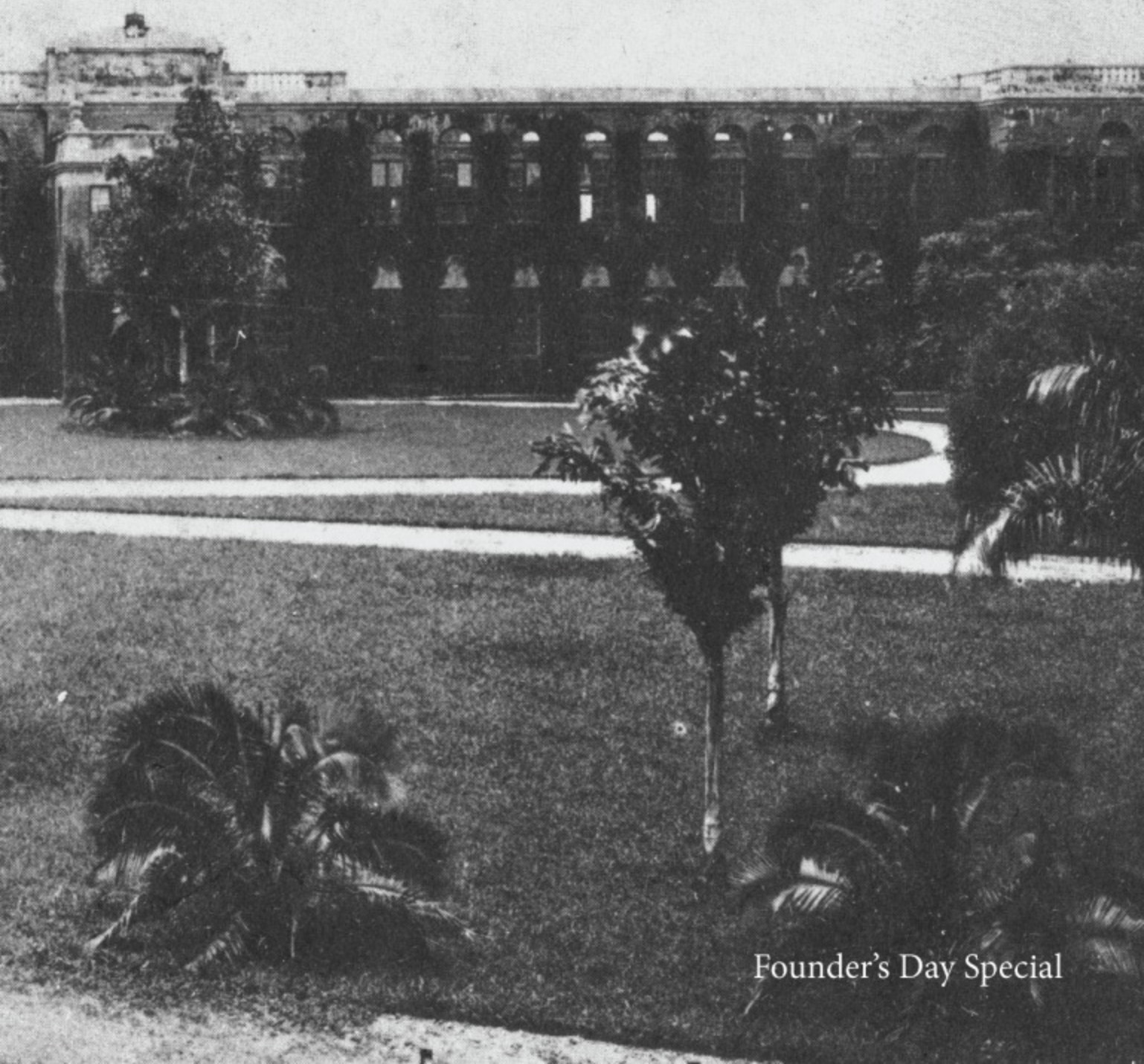
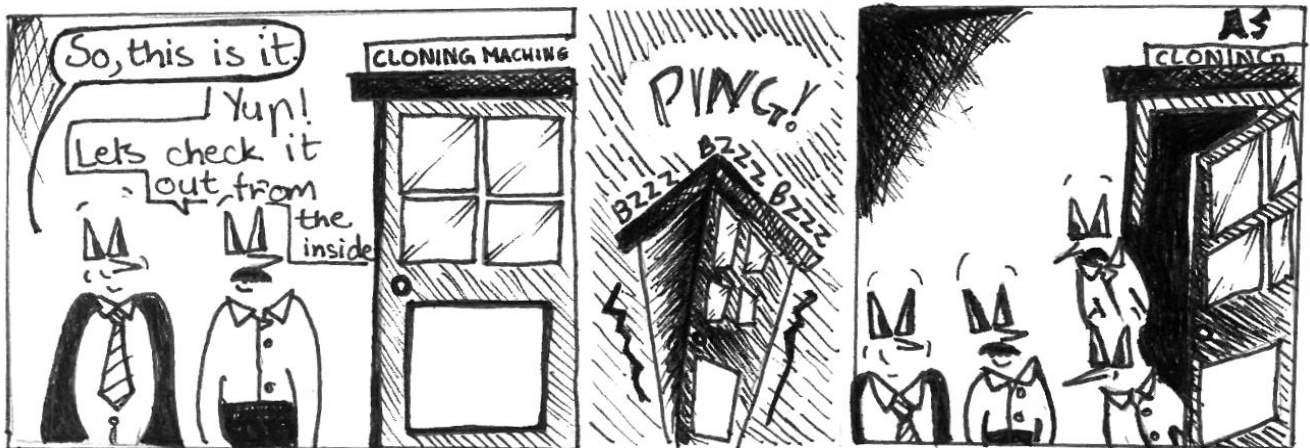
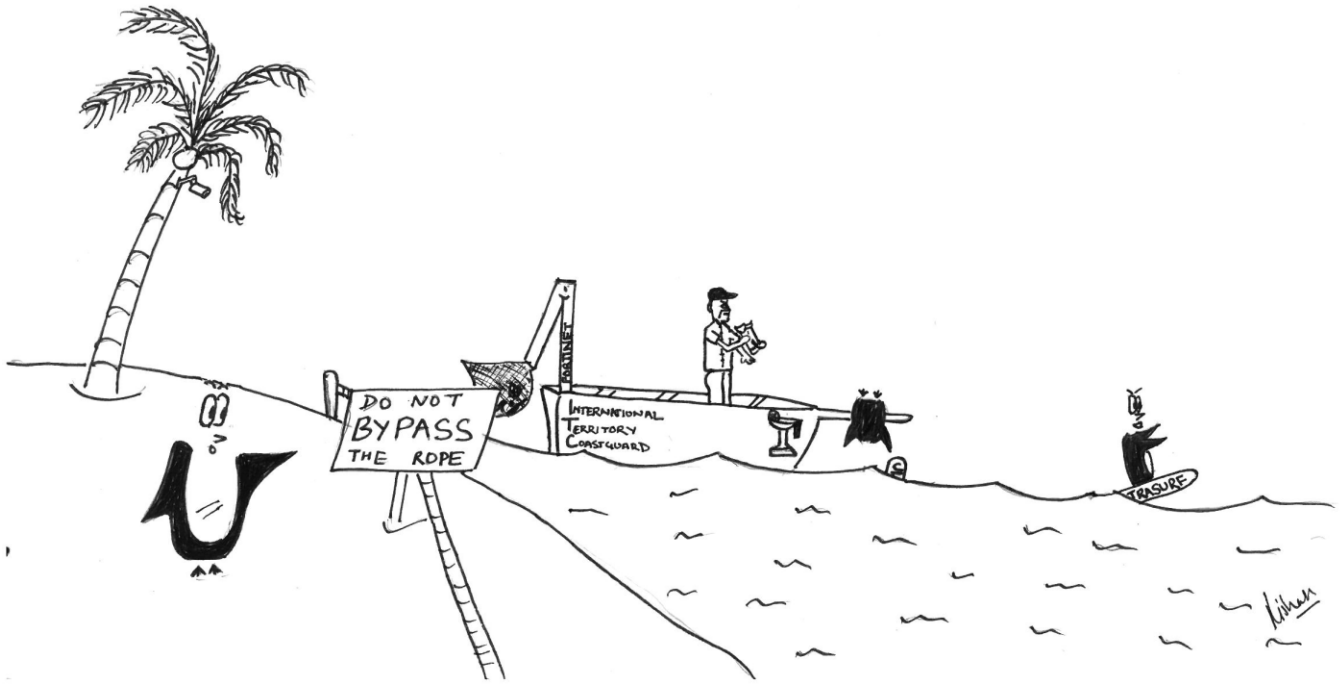


The Doon School WEEKLY

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Founder's Day Special



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The Editorial

Various Editors-in-Chief have written passionate, emotionally charged parting editorials, reminiscing their time on the board of the Weekly. They have proudly recalled how great it was to be part of the Board, and how sadly all good things come to an inevitable and painful end. Most importantly, they have stressed on how the Weekly is an integral part of School. While I share the sentiments that so many of my predecessors have expressed in the past, I do so with the knowledge that at least for me, heading the Weekly was no easy task. In fact, at times it bordered on the unpleasant. I also feel that Editorship in today's age entails much more than it used to earlier. The reasons for this shall become clearer as you read on.

Firstly, let me share with you that on multiple occasions in the course of getting this issue together, the printer has had to be coaxed into working; sometimes a resounding slap on its back would do the trick and at times it would have to be cajoled into getting the job done. This is just one example of the difficulties in the life of the Weekly team. But the point is that every time we faced difficulties in the past year, we became more efficient at what we did. It has been our ability to improve in the face of difficulty that has allowed us to do justice to the Weekly and live up to the high standards set by previous boards.

Secondly, this year completes a hundred years of the Main Building. In a country where pre-independence structures are fast disappearing in a haze of modern architecture, we consider this to be a milestone like no other. The section-breakers for this issue comprise different pictures of the Main Building, and as you have probably already seen, the cover juxtaposes two shots of this monument to education- old and current.

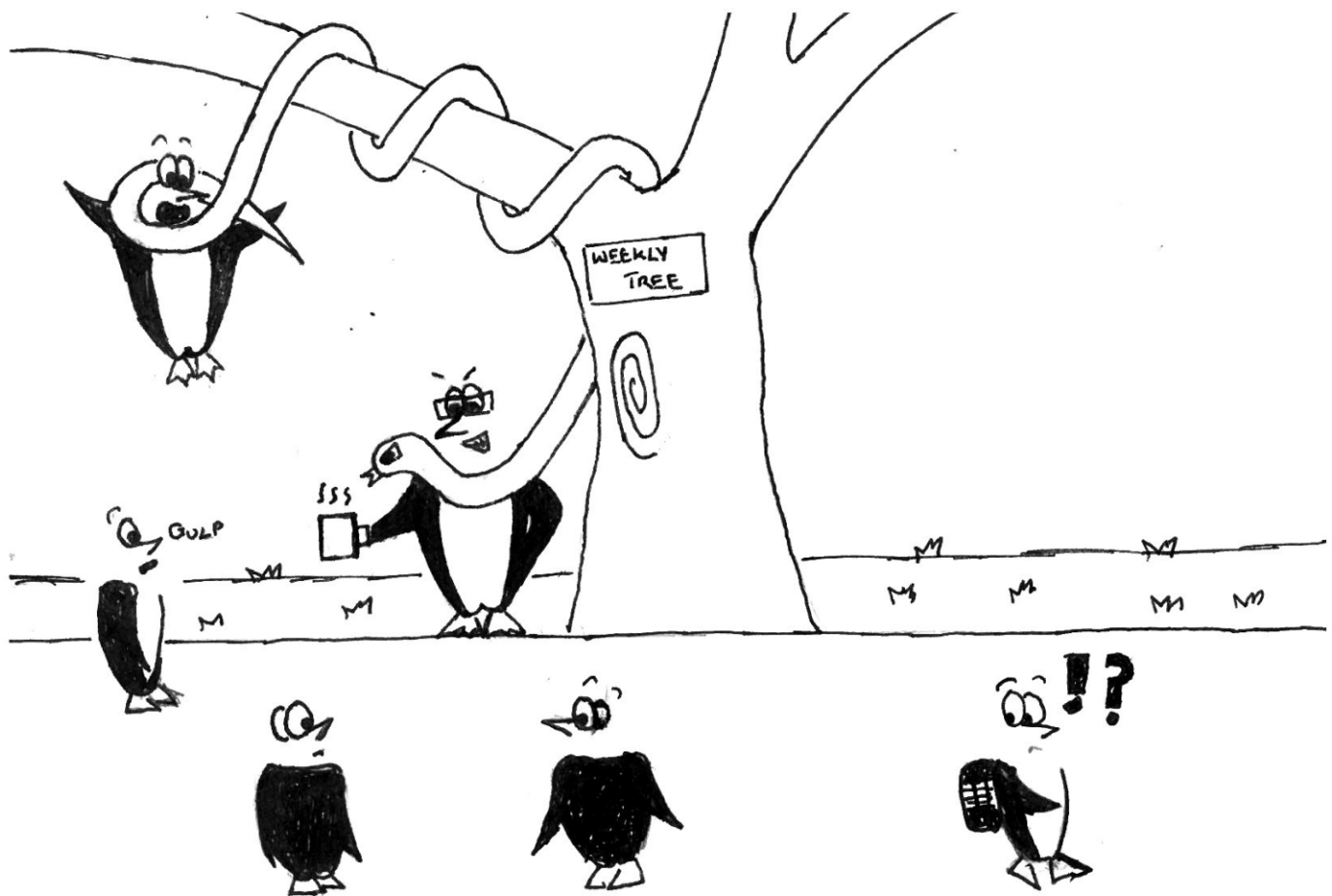
Now, 'the Editorial' is meant to be the conscience of the community; it is meant to get the society thinking and asking questions. In my belief, it is not meant to simply impose opinions or even pander to public opinion. It is meant to reflect on pertinent questions and serve as a forum for expressing our views.

That brings me to the most important aspect of running the Weekly: criticism. Every single ecosystem in the world has a feedback loop, which is a step towards self-development. It is absolutely essential for the survival of a functional ecosystem or institution. This is the age-old Darwinian principle of natural selection and evolution playing itself out. The moment we try and restrict the feedback received, either in quality or in quantity, we are threatening the survival of the institution, because there is no better way for the institution to fill its lacunae than by the views of the people who live in it. This past year we have tried to incorporate as much critical feedback as has been possible. While it is never too pleasant to hear anything but praise for what we write, we understand that in order to be truly good at what we do, we have to be able to take the hits as well. At the same time, however, for the system to be healthy and fear-free, we have often requested the community at large to oblige us with a bit of good-humour and tolerance. Not every cartoon is a personal attack and not every question asked is a direct accusation. We would all get along much better if just learned to laugh at some of the lighter moments in life, and in print.

Another aspect that I must mention in this editorial is a disturbing trend that I have noticed in School: that of selfishness and materialism. Various students across innumerable platforms in School are leaning towards working for material gains and incentives rather than the satisfaction attained by those activities. Undoubtedly, having one's name announced in assembly (for the right reasons!) is something to take pride in, yet it cannot be the be-all and end-all of one's school life. One should not spend five of the most formative years of his life revolving around gold! The larger picture - what you learn on the journey, is what really matters. It is absolutely essential for adolescents such as us to be given a goal to work towards, so that we make progress in the right direction and do not become nihilists, yet material awards shouldn't be the only reason for us to progress. For example, a boy who enjoys painting should not be lured into sitting through a sculpture-making workshop that he doesn't enjoy, just to attain necessary points for Art Colours. The activity, in such a scenario, loses its prestige. Perhaps our cynicism and materialism stems from our primordial instincts. Before mankind learnt to cultivate and domesticate, while still a hunter-gatherer, his activities boiled down to one simple choice: 'Eat or be eaten.' Therefore, if we compare the 'eat' to the positives, the hunter would have ample amount of opportunities to snare his food. He could even afford a few misses. At worst, he would be hungry a while longer. However, if the

negatives, which are akin to being preyed upon, would occur even once: GAME OVER! Therefore, the human mind is probably conditioned to look at the negatives first, for they tend to be of far greater consequence. With changing times, we too are evolving; we have to revisit what we stand for. The School Council this year discussed the pertinent question; 'What is a Dosco?' and that was indeed a milestone in our existence. The School schedule has changed, the number of semesters is due to change, the Bulls have gone and 'Chots-faggers' have ceased to exist. We are indeed battling our own existence. Has the Weekly then also lost what it stood for? We cannot afford to be the free forum that we were a couple of decades ago, for our reach has considerably expanded. It is now on the World Wide Web for the entire globe to read. The Weekly is indeed the most widely and frequently read publication in School, but must its greatest strength limit its purpose? I would hope not.

We Doscos, at heart, tend to be fond of the status-quo. But we must learn to introspect. We must strive to become the best and take this grand institution and the country to greater heights. Unfortunately, I fear, we may be losing our way.



Signing off,

Arjun Kamdar

LIVING THE CHANGE; PRESERVING THE PAST

One of the questions I am often asked by journalists is how relevant a Doon School education is in the twenty-first century. We are seen as probably the most representative of the “legacy boarding schools”, as they are known in India, a symbol of a traditional mode of education that served the country well in the half century after Independence, but which may no longer, according to some commentators, have a place in the modern, globalizing world.

I contest that proposition vigorously at every opportunity because I believe that the core of a Doon School education is more relevant now than ever before, and is, in fact, the future of education. In an uncertain world swept by the tides of evermore rapid social and economic change, traditional values are like the massive rudders that keep ocean liners steady and on course during even the stormiest of seas. However, sometimes legacy schools are their own worst enemies, not only in India, but around the globe. Rather than being in the vanguard of change where and when needed, they are often – and then perceived by the public as such – as inward-looking bastions of privilege and unthinking resistance to change, cocooned in their own complacency, an arrogant bar to social and economic advancement rather than the engine room of progress. They are often associated with certain historical epochs. For instance, Eton College's alumni are often portrayed as a relic of the aristocratic domination of British politics, while those of the “prep schools” in the states on the Atlantic seaboard of the United States, with their strong links to the Ivy Leagues, are often seen as instruments of the perpetuation of a powerful, oligarchic “East Coast” elite that dominated the country from the nineteenth century onwards. As is the case with legacy schools in India, this is an unfair stereotype because some of the most radical Prime Ministers, Presidents and other political, social and economic leaders have emerged from those schools. However, legacy boarding schools in the West have to date been better at adjusting to the challenges of a changing, globalizing world than their peer group of schools in India.

There are some things that, in my view, should never change about Doon. I have in my time been the head of an excellent co-educational school, so co-ed holds no terrors for me; but I am utterly opposed to it for Doon. Most of the great single-sex boys' schools in the West have gone co-educational, but usually not for philosophical reasons, more for pragmatic ends. The three major drivers of change have been a need to improve academic results in an era of league tables and rising parental aspirations; a need to boost numbers as boys' boarding becomes less fashionable; and a desire to bring in girls as “a civilizing influence on the boys”, that is, to transform backward cultures that are seen as too aggressively male in a world in which bullying is no longer socially or legally acceptable and women are claiming a larger place in the worlds of university education and employment.

“We are demonstrating that that boys' schools can be just as civilized, academic and buoyant as co-educational schools, but can offer so much more besides, especially outside the classroom.”

Besides the other strong arguments in favour of an all-boys' education, I believe that all these objectives can be met in a single-sex boys' boarding school. We are demonstrating that boys' schools can be just as civilized, academic and buoyant as co-educational schools, but can offer so much more besides, especially outside the classroom. Boys' boarding schools do not need to conform to the unfortunate and unfair stereotype that has lingered from the last century, or to be boorish, brutal, inward-looking, anti-academic and misogynistic to prove their manhood. Doon is living proof that a school can be profoundly attached to the best of its traditions and at the same time thoroughly modern. While it is generally true that the quickest way for a school to improve its academic results is to bring in girls, I think that it is a bad

first and last year that comprehensive data was made available, the two schools with the highest percentage of students gaining 90% or above at ISC were two boarding schools: Welham Girls and The Doon School. And, Doon is producing some of the best university placements, not only in its own history, but, pro rata for its size, in the world.

In my view, co-education at Doon would demolish its singular identity as an institution and its uniqueness in so many other ways. The logistical challenges – would we double the size of the intake to accommodate 500 girls, or halve the number of boys to take in 250 girls? – are great, but surmountable in purely practical terms. But the sticking point is philosophical: could that indefinable nexus of qualities and character traits that make Doon “The Doon School” and a truly great institution persist in a co-educational environment? I believe not. In that respect, I am a conservative in the tradition of Edmund Burke and, like him, believe that over time, great institutions develop their own coherence, and that needs to be respected.

However, we must also adapt or die. Change in hierarchical male environments can be painful and resisted unthinkingly because even the smallest – and youngest of traditions – can be imbued with a disproportionate importance because they are more about position in the hierarchy and perceived status, rather than the intrinsic worth of the activity. Strangely, many boys' schools around the world are pervaded with strong fears about embracing the future, and roll along complacently in comfortable ruts; consequently, they fail to renew themselves as institutions in a timely fashion, and then perish – or go co-educational to survive!

Life at school, any school, is about preparation for the rest of one's life. One of India's great strengths is the remarkable fact of its hundreds of millions of people under the age of twenty-five, i.e., those who were born around the time that Manmohan Singh masterminded the opening up of India's economy. But the sheer weight of numbers means that a considerable part of India's memory since Independence is not shared by the bulk of the population, and the election of 2014 has massively reinforced that trend. Anyone who was born at Independence would have spent almost his or her entire life ruled by one political party; those under the age of twenty-five, the largest single demographic, will remember a very different political, social, economic and global geopolitical dispensation. Old certainties have to be justified in a way that they have never had to be justified before. Defence of tradition and “the old ways”, and defence of privilege and exploitation do not necessarily go hand in hand, but any institution that does not also embrace the changing world around it is doomed to perish. The history of the twenty-first century, as and when it comes to be written, will, I believe, bear me out in this.

“Boys’ boarding schools do not need to conform to the unfortunate and unfair stereotype that has lingered from the last century, or to be boorish, brutal, inward looking, anti academic and misogynistic to prove their manhood.”



Dr Peter Mclaughlin

THE PUTIN-OCRACY

Anvay Grover *comments on Vladimir Putin's manipulation of "soft power".*

"The Cold War has long ended, but the mentality of the Cold War has stayed firmly in the minds of some." - Vladimir Putin, 2008.

The crisis in Crimea this year has re-drawn attention to the region of the erstwhile Soviet Union. What has been apparent is that Russia very much remains a world power, not merely because of its military prowess but also because of the influence that Russia's say carries all over Europe. This influence and ability to exert control has been dubbed as "soft power". American political scientist, Joseph Nye was one of the first persons to use this term, way back in 1990. In 2013, he argued that Russia was using military power to compensate for its lack of soft power. But if there is one thing that the recent attention on Putin has brought to light, it is that Russia wields immense soft power in Europe.

Nye defined soft power as the ability to attract and influence. He said that this power can be drawn from three different resources; a country's culture, its country's political values and its foreign policy. Through this piece, I would like to communicate how Putin has aggregated soft power using these resources and illustrate this with some examples before talking about how this can impact world politics.

Vladimir Putin has been following a foreign policy that involves making other nations dependent on Russia, both financially and in terms of resources. This is Putin's own interpretation of soft power; perhaps best explained using the example of Europe's energy dependence on Russia. Oil and gas exports make up for more than half of Russia's budget. But who buys all this gas? The neighbouring nations do. Germany and France, two states that are members of the NATO depend on Russia for thirty-six per cent and twenty-three per cent of their energy supply respectively. This has given Russia increased influence over the NATO itself. If there were to be a war between Russia and the NATO bloc today, it is plausible that Russia might simply cut off the energy supply to France and make it pull out of the war. After all, they have done this in the past. In 2009, Putin shut off gas supplies to Ukraine, and in April this year, Russian oil conglomerate Gazprom raised prices by eighty-one per cent!

Putin has also cleverly attracted residents of nearby nations by using popular Russian media outlets in Belarus and Moldova. Media outlets which are controlled by the Russian state reportedly enjoy greater popularity than the local news agencies in these two countries. We would also be wrong in assuming that Russia's political values hold no attraction for the countries that were earlier part of the Soviet Union. Russia has the element of exclusivity from the point of view of countries like Moldova, as Russia is the symbol of the 'alternate Europe'. The Russian media communicates the nostalgia for the by-gone days of the Soviet Union, when Russia carried the same weight as United States. Which nation would not desire a return to that kind of power? Thus, Putin preys on the history of the region, and by portraying Russia as an economically superior state, attracts such nations as Moldova.

Sometimes, though, Putin has used this soft power for aggressive purposes as well, rather than for just establishing financial superiority or attraction. The *Seddeutsche Zeitung* reported on the 18th of September that Putin, according to a recorded conversation with the Ukrainian President, threatened Poland, Romania and other Baltic states. "If I wanted, in two days I could have Russian troops not only in Kiev, but also in Riga, Vilnius, Tallinn, Warsaw and Bucharest," Putin allegedly said. Such words are an example of how Putin has been using his soft power in coherence with Russia's military might. More than anything, this conversation, if true, serves to show that Putin is ready to wield his soft power to establish Russia's hegemony in Europe. The newspaper also reports that Putin told Ukraine not to put too much faith in the European Union as Russia could, by using its influence, achieve a blocking minority; another display of soft power drawn from the dependence of nations like Germany and France.

Now let us think what Britain or the United States might think about such remarks made by Putin. If Putin were in to act on his claims, both these nations would find themselves at war with Russia due to NATO's tenet that an attack on one is an attack on all. This definitely brings back memories of the events of the Cold War, when both American and Russian propaganda led to the armament race, the Cuban missile crisis and a divided world. I am not commenting on whether Putin's amassing of soft power is wrong or right, but I shudder to think about the implications that such actions might have. That is the point that I wish to raise in this piece. What does Putin actually want, and how will America reply to that? This world can do without another Cold War, but that is a possible direction that world politics might take if this continues.



Memoirs of a Retiring Debater

Pulkit Agarwal

"To everything, a why; to every why, a why not."

At the outset of this piece I would like to clarify that the title in no way suggests that I shall stop debating in the years ahead, but simply that the time has come for me, and my form mates, to look back, reminisce and bid farewell to our fortes, those that have helped us find ourselves within these four walls.

People often identify debating as an activity that invites limited participation, for not everyone relishes the challenge of having to defend his views vehemently in public. However, little do we realize that within us all, there rests a debater: the person who sometimes wrestles with himself on hearing something contradictory to his opinions, and sometimes with those around him. It is our duty to find that person, nurture him, and allow him to flourish; and that is what makes a perfect recipe for a passionate debater.

Yes, it is that simple. But what is not so simple is the trouble that debaters often run themselves into. I would not be lying if I said that I have been checked by Masters, only too often, for my outspoken nature. It is frequently even construed as arrogance. But I have failed to understand if being outspoken and assertively open about one's views makes one arrogant. Perhaps it does. I am willing to acknowledge that possibility. However, there are certain instances when I know that is not the case. And that is when hearing people say "There is no point arguing with him; he's too stubborn to understand anyway," kills a little bit of that fierce debater that rests within us all.

Thankfully for us, this is not a highly pervasive trend on campus, for nothing makes better for an uncommunicative community than the shunning of dissent. But be that as it may, we do sometimes fail to acknowledge the power of free speech. The very free speech that Eastern European people cried for through the Cold War, that the citizens of Hong Kong will continue to protest for from the Chinese, and that the Indian government denies to so many of its subjects even today.

Perhaps it is so because there is a sense of disobedience that lies at the heart of debating. I cite the thrill with which I studied Antigone in my Literature class, smiling understatedly to myself every time I read about her defiance of autocratic authority. Certainly, Antigone's transgression was far greater than any we school-level debaters ever commit. But even so, the ever so slight resonance that we find with the actions of notable 'disobedients' in history and literature, can at the end of the day serve as reward enough for us to pursue debating as our forte at Doon.

The little that I can speak from my experience with this activity at School is something that PKB told me during the very first SEDS meeting I attended. She said, "Debating is a way of life; sign up for it only if you are willing to bear its side-effects." In hindsight, I understand what a prophetic statement that has proven to be. I will probably continue to run into conflicts and confrontations with those around me for my debater-*wala* attitude, but passive obedience and taciturnity in the face of opposition will never seem as enticing to me as the opportunity to argue for something I feel strongly about.

So yes, I am just another student who chose the debating-*wala* path at School, and lived through its side-effects, secretly enjoying most of them in the process. But I'm glad I did. And I only hope that more and more Doscocs walking through the gates of Chandbagh in the years ahead will choose the same path as well, because choosing it was the best decision I ever made.

"little do we realise that within us all, there rests a debater: the person who sometimes wrestles with himself on hearing something contradictory to his opinions, and sometimes with those around him.."

DOON'S MERITOCRATIC SOCIETY

Arjun Singh comments on the meritocratic attitude prevalent in School.

Our School was founded for various reasons- the foremost of them being to create leaders for society who are instilled with virtuous qualities and ideals of societal service. Among these reasons, one of them is, and I quote, 'To inculcate the spirit of excellence into the minds of every boy.' As such, we have always strived to achieve the highest levels of merit in every activity that we Doscors undertake. Whatever hobbies that we have as students, whether academic, sports or another holistic pursuits, we aim to be the 'best-of-the-best', tackling any obstacles in order to reach our goal. This spirit of excellence is extremely beneficial as it not only leads to individual triumphs, but also upholds the reputation of our School, which is known for its general proficiency.

However, this spirit of excellence also has affected our School adversely. The constant desire to achieve our high goals has led us to becoming obsessed with materialistic gain, and has also caused a tear in a major segment of our School's characteristics fabric - equality, and the tear is noticeably evident at our social and interactive level. Within forms (especially junior forms), there is a considerable divide between the achievers and the underachievers. This divide constitutes the popularity, respect and glory that achievers often receive when they reach a level of excellence in their pursuits. It leads to a viewer-ship of contempt of the underachievers by their form-mates, who are often branded as 'useless' and 'unprofitable' because they cannot or haven't yet attained a similar level of accomplishment in their hobbies and pursuits. Differences like these lead to bullying amongst forms, due to the dominance that the achievers possess. This attribution of contempt, is not only prevalent within forms, but is also somewhat present in the senior-junior relationship as well. It is a violation of our School's principles of equality amongst all students, and affects the friendships and fraternal bonds that form-mates are supposed to bear. It can then be inferred from this that the inequality of wealth and class that our School has extracted has been replaced by the inequality of achievement and meritocracy that exists in our School today.

Apart from its social implications, our obsession with excellence is also inimical to ourselves. In our constant pursuit of achievements across the spectrum of activities provided, we tend to neglect our values and ethics. We are often willing to do whatever it takes to accomplish our goals, even if those efforts constitute unethical behavior, so as to attain social dominance and popularity. The infamous 'S-Form Second Term' is an example of this, which has been characterized by many as a time when one performs sycophantic activities so as to be appointed to positions of authority when they reach SC-Form. This also clouds our judgment, as we tend to favour those who are achievers when we make our decisions, not considering their personal behaviour and the personal qualities required. At the beginning of every year, when elections for the School Captain's post are held, we often elect someone who is a high achiever, particularly in the sports area. We do this without considering whether he is a well behaved individual with leadership skills or not. We have come to associate achievement with overall leadership competency, which leads to arbitrary decision-making and gullibility that remains when we leave School and enter society.

To sum it up, we can refer to our founding headmaster- Arthur Foot's words 'that boys of the Doon School should be members of an aristocracy'. He, however, also included in his quote that this aristocracy should not be one of 'position'. The word 'position' was a euphemism for the egalitarian sentiment that he wanted to flourish in our school. To uphold his words, we should confine our 'spirit of excellence' to our activities and undertakings, and not let it permeate into our relationships and judgements. If this type of meritocratic attitude continues to prevail, it will default on our rudimentary principles and will desecrate the very reason why our School was founded and continues to exist.

“It is a violation of our School's principles of equality amongst all students, and affects the friendships and fraternal bonds that form-mates are supposed to bear.”

THIS TITLE NEEDS AN IDEA

Rishabh Agarwal

I believe that each one of us has a purpose here, on Earth. And I'm not talking about bravery, or understanding, or sensitivity; all these are ideals. No, I believe my ultimate goal is the conception of an idea; an idea that none of you nor anyone else in the world has ever had. Imagine if that was what everyone strived for, if that were the sole purpose of every human being? Why is it that we have been given the ability to think, rationalize, create and innovate? Now, if an idea is the foundation stone of achievement in life, the only question that remains is: "Where do I find one?"

An idea is like an organism; each one requires the perfect environment to flourish, and through sessions of brainstorming, I believe I have identified two environments or situations in which these ideas spring to life.

Let's look at it this way: have you ever watched a movie scene where one person is faced with a conundrum- and whilst talking to another person about mundane things, suddenly he has a 'eureka' moment and disappears from the scene- full of excitement, thanking the other person and leaving him in bewilderment and confusion as to why he is being thanked? I suppose you can recall a few of these cliché scenes. When I look back, I can actually recall a few such incidents from real life. So why does that happen? Because we pick up and develop ideas when we interact. That is what I consider to be the first situation under which ideas thrive. Interaction and connection with other people is the best way to nurture ideas, and that is why the best ideas in history started off as a mere observation, the consideration of a mere possibility, a different way of thinking. Take for instance, Archimedes. For the rest of the world, the water level rising when they entered the bath tub was just something that they saw, but Archimedes observed it and explored the cause for that phenomenon. We should never discard an occurrence as something to be taken for granted. The need for discussion is that sometimes, people have some part of an idea floating around in some corner of their minds, a vague notion of difference that comes from observation, and they need the rest of that part: someone else, to help them complete the idea.

The second situation is pressure. The Majority of us don't like to work under pressure, and we think that we do our best work while at ease and in the comfort zone. This isn't always true- if you remember that brilliant scene from 'Sherlock', where he figures out how the painting in the museum is a fake within ten seconds, I think that captures best what I am trying to explain. Look back at all the IB English Papers, those two second windows to think of an excuse, those Wednesday deadlines for *Weekly* articles, and countless '15 Minute Preparation time for Debates.' Our brain comes up with the most interesting connections and interpretations of poems, essay topics; it notices miniscule details that you know were impossible to notice were you given more time.

"Where do I find such an environment?" is a good question, to which I suppose I have the answer: "You are already there, but not quite." Interesting statement, isn't it? What it's trying to say is that we are already in a place where all of this comes together, but the existing paradigms don't quite help us get the best out of it. And this is a direct indictment of our education system. Schools give you all that is required: interactions, sharing of ideas, exposure to different perspectives and of course, pressure. Assignment deadlines, exams, class discussions and also 'after-class gossip'. These are the best activities during which our brain can make connections between two neurons that have never been connected before; because essentially, that is what new ideas are.

I suppose a lot of us have heard that average humans use only 7-10% of their brains in their lifetime. Now, if we were to consider that as correct, I'd say we are wasting an awful lot of what is already scarce. Why should I waste even the slightest shred of my 'brainpower' on learning the periodic table or the location of the Alps on the world map, or when and where Arthur Foot was born? Don't I have Google for that? Why should we waste this limited 10% on remembering who said "We go into liberty and not into banishment"? I could refer to my book, or the internet for that. There was a reason why the printing press and the 'World Wide Web' were invented. That purpose was to make information more accessible, and that is why companies spend more and more money each year to make computers and phones lighter and smaller, to increase the capacity of the memory chips in them. It is done so that we don't have to waste our energy and that '10%' on it. Today's classrooms should be about innovation, discussions of new ideas, reading books and thinking about space and time. Constant questioning of existing paradigms and the laws of science is what will form more and more of these new relays

between our neurons. Rote learning, as Sir Ken Robinson once said, is a system developed for the Industrial Revolution, for a time when the computer and its boundless possibilities did not exist. We need to adapt, and quickly if we wish to progress.

An idea can have amazing powers of motivation to drive you to seek the truth, intrigue you and let you cross all limits to change the fact that the idea does not remain just that. To quote Alan Moore, "Behind this mask there is more than just flesh. Beneath this mask there is an idea... and ideas are bulletproof." Once the idea has nested in your head, and you have complete faith in it, it grows and then you are ready to go beyond available resources and capabilities to seek the truth behind the idea and find concrete proof for it. I can substantiate by saying that this entire article is a result of many interactions with people, many silent observations and many experiences. An idea will not come to you while you are sitting within four walls. You have to step out, not just see but observe and then go back and reflect, discuss and finally conclude and then present your idea to the world. That is not very tough today due to the presence of social media and discussion forums. We are practically connected to every other human being on this planet and our ideas can reach them in seconds. Now if I were to introspect, I believe we have everything required for our brilliantly engineered minds to function efficiently. We simply need to adapt to meet our present needs. In conclusion, I can recall (surprisingly) one piece of advice: "*Change your mind about something significant every day.*"

Workings of the Weekly

Tushaar Kuthiala

(Reprinted from issue no 2079, March 12, 2005)

The Doon School Weekly is the oldest publication of its kind that I know of. When I classify it as such, what I mean that it is unique in that it is edited formatted and brought out entirely by students. Since 1936, when the *Weekly* was first published (briefly as a fortnightly), till today, it has been delivered within and without the Dosco community with unfailing regularity. *The Weekly* is constantly evolving, with no two issues being cast from the same mould.

The Weekly represents different things to different people. For most students, it is a publication that has some generally enjoyed 'regulars' like the Roving Eye and Unquotable Quotes. There are also some columns where their voice is heard (Doonspeak) and where their views are reflected (Opinion Poll). There are articles, of course, on matters both serious and light which give the *Weekly* its journalistic substance. To Old boys and parents, it is a news sheet that keeps them apprised of what is going on in school. To the cynics of this School, it is merely something to criticize and try to find fault with...the list goes on.

I have received innumerable complains about the contents, running and dealings of the *Weekly*. Students keep telling me to put more humour into the *Weekly*, because it is too boring otherwise. It is difficult to find the right mix between creative pieces and reportage in the *Weekly*, simply because different sections of the School expect different things. We were told to write about some serious issues in the *Weekly* and not to turn it into something which merely made people laugh. This is the opposite of what the average Dosco expects at Saturday breakfast. Then we have people criticizing the 'long' articles that run on and on. We have people to tell us to address matters of importance and keep it lively and interactive at the same time.

The Weekly is not a boring, dry chronicle of events. Nor is it devoted to airing 'creative' pieces and morbid poems that have been written as English assignment. We try to have a balance of all the elements that make up the *Weekly*, but we often have to pull a good piece and insert a mediocre one in its place simply because the mediocre one is topical. The *Weekly* aims to be a forum for people's thoughts and viewpoints, and getting more people to write. Receiving articles from a cross-section of the community is exceedingly rewarding for us. It goes without saying that a variety of voices will enhance the flavor and readability of this publication. Rather than beING critical, let us be productive. We are committed to producing a *Weekly* that appeals to all, inspite of all the odds.

HASTY WASTE

Ashish Garg

(Reprinted from issue no 1507, March 4, 1987)

The age-old adage states “Haste makes Waste”. Unfortunately, this is the state of affairs in School. In their over enthusiasm to change and modify the School, the School authorities are trying too many things simultaneously. I am not trying to advocate against sophistication and changing of traditions. I have always supported deviation from traditional ideas, but I do not support irrational changes. At least the School should give proper thought and consideration before such Goliath changes are made.

Oberoi House is a blunder. I foresee that it will be the biggest folly we can commit at our present “peak” time. No school in India could function under a five-house boarding system. Those who have experience of boarding schools know that to have Inter-House competitions, the number of houses has to be even. Even if we manage to overcome the problem of competitions, Oberoi House will extirpate the most hallowed of our traditions. The other four Houses are landmarks in School and form such an inseparable part that any move to decrease their importance will fail. Oberoi House will impugn the very fundamental philosophy of our School. It will be just a redundant building (I won't call it a House) built because of donations from a rich business house. A School which preaches “Economic Equality”- will it become a pawn in the hands of such business houses? At this point the wise will not break the present harmony of a four-house system, but use the surplus money to renovate the already existing, dilapidated houses.

Restarting the House Dining System will also be a mistake. It is the axe with which we will sever our own roots. The CDH is the nucleus of our school. It is the place where social intercourse and interaction takes place between boys. On Saturday nights it is a venue of gorgeous display of rich culture. Old masters recall that before the CDH was built, boys' going on midterms with boys of other houses was unheard of.

If such a healthy practice is continuing, must we stop it? The reason that House Dining Halls facilitate Captains and Housemasters talking to houses is very flimsy indeed. If people deem it necessary for house spirit to exist, I think it even more necessary for school spirit to exist.

Well, if the School has funds to flounder and profligate then why not develop our Physics, Biology and Computer Departments? Why not build an observatory for Astronomy. Why not give more stipends and subject scholarship? I am sure there are enough projects which have been rescinded due to paucity of funds- why not complete them? This term has seen mammoth changes. Among them are ugly, half-finished projects and mountains of bricks littered everywhere which fail to identify themselves with our environment. Already, congestion and concentration of buildings has begun to set in. It is indeed ironical that we, the boys, do not find the “sub-utilized” place which the members of the bard talk about. All I can hope is that the School architects and planners are more considerate in selecting future sites for buildings.

Many letters and editorials on such a vital issue have fallen on deaf ears. If not expedited, basic school decency advocates that at least such articles should be replied to. If there cannot be a direct dialogue through the *Weekly* then why not throw open the topic for discussion in the School Council, and let us argue it out through our representatives.

'Sneaking', Reporting and, the Life of the School

Kanti Bajpai

(Reprinted from issue no 2090, August 6, 2005)

'Sneaking', Reporting, and the Life of the School

The word 'sneaking' is arguably the deadliest word on campus. To be called a sneak is the worst form of abuse. It can get you into a lot of trouble with other boys. Trouble comes in many forms. You can be isolated and ignored if you have been labelled a sneak. You can be the object of verbal ridicule. We also know that a sneak can be attacked physically. It isn't polite to say all this in print. The time has come, though, to deconstruct the word and to uncover the world of fear and disgust built around it if we want Doon to be a secure and happy place.

The Doon School understanding of the words 'sneak' and 'sneaking' is misplaced as I will show.

Properly understood, sneaking means to pass on information to the school authorities, including prefects, in the hope that this will get someone else into trouble. Sneaking has two elements. First, the information is either completely inaccurate or is grossly exaggerated. It may be transmitted anonymously or openly, but the key point is that it is essentially a fabrication, a lie. Secondly, the purpose of passing on such 'information' is a malicious one. It is an act of vengeance, a way of hurting a person's reputation, or a way of getting into the good books of the school authorities (for example, to advance one's chances of becoming a prefect).

Sneaking understood in this way is wrong, and the School does not support it. No school wants to be fed incorrect information, and no school wants to victimize the innocent and reward the dishonest. Nobody should have any doubt about the school's abhorrence for those who lie in order to hurt others or are economical with the truth in order to profit.

The second meaning of sneaking, the one that Doon School boys prefer, is passing on information about wrong actions- that is, factually correct information about actions that are wrong. These actions are wrong because they violate the rules of the School or because they endanger security and happiness. For instance, a boy may pass on information to the School authorities when he is threatened by another boy and cannot defend himself. He may turn in information on someone who bullies others. He may even pass on information about a fellow student who is harming himself by consuming alcohol or drugs. Or, he may become an informant because there is damage to the reputation of the School and, by extension, the welfare of the entire student body. The purpose of the person who transmits the information is to put an end to the improper behavior. It is not malicious.

While boys refer to this second type of information-giving as sneaking, it is more correctly understood as 'reporting'. In political life, we call it 'whistle-blowing'. Two years ago, and idealistic young man by the name of Satyendra Dubey made national news when he blew the whistle on the collusion between local mafia, dishonest businessmen, and corrupt

government officials in Bihar. Dubey tried to pass on information about something that was wrong, that was a danger to individual citizens and the common good. We would all, without much debate, agree that Satyendra Dubey is a hero, a noble figure worth emulating. However, at The Doon School, going by the current vocabulary and mindset, he would be labeled a sneak!

I cite this example to show how misguided it is to mix up sneaking and reporting. Sneaking is a dishonest and mischievous activity. Reporting is a commendable and proper one.

Of course, we should distinguish between petty reporting and responsible reporting. To report every minor violation of the rules, every episode of teasing and leg-pulling, and every push and shove in the school corridors is petty. Worse, it is foolish. It is like crying wolf. A boy who does this will not be heard when something bad really does happen. On the other hand, responsible reporting is telling the authorities about something that truly endangers security and happiness. This is a service to the community and should be applauded.

Reporting or whistle-blowing is not easy to do. Those who can do it, do so in desperation, when they cannot think of another way of stopping harmful behavior. They know that their act will end in trouble for them because the person who has been caught and punished will plot revenge. Nevertheless, they persist. This is bravery, and it deserves our respect, not condemnation.

Understanding the distinction between sneaking and reporting is not a fancy move in a word game; it is not a verbal googly. On it rests the future life of the school and nothing else.

To report every minor violation of the rules, every episode of teasing and leg-pulling, and every push and shove in the school corridors is petty. Worse, it is foolish. It is like crying wolf.

The Year Gone By...

Yuvan Kumar

Picking up from where my predecessor left off, I have the honour of presenting to you the 'Year Gone By'. Given that it is an entire year, for some part of which I was not on the board of the *Weekly*, this will be an obstacle-laden task. But I shall try my best.

First and foremost, this past year has been exceptionally hectic. Take this article for example- it reached the editors for editing just in the nick of time! Time is currency in a school such as ours; and we just seem to be getting poorer by the day.

The month of February brought with it a new body of prefects (most of who were away at the time), posing new challenges as usual. The season kick started with cricket in which our School team made us proud; at home and away. The Inter-House competition took place without any weather related interruptions, which was gratifying to see after last year's washout! The brooding cloud of the Board examinations haunted both the ATs and the SCLs who were seen studying well into the wee hours of the morning. Their hard work paid off and after three months of wait, the same overworked students were seen celebrating their results and congratulating one another. In fact, both these batches scaled new heights: with one AT boy scoring cent per cent marks in science. Well done! Before one knew it, we had reached mid-March, which ushered in a bout of nostalgia, as the 'last this' and 'last that' for the SCLs began. And before we knew it, they were gone, as were the evolved S formers, leaving the rest of us to gear up for mid-terms. However, looking at the number of SCs cautioned thereafter, for "taking a different route", it seemed funny to have gone too far in the first place!

Trudging past mid-terms we reached the second half of the term. In April School was transformed into an oven, forcing most people to stay indoors for good. But that has never been the ethos of School, has it? Hockey was taken to with renewed fervour, with the School team winning several tournaments like the David Inglis Cup. School also tasted victory at various MUNs around India and abroad- all in preparation for our very own DSMUN in August. Luckily for all SCs, MUN wasn't the last of the socialising in April- behold the first Socials with Welham Girls, which left most of us wishing it hadn't ended. Dodging all these activities, the Doscogs worked on the PT exercises every morning; the finale of which was quite something to watch. Tata House stole the gong from Jaipur, winning it for the first time in eight years. The activity, which had taken away the voices of many PT leaders, was now history. To add to this, the onset of May saw preparations for the Inter-House One Act Play and Dance competitions shift gears. All the houses put up iconic performances in the Rosebowl, employing effective lighting, scene changes and thought-provoking scripts. The weeks of meticulous and backbreaking practices seemed to achieve fruition not many days after, in the form of the Inter-House Dance competition. The evening compiled dance from various genres, giving the audience's eyes a rare treat. In the blink of an eye Trials were upon us, posing the greatest challenge for all musicians participating in the Inter-House Popular Band category. To their delight, the competition was to be held immediately after the exams! Yet again, Doscogs rose to the occasion and gave equally commendable performances, in both their exams as well as on stage.

The second term began with a bang, as School saw hosted the biggest student-related activity in the form of DSMUN. There were a whopping fourteen committees and over five hundred delegates. This mammoth event was timed to commence on Independence Day, and just like last year, rain made its customary visit on the first night itself! Football was in full progress and was being played with even more 'josh' after the recently concluded FIFA World Cup. One could see daring moves and tactics being tried during house practices. Somewhere in this crossfire of activities, swimming was also taking place. This year's competition saw many records being broken by our boys as well as by some exchange boys. Shortly after the Inter-House Competition, School went ahead and won the Doon School Aquatic Meet for the second year in a row. Keep it up! We then had a series of victories, starting with the Doon School Chess Tournament, the Chuckerbutty Debates and to top it up, the Kamla Jeevan debates. A huge salute to the students and masters involved in making these events glitch-free, and adding so handsomely to the trophy cabinet. Inter-House Music and Football were held in a rushed one week, where most musician-players found it difficult to rest! Oberoi House took the Music Cup home, while Tata House emerged unscathed, making a clean sweep of all three football shields. Congratulations! Not soon after were mid-terms, a much needed breather for all.

The days ever since mid-terms have just been taken by Founder's preparations and have squeezed the life out of most of us. With Athletics training and SAT preparations going on, everyone seems ready to just drop dead. However, there are "miles to go before we sleep"! And a Dosco seldom sleeps; we all know that, don't we? So here's raising a toast to the good times that we have all had this year, and striving to have better ones in the years to come.



CONFESSIONS OF A SERIAL SAVIOR

Arnaav Bhavanani and Devansh Agarwal

I'm here to tell you the story of my life.

Now in the grand scheme of extraordinary events and occasionally mundane pauses, why should the story of my life make the slightest difference to you? Well, here's the deal: right when you think that this story, my life, is a pain all too familiar to you, you will realize that this is no ordinary tale, and I am no ordinary person. So let me begin, and help me along the way, alright?

Alright then. Begin.

Begin? That was rude. Anyway, you know how people keep talking about drawing the final straw, about their tempers getting tested, about being pushed to the edge; and at times, off it? They talk about heroics and heroes, and how they all aspire to be saviors.

So?

Well, it is these people who often fail to understand the gravity of many of their statements and truly, I envy them.

Why?

Because I am amongst those unfortunate few who do understand the gravity of these terms. I am a savior, and yet a victim.

That doesn't make sense.

It doesn't? Then I want you to imagine what saving a life actually feels like, especially when you keep doing it again and again and again, until you have close to nothing left to give.

It must have been love, then.

Please, don't make the same mistake I did. Even I thought it was love, but it wasn't. It was more of an unbridled sense of necessity that drove me. I clearly remember the first time it had happened. Come to think of it, I remember all the six instances I helped her escape the clutches of death.

I thought you were a victim?

Will you wait? As much as I don't want to sound like a hero, I really didn't have much of a choice. I had to be the hero, because I was the only one capable of fighting him. And he was there all six times. Each time he nearly killed her, nearly destroyed the woman I lived for. The fifth time he tried it, I almost lost her. And it was at that moment that I realized that he would stay. Regardless of how hard I tried, he could make her succumb to him each time. And my strength was waning. I was running on a nearly empty tank- it required massive amounts to keep her alive at times like those. But honestly, it wasn't completely her fault. This world isn't an easy place to live in, and he promised her so much comfort. So much relief. Her depression dealt itself out in irregular doses, and that's when she would confide in him, not stopping to think that he could be her ultimate downfall. She never stopped loving him, even though he clearly wished to kill her. And I never stopped loving her. Till now.

Till now?

Well, I realize now that I have spoken enough, for I have fought enough. I have done more than enough for her, and there seems to be no point in any of this anymore. She's with him now, again. And you know what? She's completely ignoring me. I can't take this. Sometimes the irony of it all makes me giddy with hate. So much hate- the kind that envelopes me right now. At times-
NO!

What happened?!

Can it be? After all I've done?

WHAT?

She's left me and gone!

But wait, what is this? I'm feeling something inside me!

...

It's Love! It was there all this time! Misguided and misplaced, but still, a love for her! I'm beginning to realize- I am nothing without her.

But it doesn't matter, does it? I know I cannot do anything. It is his seventh attempt, and for the first time in my life, I cannot save her, for I have nowhere to go. I cannot walk to her, I cannot run. I cannot even call for her. I'm voiceless and immobile. Always have been.

But then how did you save her?

My friend, I am an inhaler.

It all makes sense now. But what about him? Who is he?

Well, he's not human either. We're both connected to each other in the simplest yet most inescapable way one can imagine.

What are you saying?

My friend, his name is Cigarette.

I can't believe you didn't get that. Anyway, come watch the sunset with me. There isn't much time left anyway.

Why?

When she grabs me, she'll realize that I only have one puff left. It isn't enough to save her this time. We're done.

Ah, there she is.

Puff.

| Poetry |

To Win

Varun Sehgal

Have you ever thought of what it takes to win a
match?

How long does it take for a goal to hatch?
Can you only win if you have big names in your
team?

Or can unknown players start to gleam?

Just a moment of brilliance can change a game.

As can a kick with accurate aim.

A sprint, a dribble, a powerful shot
Can leave your opponents hugely distraught.

What matters is the will of the players to win.

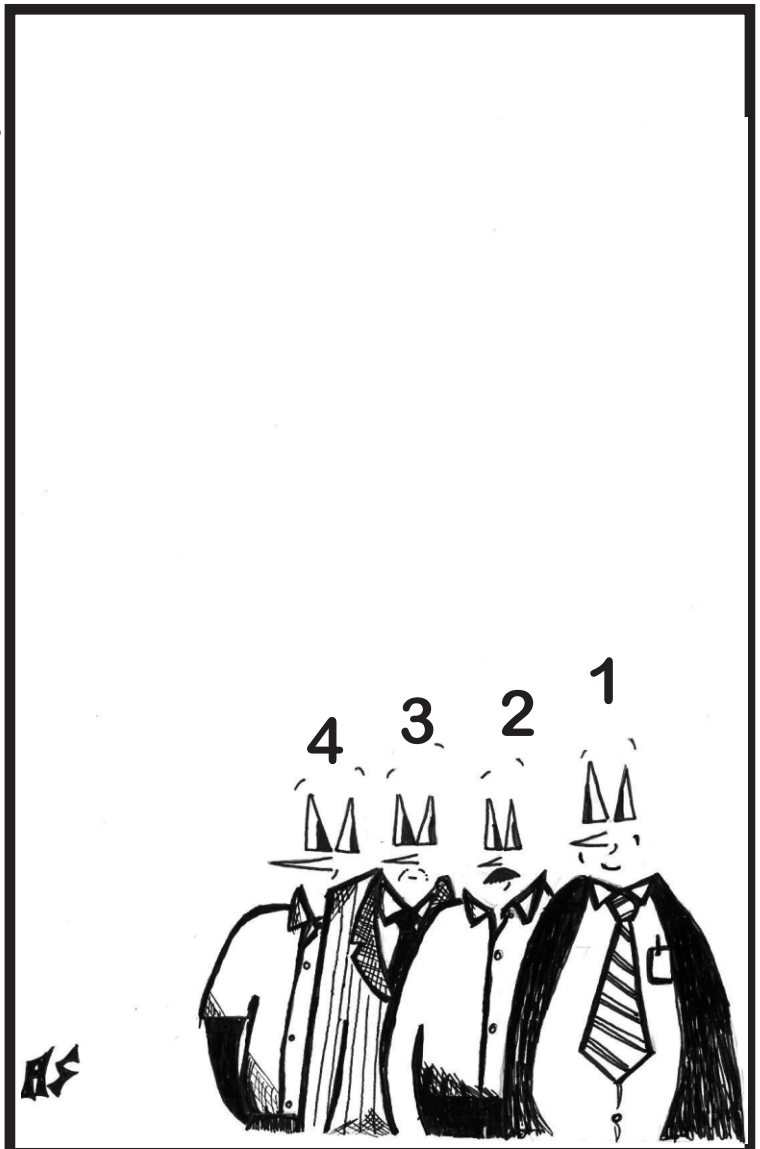
To leave the opposition in chagrin.

Their effort to pull off an upset,
To prove that they are a real threat.

Their commitment towards their club and
country

Can change the course of history abruptly.

And a single shot within the frame
Can leave a player in the hall of fame.



SOMETHING STRANGE

A Historical Perspective of a Prospective Future

Arnaav Bhavanani

2018. When he looked out of the window, the sun was about to set. Its fire was to be quenched by the cold, broken melancholy of the night- falling through the fabric of the bullet ridden sky. Far in the distance, fighter jets sprayed bullets with what might be considered wild abandon, but was really done with careful precision, and each bullet found a mark. The new AVI equipped meters in the army's fighter jets were perhaps the biggest blessing to the military, a product of the now defunct BAE Systems- once one of the largest military contractors in the country. Each bullet now had a destiny more important than the dirt. Especially now, when it mattered.

As the jets went about destroying their assigned targets with new found hope, they suffered casualties too. After all, the enemy wouldn't have been one without resistance. And it wasn't a passive resistance either. The ACAC Consortium had created some of the most lethal fighter jets in the world, capable of extreme offence to the point of annihilation. It was a tough fight- hard, but not impossible. And as each day wore on, it became more and more impossible to hold back the endless tides of Consortium jets.

And so the war wore on.

2020. A young and thin Jonathan Holmes watched the sunset. Clad in nothing but his brown overcoat, he sipped his horribly made coffee and pondered on what he would write next. Looking down at his slippers, he realized they were about to break any moment. Their once soft fluffy cushioning was gone, replaced instead by mud and grime that simply refused to come out. It was like taking a constant walk on Earth. But at times it felt truly liberating to do so- there were no gardens or forests where he could sink his feet into the little green blades that had tingled his skin as a child.

Jonathan was facing writer's bloc- at the moment he had more than enough metaphors and ideas in his mind, but none of them appealed to him. The papers he knew would print what he wrote, but only as long as it was politically correct to the marrow. For that reason, he couldn't differentiate between the reality he perceived and the reality he was meant to perceive. Truth be told, he had thought it was all fine until a few days ago, when he found a T-rated movie while digging through his closet. It was a criminal offence to be in possession of such material, and in a sudden awakening of the rebel inside him he sat down and watched it. What he saw surprised him beyond words, and left him deeply contemplative. He felt there was something pertinent about the movie, but he couldn't place his finger on what it was.

“Marley & Me” was its name.

Below him in the bustling square, he noticed old Matthew arguing with the carriage driver- horses were getting really expensive nowadays since cars had been banned. He saw the young lady who lived across from him carrying her month old baby on her back while she went about her work. There was nobody at home to help her, the husband had died in combat. She was alone; struggling with a newborn child in a broken world that nobody felt was broken. The chimneys in the distance billowed smoke that clung to the fading light in a desperate attempt at recognition, and in the fast dimming light, Jonathan looked past the square and saw the ragamuffins. Soldiers once, they were left by the wayside once they could not perform their duties. Alive, but unable to fight for a number of reasons. These ones were especially filthy and stinking. Clothed without care, they hung around the butcher's shop and smoked rapaciously. One of the men's legs were missing, and two of them were missing an eye. It wasn't too surprising, though. They were everywhere, and people were used to their presence in all nooks and crannies of the city.

The war often made Jonathan wonder how much he was worth as a writer to the state. People were being enlisted into the army without thought or care- there were simply not enough men to handle the endless number of rifles and guns and missiles. Just the other day, he had read of how entire communities were being

herded into the enlistment offices to fill in for the increasing dead. Equipment and resources for the army had reached an all-time low, and rations had begun with immediate effect two months ago. All companies, corporations, conglomerates were devoting all their time and money to help the nation. It was thought that the war would be over soon- why not help the government now, and pull a few favors later when they were needed? As he pondered over the developments that had occurred over the last couple of years, it occurred to Jonathan that things might be changing. Was he the only one who had noticed that there were no trees left in the city? Even the famous environmentalists of his youth had disappeared. What happened to Greenpeace? The only thing that worried him now was that people just didn't know enough anymore. The country's Internet had been shut down a year ago, much to the (quickly silenced) disgust and anger of the world community. The Leader stated war as a reason, and everyone believed him. Who wouldn't? Hadn't he helped the country so much? What reason was there to doubt the word of a man who's governance was the reason the country hadn't descended into total anarchy like so many others?

Jonathan vaguely remembered how the mighty USA itself had been the first to fall. Its overly lax gun control law and newly initiated nationwide marijuana approval had turned in on itself. Thousands of Americans, sick of propaganda and political conflicts, literally went 'trigger happy' when President Q had declared a state of emergency after the Boston Invasion. The riots were now armed rebellions- nobody was safe. The food was running out in that country, and it had taken some valuable time for world leaders to realize that the situation was hopeless- they left the country in smoldering ashes and worried about themselves.

(2016). The beginning of the war had been a classic clash of egos. Nobody knew why, but the Chinese High Command had placed her new gunships in US sovereign waters, and like in the Second World War, USA decided to fight for the free world. Only this time, China was more powerful. Even though she had been split in two a decade back, it hadn't taken long for the East to take over West China and establish total military control. She had then finished what she had started in the Cold War; USA was finished. And then the rest followed. Half the world was in chaos, and the other half was trying to keep its seams together with whatever it could until the storm was past. But would it pass? Who was going to reestablish order? It seemed like this war was going to have no end, no matter what the propagandists and newspapers said. Jonathan only saw one end in sight, albeit one that was as obscure as his memories.

They said that China was now an entirely military establishment rather than a functioning country- the largest training ground and active war zone on the planet. The truth was somehow accepted without care- that they lost millions of their own each day, and still produced entire battalions of soldiers every week for combat. There were simply too many people there- and that was the greatest strategic advantage they had. He thanked his lucky stars that nuclear warfare was pointless- the Strategic Disarmament Plan had made sure of that. But who knew what went on behind closed doors anymore?

2020 Jonathan couldn't even remember if things had been better once. Had they? He couldn't even ask any one from the generation before him because there was nobody left. It seemed as though they had all disappeared one day. Then it struck him. Hadn't there been a vaccine shortage? No wonder people had gone paranoid. Disease had been everywhere. Yes, that must have been it.

But what did it all matter. Things were how things had seemingly always been, and probably would be for a long time to come. Jonathan didn't have time to wait for his inspiration; he had to feed himself somehow. But there was nothing out of the ordinary for his readers. He couldn't write about the past- it wouldn't be printed. And he didn't feel qualified enough to talk about the future- he didn't have the facts to predict what was going to happen. This feeling of emptiness flew around his head like those little metal engines that transported water and guns for soldiers in battle. What were they called? Oh yes. B.I.R.D.s. How odd. He wondered how they came up with such an unnatural name.

Anyway, it was getting late, and the sun had left this side of the planet a while ago. He decided to go sit at his desk for a bit and think of what to write. There must be something interesting for the public. He absent-mindedly put the empty mug down on the balcony railing and went inside. It was getting cold, it looked like a storm was coming. No matter; he was used to it. There was always something strange. He would find it.

A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

Rishabh Agarwal

My friend wasn't like the other boys. There was a reason why we spoke so often. There was a reason why he knew my darkest secrets. There was a reason why he knew the most traumatic of my childhood memories. There was a reason why he was my only friend.

We were sitting outside the house on the edge of the field, a Saturday night routine, on 'our' bench, talking. I don't remember how it started or when it started, but as far as I can remember, we became friends around the time I was beginning to actually like school and didn't have to lie about it to my parents anymore. I think he had something to do with it.

We were looking at the field and it was almost deserted at that time. There was just one other person, at some distance from where we sat. He was not in my house but I knew that he studied in our school. I had never spoken to him, and I never saw him with the other children. I saw him rarely, and when I did, he was usually alone. My friend called him a 'freak'. We watched him walk past us, pointing at us and whispering to himself, almost as though he were talking to someone who wasn't there. "Sad" we remarked together. "He is not fit for a school like ours. Why don't they just pull him out of school?" I said. My friend replied, "Don't talk like that. We should sympathize with him. You know about his condition. Rumors are that doctors have advised to keep him in school. They have no cure for him, and believe that the only chance of progress for him would be if he was left among other normal people, like us." "But what's the point if he speaks to nobody, doesn't participate in any activity, just sits alone writing in that silly diary of his", I argued. "You wouldn't be saying that if you knew how it happened to him" my friend said with a distant look in his eyes. He continued, "I've heard that he could write really well, back when he was like you and me. He really isn't too different from us, you know. Anyway, he wrote a lot of stories, filled entire diaries with his tales. Then, one day he wrote a tragic one, in which his mother dies.

His mother never woke up to see the story he had written.

He couldn't take it; he knew he'd done it. He knew his stories were coming to life. So he wrote. Again. And again. And again. He filled more and more diaries, somehow trying to resurrect his mother through his stories. It got to

him. Next thing you know, he starts seeing more of his characters than he should. He starts talking to them, just the way we're talking right now."

I was speechless. How could I not have known this story? I wondered. Had it somehow slipped my memory? My friend watched me for some time and then said, "I knew you would be speechless. You know, maybe you should try and talk to him."

Then, with a strange, yet oddly familiar smile he added, "After all, you'd know best."

Just then, I looked up and saw the 'freak'. He was walking towards us. "Look, here he comes. Maybe I'll try and talk to him", I said. I opened my mouth to speak, but he walked passed us, giving me a strange look.

While he walked past us, I heard what he was whispering to himself. "See that guy sitting alone on the bench, ma? He's always sitting there, talking to himself. I think he has schizophrenia. Do you think I should talk to him?"



ODE TO A LAPTOP

Rahil Chamola

Oh exalted piece of machinery, thou
art one that never fails to impress.
Always there with me,
In good times and under duress.

I never fail to be impressed by
thy sleek black matte design,
Just one push of a button and,
you suddenly spring to life.

I fail to fathom the possibilities of
things I can achieve with you.
Thou art the one, the only one,
Without whom I can not do.

Thou art like a tireless teacher,
ready for me day and night.
Forever answering my questions,
O! My guiding light!

Not just a tireless teacher, but
also a fearsome friend.
Video games, music and movies!
My staunchest comrade till the end!

Thank you, my dear laptop,
For being my closest mate!
I will always hold you dear,
and carry you till your dying day!

LIFE

Hitansh Nagdev

Wondering the reason,
For I live every season,
The purpose of my life,
Lies in my hands or the knife?

Is this a test,
To reveal my inner best,
As the earth the battleground,
Was where uncountable obstacles I found.

Life, death and life again,
This is an endless chain,
So it's time to question our creator,
That why are we here?

Oh My God

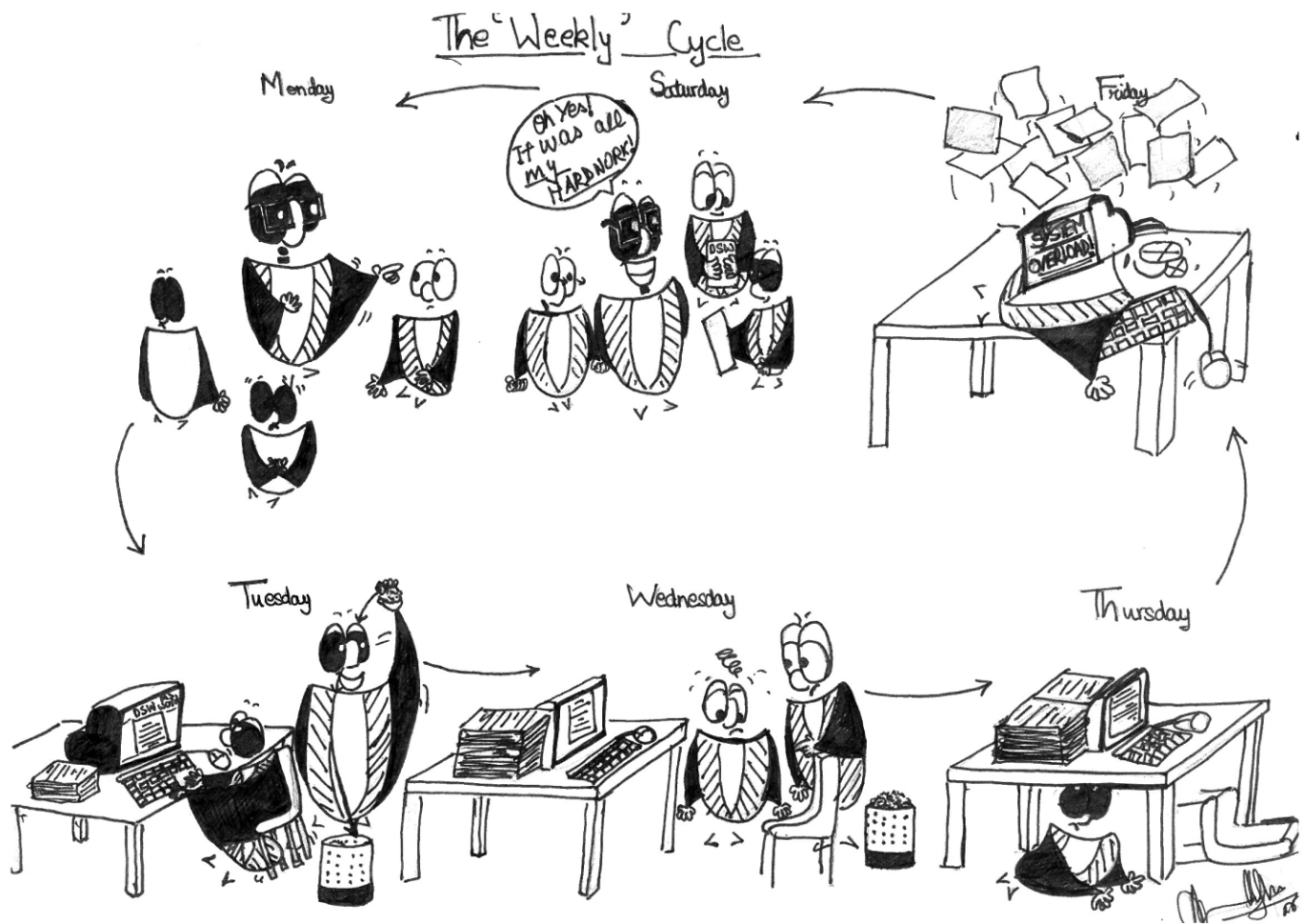
Riyan Agarwal

This Earth with man is filled with greed and fraud.
We need to improve,
Our humanity we need to prove.
The oceans that were once blue,
Are now filled with soiled glue.
The once clear skies,
Are now filled with planes of sighs.
But one thing remains, a baby's first cry.
Where once grew horse fern, now grows rye.
Now people have recognized hate,
So now they only search for fate.
The once tall mountains
Are now nothing but despairing fountains.
Nowadays people fight using mounted guns,
Earlier they used to live in peace and eat peaceful buns.
The world is now a world of hurry and worry,
Earlier it was ruled by the cute and furry.
In yester years there existed only love,
But now all that people do is kick and shove.
To improve I will try my best.
But why just me,
Progress is something that also depends upon the rest.

Pen

Devansh Agarwal

That pen in your hands stands prepared for battle.
Your mind, groggy with fatigue,
As words without shape float in the empty space of
imagination.
That pen still grins in your hand.
That pen.
Can you not write?
The words
So melodious.
Can you not compose?
The symphony
So harmonious.
Anymore?
The pen wags its tail;
Resilient, it refuses to buck or budge,
As the blank sheets of a random man's dream and
demise
Fill with your verbal vomit.
This damned pen better be replaced.
You command.
Yet if this pen has written the words above,
who is to be replaced?
The pen, or its slave?



TRUCHAIC ILLUSIONS

Arnaav Bhavanani

As I watch the skies I'm led to thinking, why this boat is slowly sinking,
Down below to greet the ship; Titanic, of forgotten lore.
And what to do I wonder often, for leagues below is still my coffin,
What of life that's led me far, so far away from Circe's shore?

So I ride beyond the crested waves, at times I'm lost and rant and rave,
But none are there to hear me o'er the stillness of my misery.
I'm parched for water's luxury, ironic, (I'm ensconced in sea!)
And driving on I've lost resolve and weighed down by my apathy.

But there's the shore with form outlined, taken far too long to find,
It brings with it the promises of hope and life and destiny!
I row by day and night to reach, shifting sands on a sunlit beach,
Just to watch illusion fall and waste into the turquoise sea.

‘हिन्दी कविता लेखन प्रतियोगिता’ में प्रथम तीन
स्थान प्राप्त प्रविष्टियाँ

प्रथम -

अँधेरे में..

• वल्लवी शुक्ला

कहानियों, कविताओं और फिल्मों में ही नहीं
मैंने ज़िंदगी में भी समझा,
अकेलेपन का अनोखा अनुभव,
लुभावना अन्धकार,
सन्नाटे का मधुरतम अहसास।
यह अहसास जो केवल दुलारता नहीं,
बल्कि जगाता है,
जीने का बोध कराता है।
अपने को अपने आप से मिलाता है,
बाहर को भीतर लाता है,
दुनिया के अर्थ को सपनीली आँखों में जगाता है,
भीतरी दृष्टि तेज़ करता है,
लगातार..।
हमेशा रोशनी का होना ज़रूरी तो नहीं,
अँधेरे में कोई ऐसी बात है जो मुझे
अनदेखी सी डोर से बाँधकर खींचती हैं,
अन्धेरा मेरा हाथ पकड़कर पहुंचा देता है ऐसी जगह
जहां कोई दूसरा मुझे देख न पाता है,
जहां बस मैं ही होती हूँ...
मेरा स्वत्व और मैं।
दुनिया की बात-चीत के दायरे से परे,
उठती हुई उँगलियों की परिधि से बहुत बाहर,
बहुत दूर।
मैंने महसूस किया है कि अँधेरे की आँखें होती हैं,
मेरी अपनी आँखों से भी कहीं अधिक प्रभावशाली,
इतनी, कि वे मेरे वजूद को
अनजानी सी अवधारणा में बदल देती हैं।
मेरा अस्तित्व कुछ अलग सा हो जाता है,
वह लापता नहीं होता...
बस, बदल सा जाता है।
इतना ही नहीं,

अँधेरे का रहस्यमय सन्नाटा,
जिसकी इन्द्रियाँ इतनी तेज़ होती हैं
जैसे शत्रु पर वार करती तलवारें
ध्वनियों को आकार देने लगता है,
अक्सर...
ध्वनियों के वे आकार
मेरे साथ साथ चलते हैं,
मेरे साथ खेलते हैं,
मेरा ही अक्स बन जाते हैं।
सुना मैंने और दिखाया अँधेरे ने,
लहराती हवा ने साथ चिपकी टहनियों को
अलग कर दिया,
और भी...
पत्तियों ने बतियाना शुरू कर दिया,
दूर कहीं से आती झींगुर की आवाज़
मेरी हथेली पर आ बैठी,
पंछी के पंखों की फड़फड़ाहट
मेरे कंधें पर फुदकने लगी,
पैरों की आहट छवि में बदल गयी,
दुनिया जो आँखों के सामने,
कानों के बाहर थी...
मन के भीतर रूप लेने लगी है।
नया निर्माण हो रहा है।
चलो, अँधेरे की ओर चलें,
अकेलेपन के साथ बैठें,
उससे दो बातें करें,
अपनी सोच के साथ लिपट कर बैठें,
अपने ही हाथों को अपने ही हाथ में लेकर
ज़रा सहलाएँ।
अँधेरे, सन्नाटे और अकेलेपन से आँखें मिलाएं,
अपने सुख दुःख को अपना बनाएं,
अपनी भावनाओं के साथ एकाकार हो लें,
खो जाने के अहसास का मज़ा लें...
अपने को जी लें।
मन में जगमगाती रोशनियों को समेट कर
अँधेरे में एक प्रकाश का पुंज बनाएं।

द्वितीय -

म..म..मौत

• ऋषभ शर्मा

ए कोरे कागज़, कितना भाग्यशाली है तू,
काश, मैं तेरे जैसा होता,
भावों की बीमारी से मुक्त,
सफेदी की शान्ति और सुरक्षा होती।
जो सफेद कुर्ता मैंने पहना है,
उसने तो बस शान्ति के झूठे वादे किये हुए हैं।
अन्तिम संस्कार की ज्वाला में भी शान्ति है,
जलकर राख होने की योजना
बना रहा था मैं अभी।
ए कागज़, तेरा रंग मेरे आंसुओं से नहीं बदल रहा है,
यह शक्ति हमें भी दे न!
फिसल रहा हूँ मैं,
पहले कभी ऐसा नहीं हुआ था...
पर अब अचानक..
पहले माँ का सहारा था,
काश न होता,
तो पहले ही टूट चुका होता,
खत्म हो गया होता।
क्या मेरी पहचान हमेशा खोखली ही रही है?
मेरी आस्तीन
जिसका बटन हमेशा माँ बंद करती थी,
बिना हड्डियों के लटक रही आस्तीने
मेरी आत्मा की तरह।
अस्तित्व निरर्थक, शरीर बेजान,
आँखे रोने से सूजी।
हे ईश्वर,
अगर यही अंत था तो झूठे सपने क्यों?
क्या 'दया करो' कहलवाने के लिए
रची यह साजिश?
आत्मा शरीर छोड़, टुकड़ों में बंटी भटकती थी,
बुरी खबर की कल्पना से रंगों मेरे अंग
आपस में लड़ते
जीवन एक युद्ध में तब्दील हो गया।
असीम कुँए में डूबता था,

साहस न था नीचे देखने का,
आस पास बस पानी था,
कोई धकेल नहीं रहा था उजाले की तरफ।
प्रकृति के नियम बदल गए थे?
धोखा था या बेहोशी?
समय रुका था पर धड़कन घड़ी की सुइयों सी
वक्त के प्रवाह को नाजायज़ बना रही थी।
बस कथानक कुछ ऐसा था
कि पहले आवाज़ गूँजती थी
फिर मुँह से शब्द निकलते थे।
भूत, भविष्य, वर्तमान तीनों को मुझसे दुश्मनी।
हार मानूँ भी तो किससे?
सवाल दीवारों से टकरा कर लौटता था।
शायद मैं ही जवाब था।
माँ अपने में मगन, चुप थी,
काश, दिलासा दे पाती, काश, दुःख बाँट पाती।

तृतीय -

अभी भी कुछ बाकी है

• अभ्यांशु उत्कर्ष

ज़िंदगी बड़ी छोटी सी है,
यह एक बार ही हाथ आती है,
दिल में यही डर रहता है,
कि आज यह मेरा साथ न छोड़ दे।
हर रात सोते हुए ये आशा करता हूँ ,
कि एक और दिन ज़िंदा रहूँ,
इस सवेरे को देखा तो लगा,
अभी भी कुछ बाकी है,
मुझमें कुछ बाकी है।

हम वाद-विवाद क्यों करते हैं?

• शौर्य जैन

आज-कल मैं बहुत बार अपने मित्रों को विद्यालय में होने वाली वाद-विवाद प्रतियोगिताओं में भाग लेते और उनके बारे में चर्चा करते सुनता और देखता हूँ। चाहे वे अंतरावासीय प्रतियोगिताएं हों या अंतर्विद्यालयीय या फिर 'वर्ल्ड डिबेट्स' जैसी बड़े स्तर पर आयोजित होने वाली प्रतियोगिताएं ही क्यों न हो, बहुत से बच्चे इन प्रतियोगिताओं में रुचि दिखाते हैं।

कभी-कभी मैं इस सोच में पड़ जाता हूँ कि आखिर इन वाद-विवाद प्रतियोगिताओं और समारोह में ऐसी क्या बात है कि बच्चे-बड़े सभी ही इनमें में इतनी रुचि दिखाते हैं? इन वाद-विवादों का मकसद क्या है और फायदे क्या हैं?

जो भी व्यक्ति बड़े पद पर होता है, वह अपने साथ विचारकों का एक दल ज़रूर रखता है। दल में चतुर-चालाक व्यक्तियों का होना बहुत महत्वपूर्ण समझा जाता है। जब कभी किसी बात पर विचार-विमर्श करना होता है वह व्यक्ति अपने दल के लोगों से बात करता है और उनके विचार सुनता है। इस दल में शायद ही कोई होगा जिसे दूसरे की बात से सहमति होगी। सभी चतुर और बुद्धिमान होते हैं, अपने अपने विचारों को साधते हैं और अपनी बात को सही साबित करने के लिए तर्क आदि देते हैं। आखिर में जो बात सही साबित होती है, वह कभी भी किसी एक व्यक्ति की बात नहीं होती है। सभी के विचारों और बातों का अद्भुत मिश्रण होता है। अब आप सोच रहे होंगे कि मैंने यह उदाहरण क्यों दिया। इस बात से मैं यह समझना चाहता हूँ कि हर किसी की अपनी राय होती है। हर एक व्यक्ति का देखने और समझने का अपना अलग नज़रिया होता है। इसिलिये लोग एक दूसरे से बात-बे-बात वाद-विवाद करते हैं और उनका अभिमत कभी भी सही या गलत नहीं होता। जो बात किसी एक के लिए सही हो यह ज़रूरी तो नहीं कि वही बात सबके लिए सही हो।

अच्छा अधिनायक वही होता है जो सब ही की राय को समझ कर और ध्यान में रख कर निर्णय लेता है। अच्छे लोग भी वे ही होते हैं जो अपनी सोच और समझ में लचीले होते हैं। यह सच है कि कड़ी सोच वाले को कोई भी पसंद नहीं करता है।

वाद-विवाद इतना ज़रूरी है कि बहस करने की क्षमता को कुशलता के रूप में देखा जाता है, और यह है भी। जो व्यक्ति अपनी बात को सही ढंग से और सभी की राय से मेल खाते हुए कह सके उसे सर्वोत्तम माना जाता है।

आज हम आदि मानवों की तरह अस्त्र शास्त्रों से किसी पर भी वार नहीं कर सकते हैं। कहते हैं न

कलम की धार तलवार से तेज़ होती है, यह बात आज की सदी में बेहतरीन रूप से लागू होती है। यदि हमें किसी पर भी वार करना है तो उस वार का सबसे पहला माध्यम हमेशा विवाद ही होगा। फिर लड़ाई-झगड़े तो बाद ही की बातें हैं। अपनी बात को कूटनीतिक तरीके से कहना ही चालाकी और समझदारी की बात समझी जाती है। जो अपनी बात को सब के सामने सही ढंग से रखने में असमर्थ होता है वह कभी आगे नहीं बढ़ पाता। सफलता प्राप्ति के लिए अपने विचारों और राय को सबके सामने लाना आवश्यक है। वाद-विवाद करना हर किसी को आना चाहिए। केवल सफलता और सम्मान पाने के लिए ही नहीं लेकिन गलतफहमियों को दूर करने के लिए भी। कई बार लोगों के रिश्तों में बड़ी दरारें आ जाती हैं। कुछ लोग अपनी बात को गोल-गोल घुमा कर कहने की आदत के कारण अपनी इच्छाओं को समझा नहीं पाते, जिस कारण रिश्ते में दीवार खड़ी हो जाती है। घर-गृहस्थी, दफ्तर, स्कूल आदि सभी जगहों पर विवाद करने की आवश्यकता होती है। कितना ही छोटा स्तर हो और चाहे कितनी ही बड़ी बात क्यों ना हो, वाद-विवाद करने की योग्यता को हमेशा ऊँची नज़रों से देखा जाता है। इन सभी बातों से मैं यह समझा हूँ कि इतने सारे लोगों का इस विषय में रुचि दिखाने का कारण यह है कि हम चाहते हैं की दूसरे हमारी बात, राय को तवज्जो दें। हम अपनी सोच में लचीलापन लाना चाहते हैं और मानते हैं कि बाकी लोगों की बातों को सुन कर ही तो हमारी सोच में लोच आएगी।

मृत्युंजय - कर्ण की जीवनगाथा

• अथर्व शुक्ल

“दुःसाहस था कि वह

पहुँचा राजरंगशाला में-

चमके जैसा कमल चमकता

कनक किरणमाला में।”

(केदारनाथ का ‘कर्ण’ खंडकाव्य)

यह कहानी है कर्ण की। दानवीर कर्ण की, महारथी कर्ण की, ज्येष्ठ कौन्तेय कर्ण की, सारथी-पुत्र कर्ण की, सूर्यपुत्र कर्ण की, अंगराज कर्ण की।

शिवाजी सावंत की सर्वोत्कृष्ट रचना 'मृत्युंजय' की रचना सन् १९६८ में कठोर परिश्रम के उपरान्त हुई। इस उपन्यास पर पहले ही अनंत व्याखात्मक निबंध, समीक्षा व टिप्पणियाँ लिखी जा चुकी हैं। अब मेरा केवल इतना ही कार्य रह गया है और वह है इस उपन्यास को पढ़ कर अपने मन में उठने वाले उद्वेगों को उल्लेखन करना।

कई लेखकों ने महाभारत को अपने-अपने दृष्टिकोण से लिखा, पढ़ा और ज़ाहिर सी बात है, समझा भी है। यह रचना शिवाजी सावंत का एक अद्वितीय दृष्टिकोण है। चाहे हमारा परिचय कर्ण से केवल महाभारत द्वारा ही हुआ हो, पर कर्ण के प्रति हमारी गहरी सहानुभूति का हम प्रावरोध नहीं कर पाते। इस ही संवेदना के मनोभाव को 'मृत्युंजय' और भी गहरा कर देती है।

अपने पूरे जीवनकाल के दौरान अत्याचारों का सामना करने के बावजूद, क्षुद्र, सूतपुत्र और सारथी कहलाने के बावजूद, कर्ण एक अजेय योद्धा, निष्पक्ष शासक, अनुरागशील पति, कृपालु भ्राता, वफादार और निष्ठावान मित्र और सबसे महत्वपूर्ण, उदारता का प्रतीक बन खड़ा हुआ।

शिवाजी सावंत ने हमारे समाज की एक ऐसी वास्तविकता को छुआ है, जो प्राचीन काल से चली आ रही है। उन्होंने हमें इस बात का अहसास दिलाया कि समाज में हम किसी व्यक्ति के वर्ग या पृष्ठभूमि पर अस्वाभाविक जोर डालते हैं और उस ही के आधार पर अपना अभिमत खड़ा कर लेते हैं, बिना उस व्यक्ति का सही मूल्य पहचाने।

कर्ण के पराक्रम का वर्णन शब्दों में नहीं किया जा सकता है। तीरंदाजी, गदा चलाने का कौशल, मल्लविद्या, खड्ग, मुष्टियुद्ध, चक्र का प्रयोग, युद्धविद्या हर कार्यमें अत्यंत प्रवीण। दानवीर, दिग्विजयी, अशरणशरण कर्ण ने अपनी ओजस्वी, उदार, दिव्य और सर्वांगीण छवि से पुरुषार्थ को अर्थ दिया परन्तु वे 'क्षुद्र' ही कहलाए गए।

अर्जुन और कृष्ण से ज़्यादा, हमारे अस्तित्व के नज़दीक कर्ण का चरित्र है। हम सभी में है एक कर्ण, एक योद्धा, जो केवल जीतने के लिए ही नहीं अपितु अपना अधिकार प्राप्त करने के लिए और समाज में अपना उचित स्थान प्राप्त करने के लिए लड़ता है। वह योद्धा संघर्ष करता है, अपने यश और योग्यता को प्रकाशित करने के लिए।

*"किन्तु कर्ण पहुँच चुके थे
पास पिता के अपने,
छोड़ तड़पते मिट्टी में
मिटटी के सारे सपने।"*

- 'कर्ण' खंडकाव्य

सन्देश

• विहान भटनागर

चल रहा हूँ मैं कहीं,
रास्ता बदल सका नहीं,
धैर्य है इन कदमों में लेकिन,
मुश्किलों से है सामना हर घड़ी।
भटक ना जाऊँ मैं कहीं,
यह राह निमग्न चाह है।
रग-रग में है डर का संदेह,
लेकिन मन में है विजय के लिए पूरी लगन,
मुझसे कहता खुदा, "जग ले फ़तेह कर
चीर आसमान, हो ले मगन।"
जीवन लगा है अब मेरा दाँव पर,
हर पल अपने को समझाता हूँ कि
अब हौसला बुलंद कर,
शोलों और कोयलों के इस पथ पर चला जाऊँ,
परिणाम की कोई चिंता मुझे नहीं।
आज इस जहान को है
एक दूसरे के सुख और खुशियों में
घुल-मिल जाने की ज़रूरत।
मिल-जुटकर उन्हें एकत्र कर
एकता ही मेरी चाह है,
अनेकता में एकता,
यह ही है अग्निपथ मेरा।

जिस ओर चला जा रहा हूँ,
वही एकता का प्रसार है,
एकता की ही खोज में,
सदा के लिए यह मेरा प्रयास है,
सदा के लिए यही प्रयास है।

प्रमुख की आवश्यकता

• निशान सिंह ब्रा

जीवन के हर क्षेत्र का एक न एक प्रमुख होता है। सवाल यह है कि प्रमुख का काम क्या होता या प्रमुख होना भी चाहिए या नहीं। मेरा मानना है कि प्रमुख का होना बहुत महत्वपूर्ण होता है। उनके बिना समाज के हर क्षेत्र में उपद्रव मच जाएगा। कोई अपने काम को सही तरीके से नहीं कर पाएगा। आखिर समाज में कोई तो दिशा दिखाने वाला होना ही चाहिए।

स्कूलों के प्रधानाचार्य से लेकर संसद में लोकसभा अध्यक्ष तक हर जगह प्रमुख होते हैं। भारत की आज़ादी की लड़ाई में महात्मा गांधी ने प्रमुख की भूमिका निभाई थी। उन्होंने ही बताया था की स्वतंत्रता पाने के लिए सब को मिलजुल कर किस प्रकार काम करना चाहिए। अधिकतर लोगों ने उनके दिखाए रास्ते को अपनाया जिसका परिणाम यह हुआ कि हम सब आज एक खुशहाल और आज़ाद ज़िंदगी जी रहे हैं।

खेलों में भी एक कप्तान बनाया जाता है जो बताता है दल को जीत पाने के लिए किस प्रकार खेलना चाहिए।

विद्यालयों में प्रधानाचार्य तो प्रमुख का कार्य करते ही हैं साथ में अलग अलग कामों को देखने और ठीक तरह से कराने के लिए अलग अलग क्षेत्रों के प्रमुख बनाए जाते हैं जिसके फलस्वरूप विद्यालयों का काम ठीक तरह से चलता रहता है।

राजनैतिक दलों में भी दलों का काम ठीक तरह से चलाने के लिए प्रमुख बनाए जाते हैं।

हाँ, भेड़ों में प्रमुख नहीं होते। जहाँ एक भेड़ जाती है वहीं बाकी सारी भेड़ें भी चली जाती हैं। प्रमुख न

हों तो समस्या है और इसी तरह प्रमुखों पर अगर आँख मूँद कर विश्वास किया जाए तो भी समस्या ही है। हमें इसा विषय में सावधान रहना चाहिए।

अंत में कहा जा सकता है कि समाज को अनुशासित रखने के लिए प्रमुखों का होना बेहद ज़रूरी होता है।

भारत मेरी शान

• अनीश चौधरी

बचपन से ही यह बात दोहराई जाती है,
पढाई, बताई, समझाई जाती है,
हर भारतीय का कर्तव्य,
भारत माता की सेवा करना है।
अब जो कुछ बड़ा हुआ हूँ,
तो बताया जाता है कि देश में कई कमियाँ हैं
लेकिन यह मिट्टी हमारी जान है
और इसी की सेवा करने में शान है।
लेकिन और बड़े हो कर यह समझा,
शान देश की सेवा में नहीं
बल्कि देश में सेवा करने की है।
कई लोग समझ नहीं पाते,
'मेरा भारत महान!' का नारा तो लगते हैं
लेकिन भारत तो वे भी हैं और मैं भी,
अगर अपनी ही खुशियों में कमियाँ कर जाएंगे
तो कैसी सेवा और कैसी शान?

भारत, भारतीय और अंग्रेज़

• राहुल भागचंदानी

यह तो सब जानते हैं अंग्रेज़ों ने लगभग दो सौ साल तक हमारे भारत पर राज किया था और कई मुश्किलों एवं तमाम विद्रोह के बाद, जिनमें भारत माता के कई बेटों ने अपनी जान दी थी, भारत को आज़ादी प्राप्त हुई।

हमें अंग्रेज़ी शासन से आज़ादी तो ज़रूर मिल गई परन्तु उन्होंने हमारी संस्कृति एवं हमारी परम्पराओं पर एक गहरा छाप छोड़ दिया जिसके प्रभाव के पात्र हम आज भी हैं। अंग्रेज़ी शासन का हमारी संस्कृति तथा हमारी परम्पराओं पर

सकारात्मक तथा नकारात्मक, दोनों ही प्रभाव पड़े। सबसे पहले, मैं कुछ नकारात्मक प्रभावों के बारे में विचार विमर्श करना चाहूँगा। अंग्रेजी शासन के कारण हम भारतीय नागरिकों को अपने ही देश में विदेशी कपड़े पहनने पड़ते और खासकर उन लोगों के लिए था जो सेना में भर्ती थे। क्या यह गलत नहीं था कि हम अपने ही देश में अपने परंपरागत वस्त्र नहीं पहन सकते थे। हम अपने ही मुल्क पराये बनकर रह गए थे।

सूतकर, बुनकर और कारीगर हमारी संस्कृति का एक मुख्य तथा अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण अंग थे। भारत की अर्थव्यवस्था इन्हीं लोगों की बनाई गई चीजों से चलती थी। लेकिन ब्रिटेन से आए मशीन बनाये माल के कारण इन लोगों की रोजी-रोटी हराम हो चुकी थी। मशीन द्वारा बनाये गए माल का महत्व दस्तकारों के मुकाबले बहुत तुच्छ था और अंग्रेज़ इसे बाज़ार में सस्ते दामों में बेचते थे। दस्तकार भारतीय संस्कृति का एक अभिन्न अंग थे और दस्तकारों की बेरोज़गारी का हमारी संस्कृति पर एक परेशान कर देने वाला प्रभाव पड़ा था।

भारत में बंगाल तथा कई अन्य क्षेत्रों में अंग्रेजी विद्यालयों का प्रमाण हुआ और पश्चिमी शिक्षा ने प्राच्यविद्या की जगह ले ली। अंग्रेजी भाषा के अत्यधिक प्रयोग के कारण हिंदी, संस्कृत एवं उर्दू जैसी पुरातन भाषाओं का महत्व बहुत ही काम कर दिया। संस्कृत का तो जैसे नामो-निशान ही मिट गया।

अंग्रेजी शासन के पूर्व, पंडित और मौलवी पाठशाला में ज्ञान बांटा करते थे लेकिन पश्चिमी शिक्षा के बाद तो ज्ञान बांटा नहीं, बेचा जा रहा था। किताबों में भारत की नहीं बल्कि ब्रिटेन का इतिहास पढ़ाया जा रहा था और कई हिन्दुओं एवं मुसलमानों को ईसाई धर्म में बदला जा रहा था। यह इस्लामी और हिन्दू अध्ययनों हतोत्साहित करने और पश्चिमी और ईसाई शिक्षा के साथ उन्हें बदलने के लिए के लिए किया गया और हमारी संस्कृति और

ज्ञान का निरादर करने में कोई कसर नहीं छोड़ी गई। लेकिन, देखा जाए तो पश्चिमी शिक्षा आज हमारे लिए काफी लाभदायक भी साबित हुई है।

अब कुछ सकारात्मक प्रभावों की बात करते हैं। अंग्रेजी शासन के दौरान भारतीय परम्पराओं तथा संस्कृति में कुछ सकारात्मक बदलाव भी लाए गए। उन्नीसवीं सदी के दौरान भारत भारत में कई सामाजिक बुराइयाँ मौजूद थीं जैसे सती प्रथा, बाल-विवाह, स्त्री अशिक्षा आदि। अंग्रेजी शासन ने सती प्रथा को रोकने का और विधवाओं के पुनर्विवाह का उत्सावर्धन भी किया। अंग्रेज़ इन सामाजिक बुराइयों को खत्म करना चाहते थे और इसमें राजा राम मोहन रॉय एवं ईश्वर चन्द्र विद्यासागर जैसे समाज सुधारकों ने उनका साथ दिया। यह परम्पराएँ समाज पर एक कलंक के सामान थीं और इन्हें रोकना ज़रूरी था।

यही नहीं बल्कि डेविड कनिंघम नामक एक अंग्रेज़ ने मोहनजोदड़ो तथा हड़प्पा जैसी प्राचीन सभ्यताओं को ढूँढकर भारतीय संस्कृति के प्रति एक बहुत की महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया। जेम्स प्रिन्सेप ने अंग्रेज़ होकर भी भारतीय संस्कृति का आदर किया और महाराजा अशोक के खम्बों को खोज कर ब्राह्मी भाषा की व्याख्या की और मगध राज्य को खोजा।

अंग्रेजी शासन ने भारत को पूर्ण से बदल दिया था और जैसा की मैंने पहले भी कहा, इसका प्रभाव हम आज भी कई क्षेत्रों में देख सकते हैं।

आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि हम भी अब अपने पूर्वाग्रहों को छोड़कर इस विषय को नई दृष्टि से देखें।

फूल

• सिद्धांत कुमार

झूमते-मचलते, बलखाते फूल,
दुनिया भर में प्रेम और शान्ति के प्रतीक फूल,
राग-बिरंगे, प्रकार-प्रकार के होते हैं,
लाल, पीले, नीले, हरे

अक्सर मेरे जीवन में भर देते हैं रंग फूल।
 जी खुश कर जाते हैं खूबसूरत से फूल।
 भंवरे, तितली, मधुमक्खी के करीबी ये दोस्त,
 आस पास जो ये मंडराएं
 तो खुशी से नाच उठते ये फूल।
 कोई बात मुझसे से कहते,
 मीठी-मीठी बातें करते,
 लेकिन मैं कुछ समझ न पता,
 मंत्रमुग्ध उन्हीं को निहारे जाता।
 अपनी सौंधी सी महक से
 आत्मा तक को खुशी पहुंचाते,
 मोहित कर जाती रोम-रोम को सुगंध इनकी!
 कोमल सा इनका स्पर्श,
 क्रोधित का भी गुस्सा पिघला दे,
 प्रेमिका को प्रेमी का प्यार दिखला दे।
 प्रेमियों को मिलाना है इनका काम,
 देश-विदेश में जिसका है नाम,
 उनका बड़े प्रेम से करे स्वागत और सम्मान।
 सभी के मन को शीतल कर जाते ये फूल,
 अपने भोलेपन और सौंदर्य से
 सब ही को प्रसन्न कर देते।
 रूप से अपने आकर्षित हैं करते,
 महारानी बसंत का ताज हैं ये फूल।
 शान्ति, प्रेम, सुख का एहसास हैं, ये फूल।

दाजू

• समरथ सिंह बल

जगदीश बाबू सबसे पहले उसे एक चाय की दूकान पर मिले थे। वह एक गोर रंग का, छोटे कद का, भूरे बालों वाला लड़का था। उसकी उम्र रही होगी यही कोई दस बारह साल। जगदीश बाबू सिगरेट फूंकते हुए उसके पास पहुँचे तो वह उनके स्वागत में सीधा खड़ा हो गया। जगदीश बाबू ने चाय की फरमाइश की, उसके कुछ ही मिनटों के बाद वह उनके सामने चाय का प्याला लेकर हाज़िर हो गया और प्याला उनकी और बढ़ाते हुए बोला, "चाय साहब"।

लडके का स्वर और बोलने की शैली से जगदीश बाबू को विश्वास हो गया कि लड़का पहाड़ी है। जगदीश बाबू के पूछने पर उसने बताया कि उसका घर दोरीताल गाँव में है। गाँव का नाम सुनते ही जगदीश बाबू बेहद उत्साहित हो गए। उनका अपना घर दोरीताल गाँव कुछ ही किलोमीटर दूर बसे गाँव में जो था।

मूलस्थान की निकटता उन दोनों के बीच स्नेहसंबंध स्थापित करने का प्रारम्भिक कारण तो बनी लेकिन मूल कारण था बच्चे का स्वभाव। उसका भोलापन, शांत मन और तत्परता। वह उन्हें 'दाजू' कहकर पुकारने लगा और जगदीश बाबू उसे 'छोटू'।

जगदीश बाबू रोज़ शाम को दूकान पर चाय पीने आते तो वह उनसे बड़े प्रेम से पूछता, "दाजू, चाय के साथ कुछ लाऊँ?" उसके व्यवहार में आदर का भाव साफ़ दिखाई देता था। दोनों दूकानदार से नज़रें बचाकर आपस में थोड़ी बहुत बात-चीत भी कर लेते थे जिसका अधिकतर भाग इशारों में ही होता था। महीनों तक शाम के समय यही कार्यक्रम चलता रहा।

एक दिन जगदीश बाबू किसी काम से बाज़ार आये और सुबह के समय ही चाय पीने के लिए जा पहुँचे। उन्होंने देखा कि अपना छोटू अंग्रेज़ी का अखबार घुटनों पर फैलाए उसे पढ़ने का प्रयत्न कर रहा है। वह अटक अटक कर अक्षरों को मिलाता और उनसे बनाने वाले शब्दों का उच्चारण करने का प्रयत्न करता। अपने काम में वह इतना मगन था कि जगदीश बाबू की आमद का भी उसे पता न चला। उसकी तल्लीनता कमाल की थी।

जगदीश बाबू को लगा कि लडके में सीखने की शक्ति है। वे समझ गये कि अगर उसे सिखाने वाला हो तो लड़का ज़िंदगी में काफी आगे जा सकता है। जगदीश बाबू उसे पढ़ा तो नहीं सकते थे। उनकी अपनी पढ़ाई बहुत कम हुई थी। उनके मन में लगन थी इसलिए बिना अधिक सुविधाओं के भी उन्होंने नौकरी पाने लायक पढ़ाई कर ली थी। ज़्यादा पढ़

नहीं सके जिसका मलाल हमेशा उन्हें सालता रहा। परिवार में बूढ़ी माँ के अलावा कोई था नहीं। शादी की नहीं थी सो बाल-बच्चे भी नहीं थे। बच्चों के माध्यम से भी अपनी इच्छा पूरी करने की कोई संभावना न थी।

उन्हें लगा कि वे अपना सपना छोटू में जी सकते हैं। उन्होंने उसका दाखिला सरकारी स्कूल में करा दिया। जैसे-तैसे किताबों की भी व्यवस्था हुई। सुबह शाम नौकरी और दिन भर पढ़ाई चलती थी।

संघर्षों की कथा लम्बी हैं लेकिन उसका अंत वही है जो होना चाहिए था। वह लड़का आज इलाहाबाद विश्वविद्यालय में अंग्रेज़ी का प्रोफेसर है। जगदीश बाबू अब उसीके साथ रहते हैं और उसके बरामदे में बैठ कर दिनभर चाय पीते हैं और सिगरेट फूंकते हैं।

इतिहास

• अद्वैत गणपति

पृथ्वी हमारी अरबों साल है पुरानी,
मानव जीवन की तो नई सी ही है कहानी,
अभी हुए होंगे गिनती के कुछ साल,
इतिहास की किताब के पन्ने तो दूर,
एक पंक्ति सा ही होगा हमारा अस्तित्व।
अस्तित्व चाहे कितने ही कम समय के लिए हो,
लेकिन तबाही मचाने में हमने
ज़रा भी समय ज़ाया नहीं किया।
हडप्पन लोगों ने सिंध का रेगिस्तान बना दिया,
सुमेरियन ने ईराक का सत्यानाश कर
इंसानियत की परिभाषा ही नए रूप में लिख डाली।
मिस्र के प्राचीन लोगों ने भी
क्या क्या जलवे दिखाए!
फिर आया राजाओं का दौर...
वे भी क्या दिन थे!
दुर्गत भी हुई और उन्नति भी,
ना जाने क्या अकल लगाई,
महल के बाद महल जो बना डाले!
गुलामी तो पूरी करवाई,

और सेवा भी भरपूर ली।
न समझूं मैं, कैसे थे वे प्राणी?
अपने ही भाई और अपने ही बाप की दी कुर्बानी,
राजगद्दी के लिए,
रिश्तों का किया ना ज़रा भी खयाल।
इंग्लैंड का था आठवाँ हेनरी भी महान,
कैसी बेरहमी, अपनी छह रानियों पर की,
होश-ओ-आवास में जान उनकी ले ली।
फिर अमेरिका का हुआ जन्म।
कोलंबस आए घूम-घूम, गोल चक्कर कट कर,
अपने भारत को ढूँढ़ते हुए यहाँ पहुँचे।
भारत में भी उस ही समय आई गुलामी।
विश्वयुद्धों में भस्म हो गई आत्माएं,
हिटलर, मुसोलिनी ने
मिलकर किये इंसानियत पर वार।
जापान, चीन, अमेरिका, रूस और यूरोप ने भी
जम कर किये अपने आक्रमण।
सभी ने अपने दिलों को चुन लिया,
आखिर तक साथ निभाने का वादा भी कर दिया,
लेकिन आदमी तो आदमी है,
बदलाव उसकी फितरत है,
ना जाने कौन, कब, किस मौके पर ढील दे जाए।
उस ही तरह,
देश विदेशों में भी भरपूर परेशानियां आईं।
विश्व युद्ध और गृह युद्ध की
बात बात पर नौबत छाई।
स्वतंत्रता प्रदान कर दी गई,
युद्ध और लड़ाइयों पर रोक लगा दी गयी।
भगवान् जाने, रोक कब तक लग सकती हैं,
देखा नहीं? कल ही तो अखबार में
मानवता विरोधी करतूतों की खबर छापी थी।
रक्तपान तो जैसे मानवता के
अस्तित्व का हिस्सा बन गया है,
इतिहास गवाह है,
ना तब बदले थे, न आज बदले हैं
और ना जाने कब बदलेंगे।



It's More Fun in the Philippines!

Chaitanya Kediya *recounts his experiences in the mystical islands of the Philippines*

We Indians pride ourselves on being culturally diverse. However, within this diversity, we forget that there is a larger world on the outside. The more cosmopolitan amongst us, endeavor to emulate the Western ideology, but we never seem to notice the East. If one were to even talk about the Eastern culture, China and Japan would come to mind immediately. The more perceptive would include Thailand, and even Indonesia. One's thoughts don't even wander off to the small, quaint islands of the Philippines. Having stayed in this beautiful archipelago for over two years I know how culturally and geographically rich it is and I aspire to bring to light this magnificence.

In 1521, not long before the East India Company came to India, the famous Spanish explorer Ferdinand Magellan docked on these 'unchartered' islands. The Spanish found an opportunity to form a colony in Asia, a region where it did not have any colonies at that time. In 1543, it was named Las Islas Filipinas in honor of King Philip II of Spain which later changed to become the present-day Philippines. It remained a part of the Spanish empire for over three hundred years and gained its independence from the Spanish in 1898, only to be handed over to America after the Spanish-American War. It gained its independence



from the USA on the 4th of July, 1946 after World War II. So it struggled for independence not once but twice, and it is interesting to see two independence days being celebrated in a year!

The capital city of the Philippines is Manila and much like our own NCR, Manila is not a city but a group of various small cities which are inter-connected and collectively called Metro Manila. The Philippines is the second largest archipelago in the world, only smaller than Indonesia. The Philippines is made up of 7,107 islands, each of which is said to be unique in its own way. It is divided into three geographical regions: Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. It is very prone to volcanoes and earthquakes.

Many would remember Typhoon Haiyan which struck last year, and brought about catastrophic destruction upon the people in the Philippines. I remember a picture which my parents sent whilst I was in School. In the horizon dark clouds were brewing, and the city was drenched in the rain. The level of water was at least knee deep, and all transportation was at a standstill. When I returned months later I could see the destruction it had wrought upon the nation. Boxes were being shipped by the dozens as aid and relief were on its way. 'Yolanda' as the natives call it was one of the worst storms to ever hit the Philippines. The Philippines are famous worldwide for an activity which is not very common, especially in India; SCUBA Diving. The Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia form the triangle from which all underwater life is said to have originated. More than its terrestrial fauna and flora, it is known for its aquatic fauna and corals. It is considered a diver's Paradise and corals, creatures considered rare, are ubiquitous in these seas. Famous aquatic life includes: Barracuda, Octopus, Sea Horses, Manta Rays and Hammerhead sharks. I have particularly enjoyed diving, and let me assure you it is not as romantic or simple as seen in *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*. It has its risks and troubles, but when you are hovering a mere twenty centimeters above beautiful corals or exquisite marine life, it all becomes worth it. The weightlessness, the silence of everything around you except the artificial sound of your breathing is what makes this unique and different. It has rightfully been called an eye-opening experience.

You are not only exploring a new land physically, but also being given the opportunity to do so spiritually. Philippines is an ideal destination for a holiday as well as to stay. With its host of activities and events it definitely has something unique and special to offer for you. After all, who doesn't like a nation which claims in its tourist brochures "It's more Fun in the Philippines"!

THE CITY OF DREAMS?

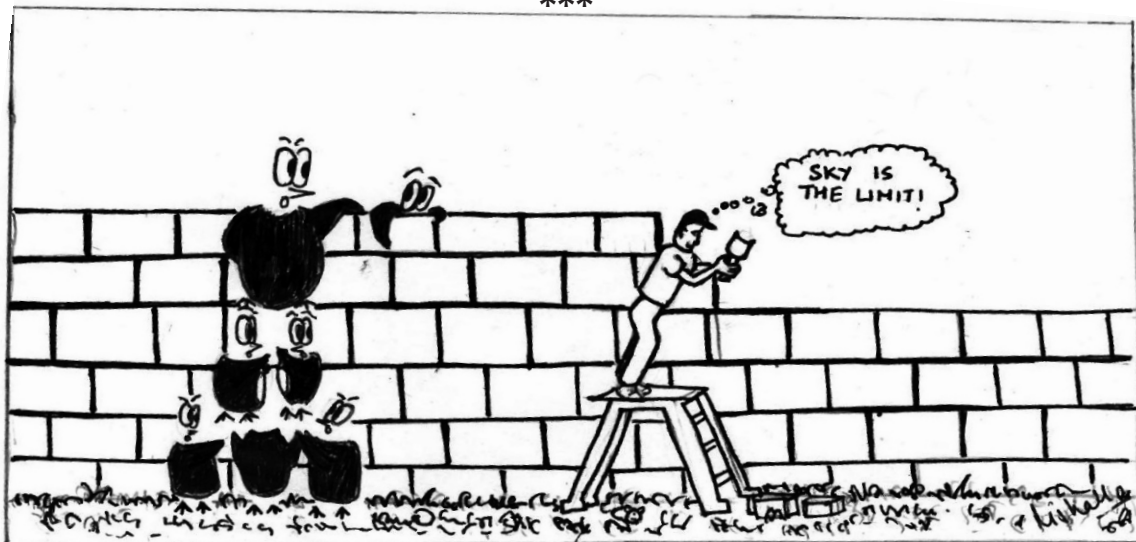
Madhav Singhal

These vacations I had the opportunity of visiting India's largest, swankiest, busiest and most populated city: Mumbai. An urban equivalent of the Amazon rainforest consisting of concrete, cars and people, one can feel the powerful heartbeat of the city, the slow breathing that inhales and exhales life. Towering skyscrapers, hypnotizing malls and gigantic landfills uphold its reputation of being one of the greatest metropolises of the 21st century.

Mumbai continues to develop with dizzying speed. And the nature of this development is such that it cannot be controlled, consuming both the wanted and unwanted. In this urban Amazon, every inhabitant fights for the sunlight that nurtures growth and survival. Interestingly, the act of seeking this sunlight develops certain characteristics, both good and the bad. One fine example of this is the 'Need for Speed' scenario on the jam-packed roads of Mumbai. Auto-rickshaws transform into Formula-One cars, skillfully evading and overtaking their plausible rivals to reach the customer first. The horns of the vehicles honk in polyphonic harmony equaling the works of Bach and Handel. Exaggeration? Maybe. But Mumbai begs to be defined in hyperbolic terms. How else can one describe the magnificent, the strange, the unending spectacle of life? After all, Mumbai is also the home of Bollywood. More starts can be seen on the roads of Mumbai than in the sky above it.

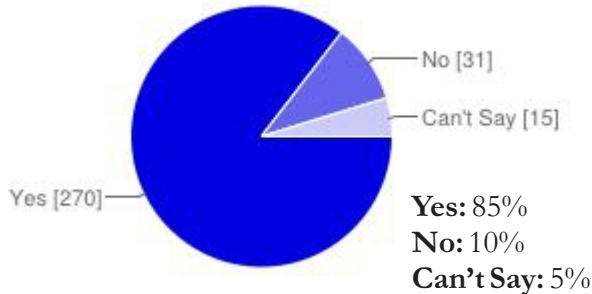
It is understood that every movie needs a villain to take the plot further. Without the villains there would be no heroes. The story of Mumbai is no different. There are villains hiding in every corner of Mumbai, in the air itself. And even though sometimes a Rajnikanthian figure is sorely missed, the people of Mumbai have learnt to carry on, to keep going, even when the roads transform into Venetian canals during the monsoons. Mumbai is the villain, and Mumbai is the hero. While its roads are filled with posh cars that envelope privileged people, the local railway acts as the lifeline for the common man. While one raises a toast in one of India's best hotels, someone relishes a cheap vada paav from one of the roadside stalls. While one lavishes money on a Carter road bungalow, five others jostle for breathing space in the chawl. And for the teeming hundreds of thousands, slum is the only place they can call home.

One sees things in Mumbai. A naked, slum dwelling urchin, begging on the streets, as well as a start who dwells in a penthouse, high up in the sky. But that is Mumbai. Unfair, but nurturing. Stifling, and yet living. One doesn't pass judgement on Mumbai. It is Mumbai that decides whether one is fit to survive. It is the monolith that carries within it the swarming masses, it is the juggernaut that will continue moving forward, and even the enveloping seas cannot stop it.

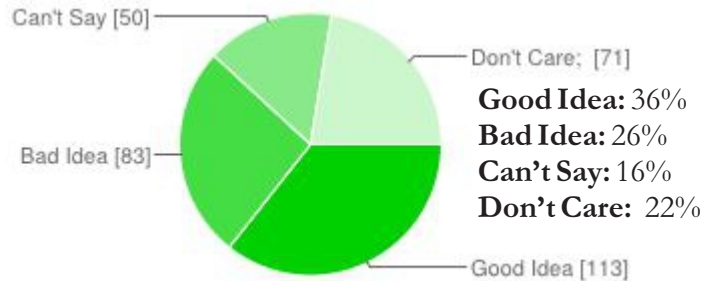


Opinion Poll

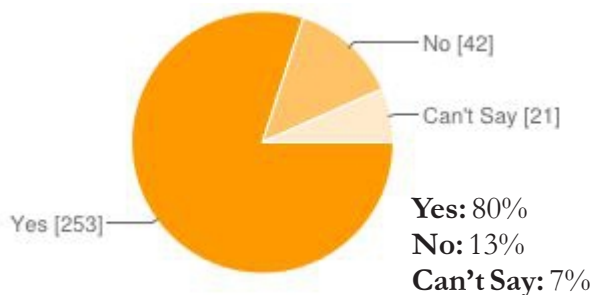
1. Should boys be allowed to play sports of their choice during games time?



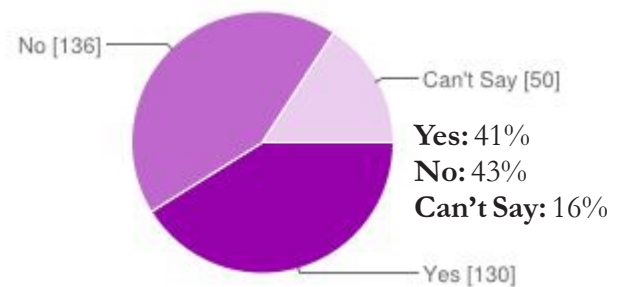
5. What are your views on the idea of implementing IGCSE in school?



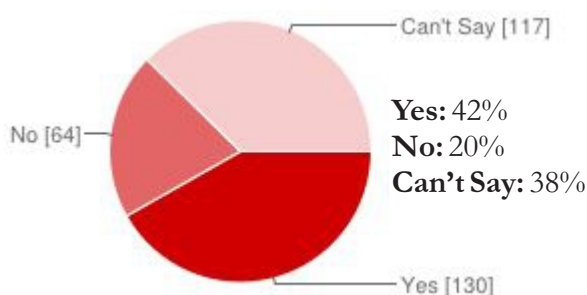
2. Do you believe that the School's IT Policy should be more relaxed?



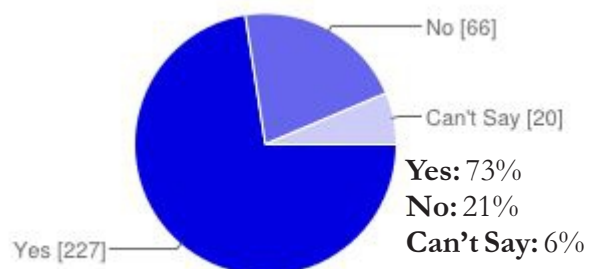
6. Are talks given by guest speakers actually beneficial?



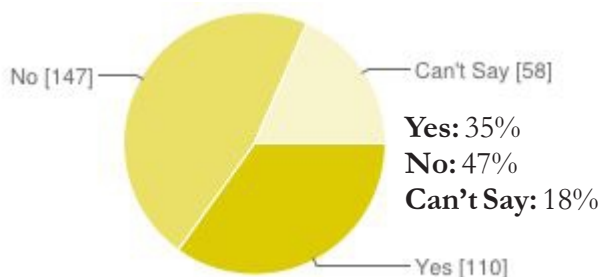
3. Do you think that Putin's actions in Ukraine can start a new Cold War?



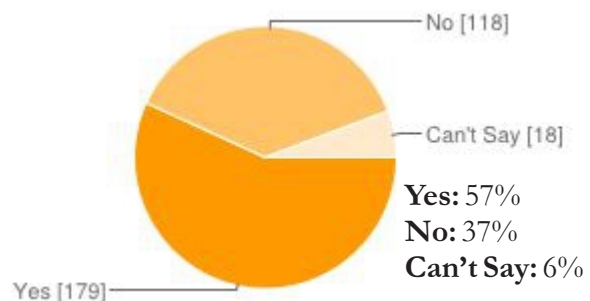
7. Do you ever interact with the school bearers and other helpers at a personal level?



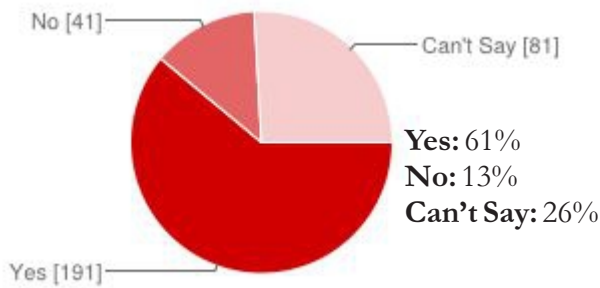
4. Do you think that MUNs are losing their intended purpose?



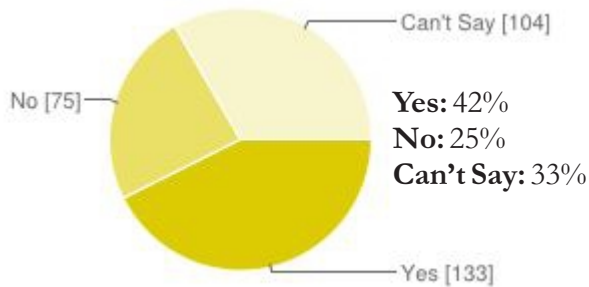
8. Have you noticed the rampant cutting of trees on campus?



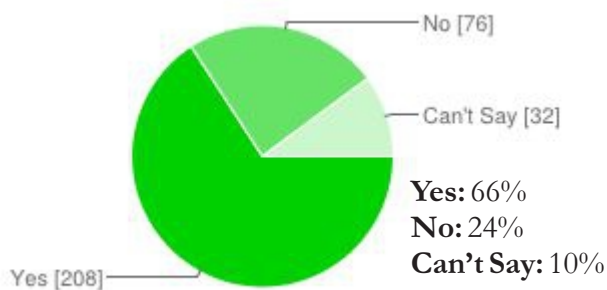
9. Do you believe that after a change in government India is seeing “better days”?



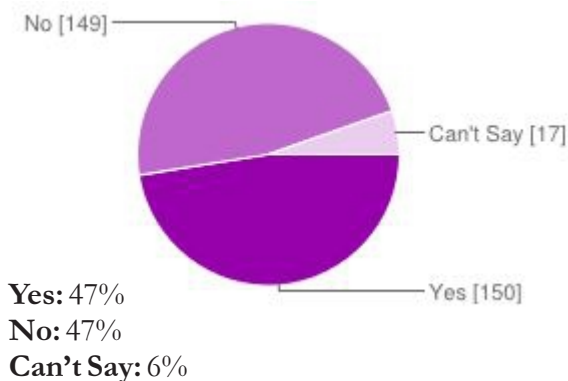
10. Do you think a holistic education is viable in today's world?



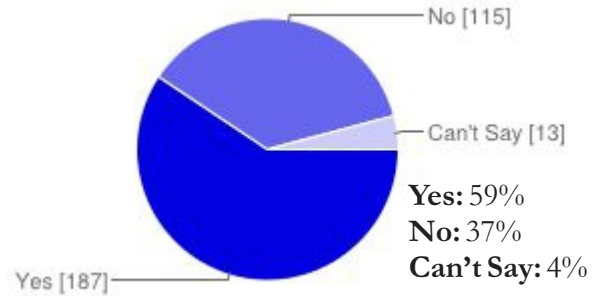
11. Do you believe that the prefectorial system serves its purpose?



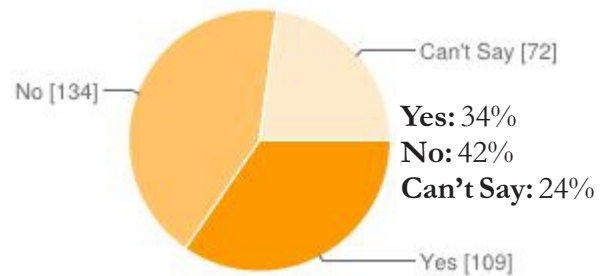
12. Has the punishment system in School lost value?



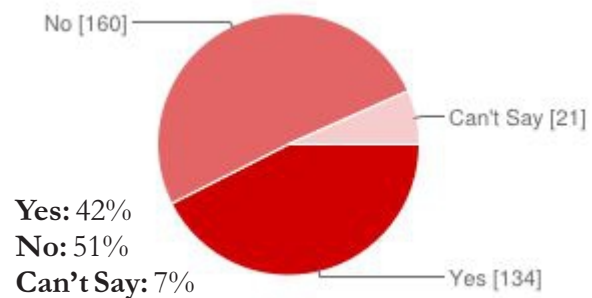
13. Should colours and blazers be awarded on an honorary basis rather than a point system?



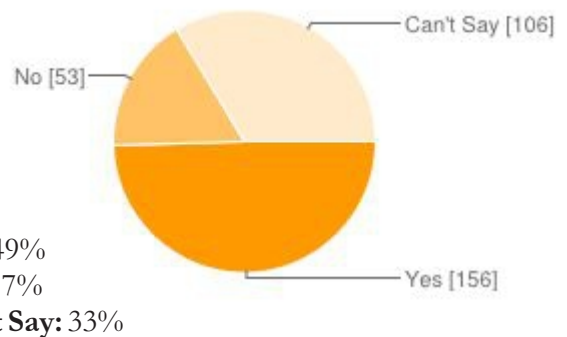
14. Are we still in a position to call ourselves an aristocracy of service?



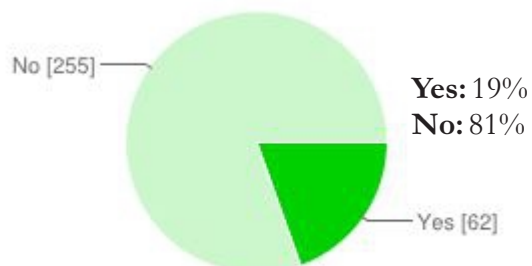
15. Are you happy with your current fitness level?



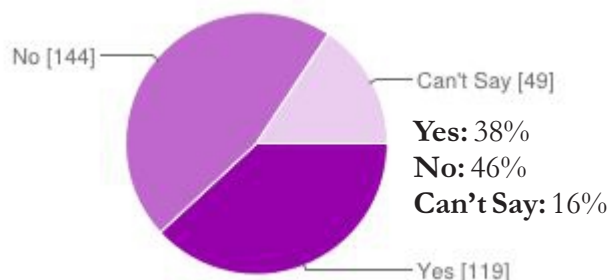
16. Would you send your children to School?



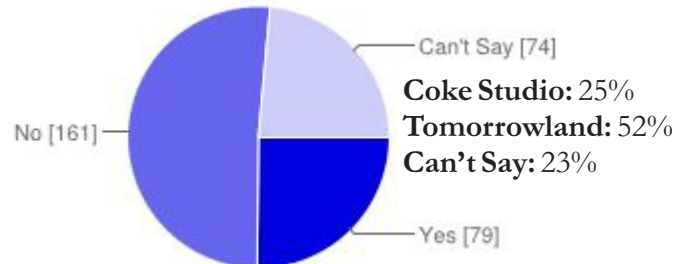
17. Have you done the 'ALS Ice Bucket Challenge'?



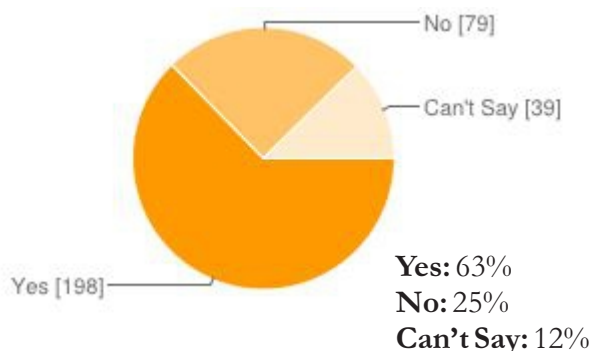
18. Do you think that Narendra Modi should enforce 'family planning', like the rule that currently exists in the People's Republic of China?



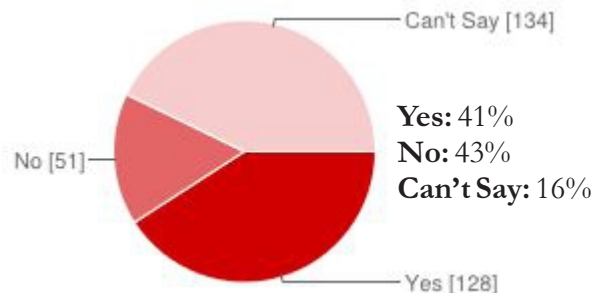
19. What would be your first preference: listening to 'Coke Studio' or 'Tomorrowland'?



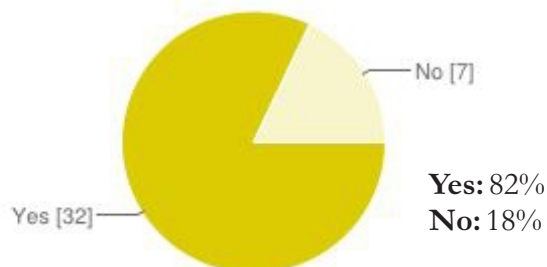
20. Did the FIFA World Cup hosted in Brazil live up to your expectations?



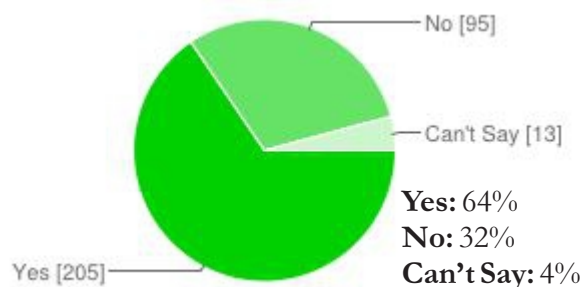
21. Do you believe that remedial classes are helpful?



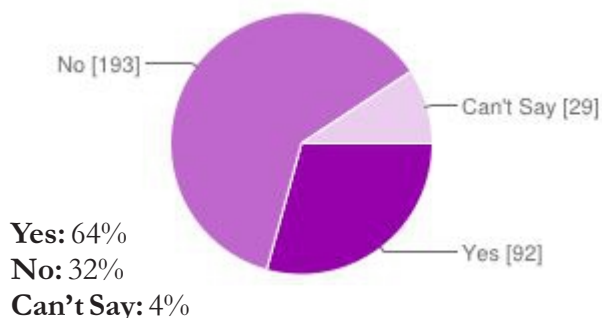
22. Do you read the Weekly every Saturday?



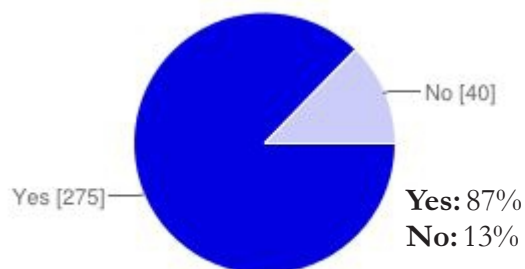
23. Do you believe that the school should introduce Smart Boards in all classrooms?



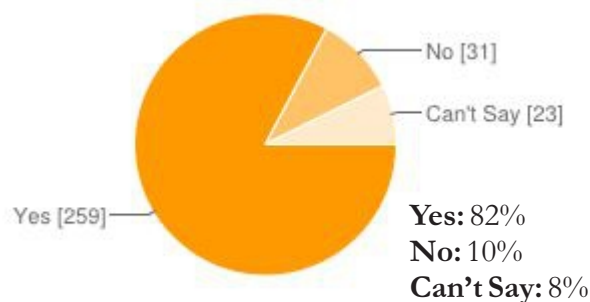
24. Do you believe in the effectiveness of the 'Leadership Workshops' conducted by the school?



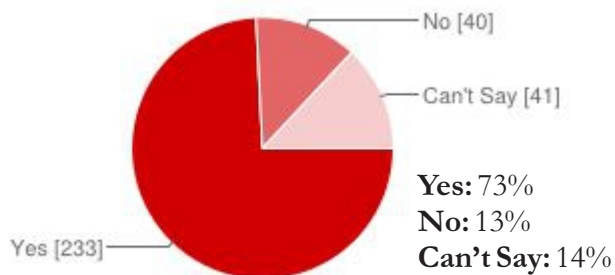
25. Are you aware of the school's decision to shift to a 'Trimester' system in the near future?



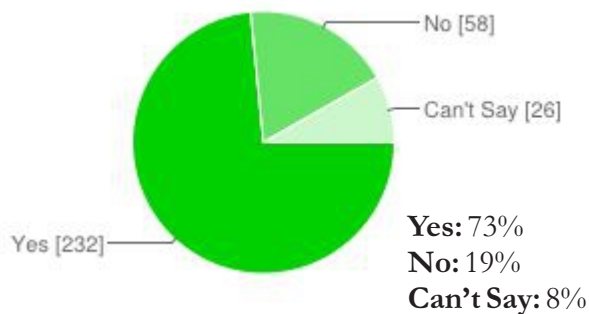
26. Do you think favoritism is practiced in school?



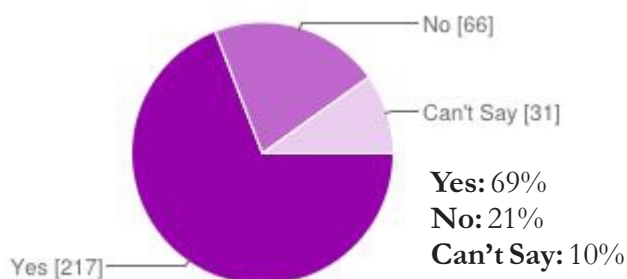
27. Do you think social service activities benefit the people or communities that we serve?



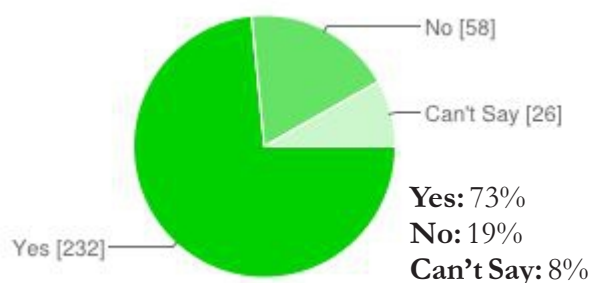
28. Is the Senior-Junior hierarchy needed in School to instill discipline?



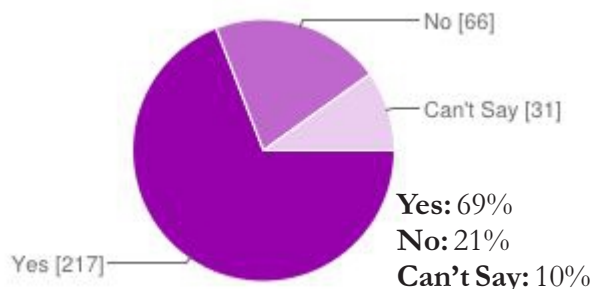
29. Do you believe that boys pursue activities based on the activity's popularity?



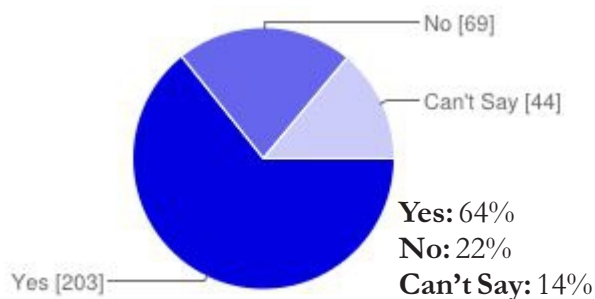
30. Is the Senior-Junior hierarchy needed in School to instill discipline?



31. Do you believe that boys pursue activities based on the activity's popularity?



32. Do you honestly believe in the song 'Doscós forever, Brothers for life'?



TIDES OF CHANGE

Hussain Haider

They say 'Change is the only constant', and over the years this proposition has influentially shaped my thought-process and mindset. The convincing election victory of the Narendra Modi-led BJP has revolutionized the Indian political scenario. The primary reasons that analysts are outlining for the overwhelming success of the 'Modi wave' is the 'change' that the current ruling party so convincingly promised during its election campaign. Hence, it becomes important for us to know the challenges that lie ahead in the newly elected government's tenure prior to wearing our 'judgement hats'.

A nation is required to constantly modify and adapt to attain flexibility with regards to changing global constraints. In the context of this everlasting and demanding race of global prominence and survival, government policy measures acquire crucial importance. Not only as genuine readers but rather as responsible citizens of the country, it becomes our prerogative to play our parts in the acceleration of the development of Modi's 'Future India'. However, it becomes equally necessary to analyze the primary issues that India, as a fast developing nation and PM Modi led central government face in the coming future. The article aims at deliberating upon these challenges that are potential hindrances to PM Modi's 'Acche din' dream.

Firstly and foremost, it is necessary for one and all to understand the amplitude, significance and relevance of these constraints and issues in the context of the civilian population and the country at large. Further, we must note that certain challenges require perception changes in the mindset of the general public and the working systems of the country as a whole. Therefore, the resolution process is not confined to government policy rooms only, it needs spontaneous co-operation from the civilian population as well.

Communal and sectarian tension is anything but a novelty to our country. Be it the notorious 1984 riots or the Godhra riots of 2002, to the most recent persistent communal tension in Eastern and Western parts of our most populous state, the image of our civilized society has been regularly tarnished by such horrendous occurrences. Unjustifiable reasons and fraudulent motives are the prime reasons driving this communal and sectarian menace. What the governmental administration requires to do is to strike a peaceful cord among the different communities inhabiting our diverse nation. With regular pestering, instances of communal violence, hate speeches and inappropriate statements, the problem is way more deep-rooted than it appears to be.

A "peaceful India" is a "developing India". Communal peace is a necessary pre-requisite in developing and practicing a sense of mutual co-operation and accelerating development of the country as a whole. Therefore, it becomes necessary for the government to enhance the legal framework and police effectiveness in this regard. Further, government policies must be aimed at enhancing this integrity of co-operation in the form of shifting focus towards the socio-economic development of minorities and backward sections of the majority community. In addition, co-operative social security and riot prevention schemes need to be implemented. It is necessary for the ruling party to shed off its 'saffron coloured label' and establish an unbiased image in the eyes of the country and the global community at large.

The Indian education system has been under scrutiny for quite some time now. Scholarly articles and media frenzies have time and again brought to light the shortcomings of our national educational systems and practices. The abnormally high college cut-offs, restricted exposure for involvement of 'outside the classroom activities' and the fact that our top colleges fail to rank among the highest ranking educational institutions on the global front are startling concerns. Education is a hallmark of a civilized society. It is a representation of a country's future political, social and economic potentialities. National education must be subject to rapid modification in accordance with global trends. Therefore, a major challenge for PM Modi will be to devise efficient modifications in our education system and sought ways to improve the state of indigenous colleges on the global scale.

Moreover, it is necessary to understand that economic policy measures will be an influential criteria in the incumbent government's 'report card' towards the termination of their ongoing tenure. Smooth and efficient economic mechanisms and methodology of functioning are prerequisites towards achieving accelerated growth and development prospects. The economic hurdles that PM Modi's government faces possess a multi-dimensional nature and magnitude. First comes the stringent problem of narrowing the current account deficit. During the past governmental regimes, the financial sectors experienced a significant narrowing in current account deficit by 2.8% of the GDP. With increase in import duties, the UPA government was successful in curbing global imports and bringing the current account deficit down. Imposition of gold duties has facilitated investment opportunities, carving the way for a safer investment climate.

However, such measures have been deemed unpopular among the Indian public. Indian households rely heavily on

gold to shield their savings from possible economic disasters such as soaring inflation rates. Therefore, it becomes important and challenging for the government to review gold import duty measures, thus keeping all sections of society satisfied. Also, India satisfies 75% of its crude oil requirement through imports which are available under subsidies in domestic markets. This is placing excessive burden on the public exchequer and is aggravating the already troubled current account deficit issue.

Further, reviving private investment operations and re-capitalization of state banks are other startling concerns for the incumbent government to counter. With the ruling party's hostile stance to Foreign Direct Investment in the Retailing Sector, attracting investment will be a daunting task. The issue is further enhanced by the point that the union government holds decision making authority over only one-fourth of the public projects in the country, with the major approval power resting with the concerned state governments. Also, re-capitalization of state banking institutions on account of inefficient lending is emerging as a significant concern to keep the functioning of domestic economic systems intact.

To conclude, the hindrances that stand in the way of PM Modi's aspirations of a 'modern, developed India' are clear and concise. With issues overlying multiple domains in the political, social, religious and economic perspectives, it becomes challenging for the incumbent government to counteract and resolve these startling concerns. With the glory of a landslide election victory in May riding high, it becomes Mr. Modi's responsibility to work towards fulfilling the promises that brought his party to these powerful offices in the first place. The expectations and hopes of the nation are high, now only time will tell whether the voters made the right choice on election day.

Nature's Walk

Arjun Kamdar

As I write this article I can hear the distinct screeching of the little owlets from the mango tree by my window, while the faint howling of the jackals slowly rises in its crescendo. I pause and spend a few minutes absorbing the sense of tranquility and serenity that the mango tree emanates. A gust of wind blows, causing the tree to tremble, almost as if it knows that this is its last night on Chandbagh. Its neighbour, the luscious fruit bearing litchi tree had been put to sleep that day and might have already been used up in making crates to transport litchis. The irony is inescapable.

Their sheer size and majesty had incurred the wrath of the Evil Eye with the mighty beak, the same one that had its own hierarchy also being put to sleep. No more would Kites, Eagles or Hornbills screech loudly to their mates from the upper branches. The White Eyes, Magpie Robins and Minivets had no place left for the performance of their ritual dances. The cacophony created by the Jungle Babblers whilst in search of hidden treasures in the undergrowth also ceased to exist. However, their fate was probably better than that of the mango, for it would not be burnt heating someone's bath water, but would become part of some furniture so that the boardroom discussions could take place smoothly. The displaced animals, such as the innocent pest controller, the Rat Snake, would be hacked to death as the reign of terror begins to unfold. Mere stumps of a grand life remain. The same trees that survived a world war are now trying to salvage their ravaged modesty by growing a few leaves around the decapitated trunk.

You may choose to brush this off as a rant by an eccentric environmentalist/naturalist, but the glaring question is still going to remain unanswered, 'development at what cost?'

This is not a remark on one particular incident. It is a reflection of the myriad options that we face in our everyday life. Do we make 'green' choices, which are not always the easy ones, or do we opt for the more convenient path? Do you take the bus or the car? When we look at ourselves as the institution that shapes the future leaders of India, creates a sensitized community that not only takes part in, but also hosts conferences about the Earth, climate change, ecological balance and helps produce boys who understand the pristine forests, it is rather hypocritical of us to not do the same back in School. The opinion poll has two rather disturbing sides to it: one that 56% of the boys, the ones who do notice the cutting of trees and do not choose to inquire into it, and the other that 37% of boys, who do not even notice the massive monument simply disappearing. I cannot put a finger on which one of these is more disconcerting.

Where do our morals and ideals go when we 're'-claim space from areas that were never ours in the first place? Do not get me wrong here, I am not against the development in School, I am only providing another perspective to an incident that is etched in my mind. As mentioned earlier, we have to adapt to the changing times; evolution is inevitable. We simply cannot afford to let our emotions get the better of us; we must think with our mind and not always our heart. But does that mean that we completely ignore something that forms such an integral part of our being? After all, the two attributes that were enjoyed by the greatest thinkers of the past were solitude and nature. Let us attempt to not deprive ourselves of them.

THE VERY BEST OF UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

That is why he is taking so much part

Aryan Chhabra, dedicated.

He was hit by the wound on his chest.

Hitansh Nagdev, hurting grammar.

I did not speak that unquote.

Jashan Kalra, now you did.

The hot water will soon start melting.

Sarvagya Dhiman, chemistry genius.

My shoes aren't going on.

Pritish Dugar, try re-booting them.

My watch gives a good timing.

Sudhansh Agarwal, punctual.

I were going to the main field.

Zohravar Bhati, future perfect.

Other don't like it.

Fateh Raj Khanna, neither do we.

I wrote myself with pen.

Arjun Singh, rewrite your sentence.

Get the key opened.

Arjun Kamdar, where is the door then?

Where from you are?

CSG, clueless.

Can you hear the smell?

SNA, the sixth sense.

All those who have interested.

KLA, interesting words.

So this is what it happened.

AND FBI.

Just shut up, you dumb.

VKL, enraged.

Look at to me.

MLJ, taking PT.

Is TED talks an interview with Ted Mosby.

Nikunj Agarwal, recent IB recruit.

I will photobomb you.

Mukul Goyal, terrorizing photos.

Shut the masters, microwave are coming.

Zorawar Mehta, your sentence is cooking.

My locker is inside my slider.

Arnaav Bhavanani, how did you manage that?

I will do spoke.

Husain Abbas, the orator.

I had went to the hospital.

Suryansh Kainthola, do get a checkup.

The snake ran away.

Nehansh Saxena, snake wrangler.

He got a science in 100.

Chaitanya Kediya, topper.

I got myself a cup of mug.

Arjun Kamdar, an ardent wordsmith.

One of my form-mate sleep.

Aryan Chhabra, sing a lullaby.

Can't you take joke.

Hitansh Nagdev, the jester.

What I did?

Suryansh Kainthola, expressing his innocence.

I'll take a selfie of you.

Atrey Bharagava, the selfie king.

He was driving a helicopter.

Sarvagya Dhiman, taking us to greater heights.

The red color was the dustbin.

Suchet Khurana, the fourth 'R'.

Do you practice in your preach?

Harshvardhan Singh, the priest.

Please maintain quiet!

UDV, asks for decorum.

I was so beautifully souled!

Yuvan Kumar, looks at inner beauty.

Bloody will you here come!

NTC, furious.

I haven't caused any destructivication!

Yash Gupta, innocent.

Skyfall is a Ski-Fi movie.

Arunabh Utkarsh, the new 007 Agent.

How is day after yesterday going to be?

Devansh Agarwal, astrologer.

I have to tie my floaters.

Manan Pradhan, knotted up.

I want to dancing for the House.

Rahul Das, house spirit.

Founder's are coming.

Sarvagya Dhiman, excited

Racism and sexism is evil for all.

Devansh Agarwal, Human Rights Activist.

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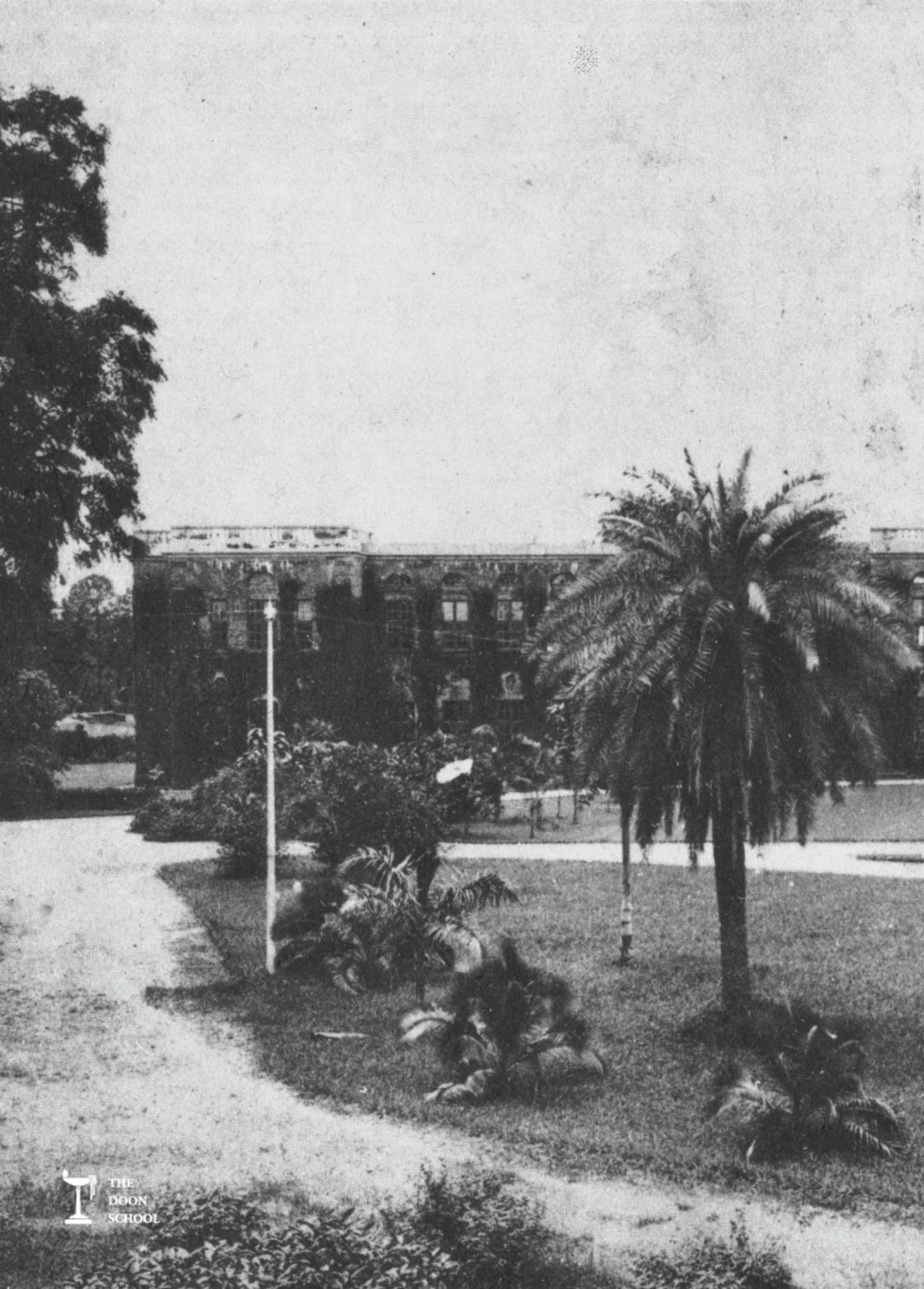
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