



# The Doon School WEEKLY

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SUPER  
CITY **3**

D TO G **3**

CREATIVE **4**



## Victory at 'Chucks'



*Saurav Sethia recounts the Chuckerbutty Debates held in School on September 8 and 9*

Having worked for weeks at the debates, the Organising Committee of the SEDS, it has to be said, did a fairly efficient job. The visiting teams all assembled on the evening of September 7. The registration took place on time, and the briefing session gave a professional touch to the debates. The debates were scheduled to begin the following morning.

The topic for the preliminary round read: *'Colleges and universities are redundant as institutions of higher learning'*. After reading the topic, the first point that came to my mind was in opposition of this motion: since the motion is silent on which colleges and universities we are talking about, and since there is no common plane on which these colleges and universities can be aligned, I was inclined to think that we would deal with colleges and universities as concepts. So, in essence, colleges and universities are supposed to instil theories in the students' minds and encourage them to apply them so as to foster a better learning experience. In that, I think, if the concept is implemented, colleges and universities are not redundant as institutions of higher learning. The flipside to this argument is, obviously, the fact that it deals with an abstract thought and that in today's world, which is in many ways, juxtaposed to Utopia, putting forward the argument based on *idealistic ideas* would not serve any purpose.

In Pool A, the debaters from the proposition talked about how higher learning connotes life skills, and since, according to some of the debaters in the proposition, these life skills are not imparted to the students, colleges and universities are redundant as institutions of higher learning. Concentrating on the shortcomings of *today's* educational systems in colleges and universities, they proved how they are redundant by saying how higher learning cannot be pursued at places where students are exposed to vices like drinking, smoking, drugs, and sex. The Doon School and Mayo College for Girls qualified for the Knock-out stage from this pool. In Pool B, the debate relied heavily on examples and an interesting statistic, about how almost half the students in the world do not know who Albert Einstein is, came to light. The rebuttal to this came from one of the debaters from the Modern High School, Dubai, who remarked that 47.6% of the statistics quoted in debates are faked. Of course, it may have led us to doubt the credibility of his claim, to a certain extent, but, on the spur of the moment, it qualified as a very quick repartee. Another speaker sought to propose the motion by taking the

example of Mahatma Gandhi, saying that he never sent his children to school. Although the participants did not refute this example, a member from the audience brought to our knowledge that Harilal, Gandhi's eldest son, grew up to be a dipsomaniac and was disowned by his father. On the whole, the results were predictable and La Martiniere for Boys and the Modern High School, Dubai, went on to the next round.

The JAM was easily the most enjoyable round for the audience. Vivaan Shah's droll speech on *'Expiry Date'* and his connection of the topic to human life was laudable. But, Rajiv Naresh's speech on *'Excuses'* scored more points. Avilash Pahi spoke passionately on *'Size matters'* and won the Best Speaker in the Turncoat round. The topic for the face-off read *'Authority spawns rebellion'*. Ashish Mitter won the Best Speaker in the Face-Off. His debate was characterised by an immaculate structure, touching upon multifarious aspects in succinct points. The Doon School was to debate against La Martiniere for Boys in the final round. So, the fourteen teams were, finally, whittled down to two.

The motion, now, read *'Indoctrination is necessary'*. The proposition drove home the point that there are certain postulates to every theory; that conclusions are drawn from certain things that are a given. I too thought that if one was successful in proving that one plus one is not equal to two, as a corollary, he would negate every mathematical breakthrough in the history of mankind. If 'necessary' implies 'for progress', then, clearly, opposing indoctrination does not achieve this end. The opposition, naturally, stressed on how all change came about by questioning and non-conformity. The proposition said that indoctrination does not mean questioning everything, and clearly, the opposition was also, very implicitly, meant to say that. The opposition went on to talk about individual creativity, to which the proposition replied by saying that the mind is indoctrinated to be non-conformist, and thus, a personality develops as a result of indoctrination, thereby reiterating its stance clearly. The Doon School won the debates, but it would not be incorrect to say that the debates were closely contested throughout. It illustrates the high standard of debating that students today are engaged in at the school level.

# REGULARS

## WELCOME

The School community welcomes **Namrata Pandey**, as a full-time **Career Counsellor**. We wish her a fruitful tenure.

\* \* \* \* \*

A warm welcome also to **Devin Whitfield**, visiting faculty from Hilton College, Durban. He will be teaching Mathematics and Biology, and will be with us till the end of this term.

## SPARRING WORDS

In the Preliminary round of the **Chuckerbutty Debates**, fourteen teams took part. The Pool A debate was held in the MPH on September 8. Ashish Mitter was awarded the **Best Speaker** in this debate, while Shikhar Singh was adjudged **Second Best Speaker**. The two teams that qualified for the knockout round from this pool were The Doon School, and Mayo College for Girls. Pool B debate was held simultaneously in the AV Room. While Rushil Gambhir and Siddhant Issar were adjudged the **Best Speaker** and **Second Best Speaker** of the debate respectively, La Martiniere for Boys, Kolkata and The Modern High School, Dubai qualified for the Knock-out round from this pool. In the Knock-out round held at the MPH the same evening, Rajiv Naresh won the **Best Speaker** of the JAM section, Avilash Pahi was adjudged **Best Speaker** of the Turncoat section, and Ashish Mitter was awarded **Best Speaker** of the Face-Off section. The Doon School and La Martiniere for Boys qualified for the final round of the debates. In the final round, Ashish Mitter was adjudged the **Best Speaker**, and Shikhar Singh was the **Second Best Speaker**, and The Doon School emerged victorious. Congratulations!

## BUZZER ROUND

In **The Doon School Quiz** held on September 9 in the MPH, La Martiniere for Boys, Kolkata represented by Shayak Chakraborty, Debdeep Nath, and Rohan Shah was placed first. The Doon School, Dehradun represented by Ashish Mitter, Chinmay Sharma, and Saurabh Tiwari occupied the second place. The Modern High School, Dubai, represented by Akash Venkat, Vivek Govind Kumar, and Avneeth Fernandes was third. Congratulations!

## SMASH HIT

The School was represented by Arpit Panjwani, Sagar Agarwal, Amit Gupta, Ashutosh Kejriwal, and Abhishek Jain in the **IPSC Table Tennis Tournament** held at Rajkot. In the Under 17 individual event, we reached the semi-finals. In the Under 19 individual event, we reached the quarter-finals. In the Under 19 team event, we emerged runners-up after a gap of six years.

Well done!

## HINDI ELOCUTION

The Doon School was represented by Vatsal Khandelwal and Chandrachuda Shukla at an **Inter-School Poetry Recitation Competition** held at Riverdale High School, Dehradun. They won the trophy for second place. Well done!

## doonspeak

### Chuckerbutty Afterthoughts...

The topics were very debatable, and the debating in the final round was, especially, impressive – **Shaman Marya, The Vasant Valley School**.

The topics were interesting, in the sense that, as students, we could connect well with them. – **Rushil Gambhir, La Martiniere for Boys, Kolkata**.

The debates were less fact-based. The key to doing well hinged on the ability to think. This, certainly, makes more sense in extempore debating. – **Tushita Gupta, La Martiniere for Girls, Lucknow**.



## Opinion Poll

Do you think justice delayed is justice denied?



376 people participated in the poll

**Next Week's Question:** Do you think that the Twenty-Twenty format makes for better cricket?

## Trophy Flash

The Chuckerbutty Debates began in 1956, in memory of **Nabendu Chuckerbutty**. Mr. Chuckerbutty taught Geography at Doon and was an ardent mountaineer. He passed away during a mountaineering expedition. The Doon School won the Trophy for the first time in the year of its inception – 1956.



The **Dr. Dipali Banerji Memorial Trophy** for The Doon School Quiz was instituted by her sons – Ajai, Sanjai and Udai Banerji (all Old Boys), in her fond memory.

## CAREER CALL

The careers' notice board will focus on the **top universities in USA, UK, Canada, and Australia**. All those interested in undertaking higher education in any of these countries should look it up.



# India's Tryst with Destiny From Koli Fisherfolk to Marine Drive

Harsh Mall

If I walk down Marine Drive, the Queen's Necklace, from the Air India building towards Malabar Hill, on my left, stretching towards the horizon, is the Arabian Sea: murky brown in colour, littered with rickety boats and a prominent member of the cast for every opening scene of a Bombay-based Bollywood movie. On my right is a wall of towering skyscrapers, watching over the Necklace with a million bright eyes. The myriad sights, sounds and tastes of Mumbai are a treat to the senses and the world views this city as a microcosm of India: but how has this growth come about?

For what was once the dowry that accompanied the Portuguese Catherine de Braganza, Bombay, or Mumbai, has constantly climbed up the charts since its debut in independent India. What is today the fastest growing metropolitan in world, demographically and economically, was once just a mere trading port of the East India Company. Slowly, as this tropical archipelago, through its flourishing cotton industry and trade centres, became a jewel in the company's kitty, and its population increasing at a rate that threatened Calcutta's supremacy, it became one of the more politically important regions of the sub-continent, and with its accessibility to the world, it was an inevitable melting pot for cultures from all over the globe. Post independence, the Bombay state was split, on linguistic basis, into the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra, and it was only in 1960 that the present day city on Mumbai was established as the capital of Maharashtra state. Bombay was re-christened Mumbai in 1995 by the Shiv Sena party, after Mumbadevi, the Hindu deity who was worshipped by the Koli fisher-folk.

In the 70s, a major construction and industrialization boom saw a rapid growth in the population of the cities due to the large number of immigrants from various parts of the country. It was here that the 'Bombay Dream' was first experienced and the concept exists till date. The comparatively high standard of living, large employment opportunities and an attractive metropolitan lifestyle drew in job-seekers from all over the country, each with his/her dream of a 'new life'. Although this led to a tremendous economic surge, it also disturbed the secular status of the city. The riots of 1992-93 followed by the bomb blasts brought out the precarious social position of the city and since then, there have been various incidents of violence aimed at disturbing either certain sections of society or the welfare of Mumbai as a whole. The 70s boom saw the growth of the stock exchange, the major ports (BSE and NSE) being in Bombay and this was perhaps the birth of the 'potential super-power' that India is being termed as today.

The biggest cover-page representatives of Bombay are perhaps the entertainment industry and the railways. Bollywood has already been glorified in a previous reference

in this column, and indeed, the city of Mumbai is the germinating point for a nation's worth of entertainment. The railways, on the other hand, although not as glamorous, are the most important infrastructural part of the city's anatomy. In fact, the first Indian railway line was laid by the British from Bombay to the town of Thane. The Mumbai Suburban Railway Network, popularly known as local trains, ferry around 2.2 billion commuters up and down the length of the island in a year (the world's population is 6 billion!), the highest for any mode of public transport in the world. In fact, the bomb blasts of 2006 intended to disrupt the welfare of the city by wrecking the main mode of transport for the citizens: the trains.

Some facts: For almost a century, the biggest contributor to Bombay's economy has been the textile industry which was set up due to the sudden surge of cotton imports during the American Civil War. The city's literacy rate is 20% more than the nation's and the per capita income, three times! The earliest known name of Bombay is Heptanesia and it took 60 years to merge the 7 islands into the landmass we recognize as Mumbai City today. It is the second largest metropolis in the world and has a population greater than that of Australia.

Mumbai is truly a show-off feature of India. From Bollywood and the growing economy, to the complex slum settlements and culturally rich *chawls*, it is representative of the 'shining' India that today, sixty years since independence, stands poised to lead the world.

## A word root

Know your alphabet:

**D:** This letter is the outline of a rude archway or door. It is called, in Phoenician and Hebrew, *daleth* (door) and in Greek, *delta*. In the latter language, it has a triangular shape. In Egyptian hieroglyphics, it is represented by a hand. The initial of the latent Denarius, is used to indicate a pre-decimal penny or pence. As a Roman numeral, D stands for five hundred.

**E:** The letter is derived from an Egyptian hieroglyph and the Phoenician Hebrew sign called *he*. The following legend is sometimes found in churches under the two tables of the ten commandments:

“PRSVR Y PREFCT MN  
VR KP THS PRCPTS TN”

The vowel 'e' supplies the key.

**F:** The first letter in the Runic futhorc, but the sixth in the Phoenician and Latin alphabets and their derivatives. The Egyptian hieroglyph represented a horned asp and the Phoenician character, a peg. 'Ph' represents the same sound.

**G:** This letter is a modification of the Latin 'c', which was a rounding of the Greek *gamma*. Until the third century BC, the 'g' and 'k' sounds were both represented by the letter 'c' in the Hebrew and old Phoenician alphabets. 'g' is the outline of a camel's head and neck and Hebrew *gimel* means 'camel'.

(Sourced from *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*.)

## Short Story

# Distressed

Saurav Sethia

It was not yet six in the morning. The sun's rays lit the sky scantily. To Sara, life meant nothing. In her hapless existence, she had formed an opinion that enjoying life is an orgy. Each day signified drudgery, and Sara, silently, submitted to it. She hoped that it was a dream; hoped that this new dawn would conclude quickly. She sighed, then washed her face, brushed her teeth, and put on a sweater over her clothes hastily, she was uncaring of evolving trends and changing fashions. She was content with her anachronistic portrait.

She walked, as if in a trance, without purpose, and without any consciousness. Her eyes revealed her distress to anyone who looked at them. What was it: an unhappy childhood, a tortured adolescence, the remnants of unrequited love? She procured a key from her pocket, and turned it in the key-hole. The door opened, and she twisted the signboard so that 'OPEN' stared at passers-by. The money Sara earned from her café was barely enough to sustain her, and why she wanted to continue her godforsaken reality, drowned in destitution, was a mystery to her. Maybe the thought of death was too painful, but life wasn't any better; maybe she was just waiting for something to happen, but nineteen years had passed and nothing had happened; maybe she hadn't lost all hope yet, but in the way she sequestered herself there was no hope.

The door opened and the soft bell was the harbinger of the arrival of a customer. His hair was short and blonde, and his goatee made him look dangerous. He walked in with long, menacing steps and took a table at the far corner of the café. She approached him, a notepad and pen in her hand. "Two cups of coffee, and make them real strong", he murmured, with his hand covering his mouth. He had a hoarse, grubby voice. The drone of the coffee-making machine disturbed the silence. The hot, black coffee matched the rancour in him. To Sara, it meant nothing. She put the tray in front of him and he sipped the first cup of coffee quickly, considering that the coffee was piping hot. The second cup was taken in by him, almost in a gulp and his face contracted to a frown as soon as it was over. He rose to leave. Sara cornered him before he could leave and said, "Hey, mister! You haven't paid up. That's five dollars and thirty-five cents". For the first time in her life, she was angry. For the first time in her life, the expression in her eyes was altered. The emptiness, the agony was gone; her pupils were

pinpoints of anger. The man looked at her, and the next second, a revolver was pressed against her forehead. He did not feel sorry for her, and she knew it. Two tears rolled down her cheeks. She closed her eyes. Bang...

It was not a peaceful pallor that spread across her face. Her eyes spoke her distress. She lay on the floor, and blood was splattered all over it. She was dead: the deceased remains of unanswered emotions. The signboard stared at passers-by. It read: 'OPEN'.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Poetry

# Bittersweet Reflection

Mansher Dhillon

The room was silent...

A painful silence sweeping through my soul,

Before it sank to the depths.

Like a second before an apocalypse,

I knew my time had come.

I've lost what I once used to be,

That boy with thoughts of elegance,

Who, after nights spent with artistic temperaments,

Hopes to seek refuge, atonement,

To find himself a christened being.

I live in this wave of temperaments,

With its perpetual swings,

Arousing in me non-conformist action,

Sparks of suppressed genuineness,

The release of basic instincts...

I hate to admit, we're all

Hypocrites in the humdrum of human affairs,

Animals who tag ourselves with a social price,

Sell our conceptual selves,

And merely term it sacrifice.

I am a river of emotions,

Flowing through this existence.

A human seeking shelter from the bondage of his  
own kind,

And can hear the echoes

Emanating from a blurry past,

'Live, and let live'.

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[weekly@doonschool.com](mailto:weekly@doonschool.com)

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