on in school. They got to see how changes in our environment can affect our attitude. Yet, RATS revealed something important. The fact that an 'underground' publication had to be printed for us to be heard, shows that we do not feel free to write what we want to. There are so many publications that could have published this truth about the average Dosco's feelings. But none did, or maybe, to stretch the argument further, no one 'cared' to write to any publication. Why did no one have the courage to write to a publication like say, the *Doon School Weekly*, and express the same emotions? Were they afraid to claim credit for the article/s? It speaks poorly of our community that someone should be afraid of communicating his/her feelings to the community. Therein lays the fault of the 'censor

The school is changing, especially where the senior-junior relationship is concerned. Why is it that when a senior is treating a junior, it is considered a 'treat,' but when a junior gives money to a senior, the senior is reprimanded and held culpable of intimidation? Let me remind those who have forgotten, that giving treats at the Tuck Shop is just one of the many ways of showing gratitude to those who you think have helped you. Agreed, there are people who force juniors to give them 'tuckey dough,' but I also believe that, given our ingenuity, we can find new ways of breaking new laws. Making the law so rigid that there is no breathing space between a senior and junior is not a highly effective or efficient way of stopping seniors from ill-treating juniors. We are drifting apart from each other. A senior is not comfortable in the presence of a junior and vice-versa.

I hope that this article gets published and that I trigger off a few debates which might lead to a positive change.

Career Call

The careers' notice board will focus on the top colleges in the country which offer courses in the fields of **Arts, Commerce and Sciences**. All those interested should look it up.

board.'

(careercounselling@doonschool.com)

Recently, I wrote an article on 'sneaking' and it was not published because, apparently, writing on delicate issues such as 'sneaking' needs to be handled in a certain manner, which I had not done. I beg to differ.. I was severely censured and told it could not be published. As a member of the Doon School community, I feel I am within my rights to write articles like the one I did.



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[Previous Page](#)

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#)

[Previous Issues](#)

Home

Google

[Parent's Login](#)

Username

Password

Previous Issues of *The Doon School Weekly*

Previous Issues Of The
Doon School Weekly

- [No. 2124 \(19th August, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2123 \(12th August, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2122 \(5th August, 2006\)](#)

- [No. 2121 \(27th May, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2120 \(20th May, 2006\) \(PDF format: 84 KB\)](#)
- [No. 2119 \(13th May, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2118 \(6th May, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2117 \(29nd April, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2116 \(22nd April, 2006\) \(scanned\)](#)
- [No. 2115 \(15th April, 2006\) \(scanned\)](#)
- [No. 2114 \(1st April, 2006\) \(PDF format: 76 KB\)](#)
- [No. 2113 \(25th March, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2112 \(18th March, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2111 \(11th March, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2110 \(4th March, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2109 \(25th February, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2108 \(18th February, 2006\)](#)
- [No. 2107 \(11th February, 2006\)](#)

- [No. 2106 \(10th December, 2005\)](#)
- [No. 2105 \(3rd December, 2005\)](#)
- [No. 2104 \(26th November, 2005\)](#)
- [No. 2103 \(19th November, 2005\) \(PDF format: 454 KB\)](#)
- [No. 2102 \(12th November, 2005\)](#)
- [No. 2101 \(5th November, 2005\) \(PDF format: 433 KB\)](#)
- [No. 2100 \(29th October, 2005\) \(PDF format: 518 KB\)](#)
- [No. 2099 \(15th October, 2005\) \(PDF format: 920 KB\)](#)
- [No. 2098 \(8th October, 2005\) \(PDF format: 1.1 MB\)](#)

- [No. 2097 \(24th September, 2005\)](#) (PDF format: 632 KB)
 - [No. 2096 \(17th September, 2005\)](#) (PDF format: 76 KB)
 - [No. 2095 \(10th September, 2005\)](#) (PDF format: 95 KB)
 - [No. 2094 \(3rd September, 2005\)](#) (PDF format: 106 KB)
 - [No. 2093 \(27th August, 2005\)](#) (PDF format: 386 KB)
 - [No. 2092 \(20th August, 2005\)](#) (PDF format: 86 KB)
 - [No. 2091 \(13th August, 2005\)](#) (PDF format: 1.34 MB)
 - [No. 2090 \(6th August, 2005\)](#) (PDF format: 644 KB)
-

- [No. 2089 \(28th May, 2005\)](#) (PDF format: 559 KB)
 - [No. 2088 \(21st May, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2087 \(14th May, 2005\)](#) (PDF format: 128 KB)
 - [No. 2086 \(7th May, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2085 \(30th April, 2005\)](#) (PDF format: 90 KB)
 - [No. 2084 \(23rd April, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2083 \(16th April, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2082 \(2nd April, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2081 \(26th March, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2080 \(19th March, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2079 \(12th March, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2078 \(5th March, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2077 \(26th February, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2076 \(19th February, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2075 \(12th February, 2005\)](#)
 - [No. 2074 \(5th February, 2005\)](#)
-

- [No. 2073 \(11th December, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2072 \(4th December, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2071 \(27th November, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2070 \(20th November, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2069 \(13th November, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2068 \(6th November, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2067 \(30th October, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2066 \(23rd October, 2004\)](#)
- [Special Issue \(16th October, 2004\) \(Founder's Day Issue\)](#)
- [No. 2065 \(9th October, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2064 \(25th September, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2063 \(18th September, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2062 \(11th September, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2061 \(4th September, 2004\)](#)
- [No. 2060 \(28th August, 2004\)](#)

- [No. 2059 \(21st August, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2058 \(14th August, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2057 \(7th August, 2004\)](#)
-
- [No. 2056 \(30th May, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2055 \(22nd May, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2054 \(15th May, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2053 \(8th May, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2052 \(1st May, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2051 \(24th April, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2050 \(17th April, 2004\)](#)
 - No. 2049(3rd April, 2004) (*April fool's Issue*)
 - No. 2048 (27th March, 2004) (*Currently not available*)
 - [No. 2047 \(20th March, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2046 \(13th March, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2045 \(6th March, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2044 28th\(February, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2043 \(21st February, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2042 \(14th February, 2004\)](#)
 - [No. 2041 \(7th February, 2004\)](#)
-
- [No. 2040 \(13th December, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2039 \(6th December, 2003\)](#)
 - No. 2038 (29th November, 2003) (*Currently not available*)
 - [No. 2037 \(22nd November, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2036 \(15th November, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2035 \(8th November, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2034 \(1st November, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2033 \(25th October, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2032 \(18th October, 2003\)](#) (*Founder's Day Issue*)
 - [No. 2031 \(11th October, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2030 \(27th September, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2029 \(20th September, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2028 \(13th September, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2027 \(6th September, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2026 \(30th August, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2025 \(23rd August, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2024 \(16th August, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2023 \(9th August, 2003\)](#)
-
- [No. 2022 \(31st May, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2021 \(24th May, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2020 \(17th May, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2019 \(10th May, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2018 \(3rd May, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2017 \(26th April, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2016 \(19th April, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2015 \(12th April, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2014 \(1st April, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2013 \(29th March, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2012 \(22nd March, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2011 \(15th March, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2010 \(8th March, 2003\)](#)

- [No. 2009 \(1st March, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2008 \(22nd February, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2007 \(15th February, 2003\)](#)
 - [No. 2006 \(8th February, 2003\)](#)
-
- [No. 2005 \(14th December, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 2004 \(7th December, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 2003 \(30th November, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 2002 \(23rd November, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 2001 \(16th November, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 2000 \(9th November, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1999 \(2nd November, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1998 \(26th October, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1997 \(19th October, 2002\)](#) (*Founder's Day Issue*)
 - [No. 1996 \(12th October, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1995 \(21st September, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1994 \(14th September, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1993 \(7th September, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1992 \(31st August, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1991 \(24th August, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1990 \(17th August, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1989 \(10th August, 2002\)](#)
-
- [No. 1988 \(25th May, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1987 \(18th May, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1986 \(11th May, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1985 \(4th May, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1984 \(27th April, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1983 \(20th April, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1982 \(13th April, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1981 \(1st April, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1980 \(30th March, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1979 \(23rd March, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1978 \(16th March, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1977 \(9th March, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1976 \(2nd March, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1975 \(23rd February, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1974 \(16th February, 2002\)](#)
 - [No. 1973 \(9th February, 2002\)](#)
-
- [No. 1972 \(24th November, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1971 \(17th November, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1970 \(10th November, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1969 \(3rd November, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1968 \(27th October, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1967 \(20th October, 2001\)](#) (*Founder's Day Issue*)
 - [No. 1964 \(22nd September, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1963 \(15th September, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1962 \(8th September, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1961 \(1st September, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1960 \(25th August, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1959 \(18th August, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1958 \(11th August, 2001\)](#)
-

- [No. 1957 \(26th May, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1956 \(19th May, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1955 \(12th May, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1952 \(21st April, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1951 \(14th April, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1950 \(1st April, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1949 \(24th March, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1948 \(17th March, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1947 \(10th March, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1946 \(3rd March, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1945 \(24th February, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1944 \(17th February, 2001\)](#)
 - [No. 1943 \(10th February, 2001\)](#)
-
- [No. 1942 \(November last week, 2000\)](#)

[Home Page](#) | [Origins](#) | [The Vision Statement](#) | [Board Of Governors](#) | [Teaching Staff](#) | [Administrative Staff](#) | [Information Handbook](#) | [Admission Details](#) | [Registration](#) | [Facilities](#) | [Our Students](#) | [Our Teachers](#) | [Our Old Boys](#) | [Educating For Life](#) | [At Home](#) | [Leadership And Participation](#) | [Beyond The Classroom](#) | [Beyond The Self](#) | [Something For Everyone](#) | [Guidance And Counselling](#) | [School Songs](#) | [Virtual Tour](#) | [Honour Boards](#) | [Photo Gallery](#) | [Student Status](#) | [Old Boys](#) | [The Doon School Weekly](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Contact Us](#)

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