





Established in 1936

The Doon School **WEEKLY**

Saturday, October 23 • 2010 • Issue No. 2264



Editorial

In recent times, it seems that cynicism has become a prevailing trend amongst members of the School community. I admit I have often been party to such a one-sided view of things, and the *Weekly* has often acted as a platform for critique and dissent. There is merit in every statement and validity in every opinion, and sometimes too, criticism can be healthy. But of late, we have suffered an overdose of it. Perhaps the cynicism of a cynical age has rubbed off on us. The excessive, narrow-minded squabbling over School-related issues sometimes makes us oblivious of its virtues. It is, in many ways, an institution worthy of esteem. So this year, our Platinum Jubilee, it is necessary that we suspend cynicism and remind ourselves of the School's rich traditions and history.

The Doon School is 75 years old. I feel it is too soon to ascribe to it an ethos. We are still very young compared to the many other prominent institutions of the country and of the world. What we have, and what we are identified with, is a set of traditions and values. These traditions comprise our sense of belonging to the School, our strong notion of fraternity and the many principles that the School is founded on. The *Weekly*, likewise, is an academic, literary and creative tradition in itself. It has seen a number of writers, journalists and academics whom we are proud of. It is a journal of record, a school newspaper, almost as old as the School itself (it will complete 75 years in February, alas, long after I have relinquished my position on the Editorial Board). Interestingly, the *Weekly* was first circulated on a leap year day, February 29, 1936.

Unlike an ethos, which is a monolithic construct, these traditions are malleable. They can be changed over time, discarded if deemed redundant, adopted if held necessary. While our lives are more comfortable than they would have been a decade or two ago, we still serve our peers at the meal tables. We may have embraced technology in many avenues, but boys continue to go, at midterms, on long, arduous expeditions in the mountains, far from any comforts they otherwise enjoy. The Doon School as an institution is dynamic, and I feel this dynamism is one of its strongest virtues: while the School respects its traditions, it does not compromise on progress. Consider the fact that we have fossils embedded in the flooring of the Main Building. If my knowledge of geology is correct, the Himalayas are young fold mountains comprising sedimentary rocks formed as the Indo-Australian tectonic plate collided with that of Eurasia 70 million years ago. The mountains stand where the Tethys Sea once was. These stones used for the flooring were quarried from in and around the Doon valley. Our School therefore carries with it a geological history of its (once-)idyllic setting. However, the new Art and Media Facility, is the immediate neighbour of the Main Building. While the Main Building has the grandeur of the past, lofty ceilings and stately rooms, its modern neighbour has, inside, a plethora of computers, all running the latest software, for graphic designing, desktop publishing and, soon, photography and video production.

Our youth affords us this luxury: we are, after all, still a young school. Seventy-five is a modest age for an institution (as is 75 million for a mountain range). So the Platinum Jubilee, besides being an enthusiastic celebration of our traditions, is also a threshold year that calls for introspection and dialogue. Because of the dynamic nature of School, there are traditions that are beginning to wane. Creativity, for instance, is being diminished because of the pressure of having to juggle so many things. Academic performance has sometimes faltered. Every institution will face such challenges. This is why we require dialogue within the community. These hurdles notwithstanding, the underlying principles of our School will remain: equality amongst all boys, familial bonding between members of the community and an emphasis on social service and leadership. While we celebrate our traditions and history, we must remind ourselves of their relevance and contemplate our future, as individuals and as an institution.

Vivek Santayana
(Editor-in-Chief)

A Landmark Year

Abhinav Mittal comments on the year gone by


Another year has passed; another year in a blur; just another of its 75. As usual, the year was filled with activities and the fervour that accompany them (not to mention the hectic schedule we had by the end of it). The distinct character of the year stems from it being the School's platinum jubilee – a landmark in its history. While DS-75 is the watershed event of the year with numerous noteworthy activities scheduled in its celebration such as (Naseeruddin Shah's troupe) Motley's *Waiting for Godot* and the Capital City Minstrels' performance in the Rose Bowl, the year was defined by much more.

For Dr. McLaughlin, it was his first year as Headmaster. After the swine flu 'catastrophe' that wiped out last Founder's, the year was relatively smooth. Last year's cancellation of many Founder's Day activities did disappoint a large number of us; still, we moved on, activities moved on, the School moved on. For this reward of patience (though involuntarily) with last year, we have DS-75.

There were a number of welcome reforms put in place by the Headmaster – there was a noticeable concern to hurry with the construction in School, which had become a School regular, with the grand Art School 'finally' completed. There was a marked improvement in the Senior-junior fraternity in terms of bullying in School, with some stern (too stern for the liking of some students, though) disciplinary actions taken by the Headmaster. The School re-established relations with our 'grandfather School' – Eton – with a student exchange programme co-ordinated this year. IB in School grew considerably in terms of a stable schedule (though not in terms of the results or number of students pursuing it); it is now beyond its teething stage, and we can only expect an ascent in the programme's success.

With the disappointment of 'DS-74' behind us, we moved towards boxing, athletics and then Trials. With the ICSE and ISC examinations looming over them, the A-Transitioners and the Sc-Leavers buried their heads in volumes of literature, science and the ever-scary mathematics. Over the much-needed break, the School made its maiden trip to Harvard for the HMUN and performed extremely well. Revitalized, we entered the Spring Term, where the major sports continued with greater vigour – the cricket team made a successful trip to Scindia and played the customary matches against the Old Boys. The hockey team deserves special mention, winning the Council's Tournament after a dry spell of over twenty years. In the Afzal Khan Memorial Basketball Tournament, the School witnessed some great games, and the School was placed third. Over the term, we had distinguished visitors on campus: Sir Richard Stagg, the British High Commissioner to India and Shyam Saran, former Foreign Secretary who lectured the gathering on Indo-British relations and the significance of knowledge in today's dynamic world. In the summer break, a School expedition conquered Mont Blanc, while several were busy with the DS-75 film back home. In recognition of Doon's dynamic music programme, and the number of students taking the Trinity music examinations, the Worldwide Appreciation of Music Foundation sent four young musicians from the UK as part of its India-wide programme, to conduct master classes in violin and piano. Their very fruitful visit culminated with a concert of Western classical music for the piano, held in the Music School. In this, the traditionally more packed Autumn term, the School also hosted a number of Inter-School academic events: an extremely successful DSMUN, the Chuckerbutty Memorial Debates where we reached the finals for the sixth year in a row, the thrilling Doon School Quiz and the Kamla Jeevan Hindi Debates where we emerged winners. A contingent of debaters attended the IIPSC Debates hosted by Ashbury College, Ottawa, in early October. The Soccer team travelled to New Delhi and played a number of friendly fixtures against several schools, but missed out on the chance to better last year's fabulous performance in the Bhupinder Singh Tournament held at Sanawar. A group of boys also travelled to New Delhi to watch this year's Commonwealth Games.

The entire School has now geared up for Founder's: the much discussed 'blockbuster' of the year, with plays, exhibitions and publications. Now that it has arrived, we hope it will live up to its monumental expectations, and give us a chance to finally celebrate the School and its history, reflect upon the past and move forward as an institution.

doonspeak

The year gone by . . .

A year where I did not get my rest hour! – **Spandan Agrawal**

Full of activities, yet enjoyable – **Aahan Menon**

Was much more hectic than others – **Devesh Sahai**

Passed in fast-forward – **Aviral Gupta**

Was compromised for DS-75 – **Arjun Sethi**

Was about much more than DS-75 – **Siddhartha Dhanda**

Was one in which the Spring term was overshadowed by the Autumn term – **Ishu Lather**

Avoided swine-flu-like interruptions – **Abhishek Pande**

The Build-Up to the Moment



At the beginning of the year, DS-75 was just another event on the calendar. We were all aware of its importance, but did not anticipate the intensity with which it manifested itself into the Autumn term. At the time, everyone seemed extremely enthusiastic about the whole occasion,

because the preparations had not begun yet. The real test was yet to come.

The following term, elements of a busy schedule became evident: there were an alarming number of announcements at lunch, followed by myriad gatherings outside the CDH. The *Weekly* even took a poll concerned with the same issue. The students undoubtedly worked hard for the publications, exhibitions and other activities such as dance and music, but this was done at some cost to our curricular routine. The cast and crew of the DS-75 film, *Dazed in Doon*, lost more than a month of their holidays in the shooting of the film, while it took nearly eight hours of the entire School for four days. The Founder's work ate into the time of the House activities. Much of the time, especially during the soccer tournament, the Inter-House Music Competition and other events, some students felt that these annual events were taking place just for the sake of it and that DS-75 was the top priority, which it certainly was.

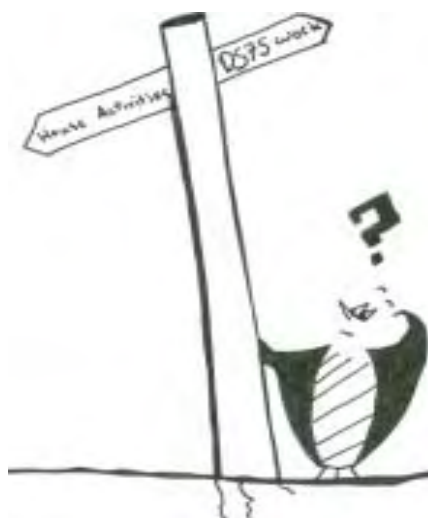
Towards the end of September, evening toy became optional to give the students time to prepare for the exhibitions. This system had its own drawbacks. Morning toy was started, and the lack of punctuality and wandering attention of students in the morning was



Workaholics

Kanishka Malik remarks on the intense preparations on for DS-75 and how the regular schedule had to be altered to accommodate them

evident. The Housemasters pointed out the problems with this system but nevertheless, we continued with it. Fortunately, towards the end of the month, most of the boys went for a



tutorial night-out, and this served as a short but nevertheless, effective break.

The preparations reached their peak in October. The publications got closer to their deadlines and the exhibition work was rounded up. As the pillars and barriers were being put up on the Main Field, so were the final charts. Play practice began in the Rose Bowl and in the MPH, music practice got into full swing in the Music School. Most of the boys were out of their Houses after dinner, and the more enthusiastic ones even crossed the ten o' clock deadline.

For the students who were involved in many spheres, or in other words, omnipresent, the schedule was exhausting. However, they had certainly anticipated this. Doscors are trained to multi-task! DS-75 was a test for these capabilities. It made the boys put in their best in their respective fields and for the senior boys, it was an occasion to use all their experience, to put in their best performance when it mattered most. I am certain that gaining individual recognition during Founder's will be a laudable achievement as all actors, musicians, dancers, 'exhibitioners' and publications will be equally well-prepared. DS-75 is supposed to be a celebration and not a competition. However, recognition has always been a motive for a Dosco and the latter is hence, inevitable.

On the whole, students did enjoy the preparations (as can be noted in the poll conducted on the next page). After all, boys took part in their activities voluntarily and some of the boys had a lot to live up to. The sixteen-odd publications, the myriad exhibitions, the plays and the DS-75 film were made by students who were enthusiastic about those respective fields. I believe that the past two-and-a-half months have been a test for us, and the result of that test will be celebrated on Founder's.

Opinion oll

Are meals being disrupted by too many announcements?



(219 members of the community were polled)

Opinion oll

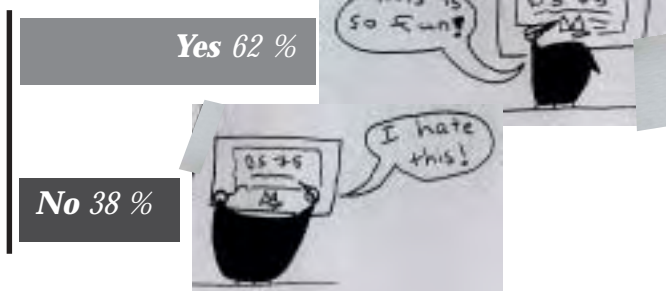
Did you find your experience in the making of the DS-75 film enjoyable?



(307 members of the community were polled)

Opinion oll

Are you enjoying your involvement in the Founder's Day preparations?



(284 members of the community were polled)

Through the questions of the polls, elements of a busy schedule are evident. The term was busier than other Autumn Terms due to the intensity of DS-75. The fact that a film was made for the occasion distinguishes this Founder's Day from others. However, the grandeur of the event was a result of the participation of the community. The film, for instance, was an unusual undertaking which shows that DS-75 went an extra mile. However, the film, along with other events could only have materialised with the contribution of the cast, which spent a month of its holidays at School, preparing for the film; even the rest of the com-

munity spent at least 8-9 hours for different scenes. That is probably what resulted in a majority of the community finding film-making a tedious process. This typifies the situation for other activities too, where the extra effort spent ate into the time of regular activities (house-events, toys *et cetera*). There were many more meetings of various societies and publication boards and the increased announcements at lunch-time were clearly an element of this busy schedule. On the whole, we knew DS-75 was going to be more demanding and exacting of our time and labour.

However, despite the intensity of the preparations, a majority of the students in School enjoyed the experience. 62% enjoyed their involvement and this is some time towards the end of September (at the time this poll was taken). Most of these votes came from the junior boys, who probably don't have the kind of responsibilities seniors do. The ones who didn't enjoy it are perhaps those who were involved in too many activities. It was they who were devoting the maximum amount of time to 'Founder's work. Such omnipresence may allow one to do all one wants, but at a time like this, one is exhausted by the end of the day. A combination of lethargy and overwork is the cause of the 38% 'No' votes. Many of these voters may also have felt that the preparations themselves was asking for too much.

Such intense preparations are undoubtedly unprecedented (at least in the last five years), but this year is an important event in the School's history and its celebrations demand such dedication and time. The 'Yes' voters probably agree with this, while the 'No' voters have dissenting views. Another critical aspect of this poll is that it was conducted towards the end of September. The preparations escalated more sharply in October, when the publications reached their deadlines, the plays were conducted at their respective venues instead of the classrooms and the various exhibitions began winding up their charts and models.

The Doon School community deeply mourns the passing away of Mr Sheel Vohra on Wednesday, October 13, 2010, in Dehradun. As in many other spheres of School life, Mr Sheel Vohra remained actively engaged with The Doon School Weekly. From time to time he would mail, or more often, personally bring articles pertaining to past traditions. Those little nuggets of information (which he was such a mine of) were a wonderful way of keeping the community in touch with the School's more memorable moments. This article, sadly his last contribution to the Weekly, encapsulates his deep knowledge of the School's recorded history and his trademark meticulous attention to detail

House Histories

Line art sketches by **Rathin Mitra**,
former Art master at The Doon School

H



Hyderabad: House of Lords

In 1935, The Doon School started with just two Houses- Martyn and Barritt. All the new boys reported in the building now known as Hyderabad House. Martyn House boys occupied these rooms while the others were accommodated in the rooms, now part of Kashmir House. Hyderabad House thus became the first House in the chronological order of The Doon School. Mr. Martyn occupied the present Housemaster's residence with Mr Barritt living in Chandbagh Villa. In 1936, Mr Howel Thomas joined the School and he was in charge of the third House (Jaipur). Mr. Barritt moved out to the present Tata House premises and in 1937, Mr. Thomas moved into Jaipur House. In the same year Mr. Gibson joined School, and was appointed the Housemaster of the fourth House (Kashmir). Originally the Houses were named Martyn, Barritt, Thomas and Gibson – after their Housemasters – and were changed to Hyderabad, Tata, Jaipur and Kashmir in due course.

Hyderabad can thus rightly be termed as the first House of The Doon School and Mr. JAK Martyn as its first Housemaster. He was a trail-blazer and set many a tradition in the School. The eleven-year rule for the Housemasters, social service in general and the same on the campus in particular, mid-term excursions and trekking in the hills, were all started by him. The Rose Bowl, the magnificent trees on either side of the Main Field, Panchayat Ghar and Tunwala were all initiated at that time. The 'fat boys table' in the Houses was another creation of his innovative mind. He resigned from the Housemastership at the end of 1946. Mr. Muinuddin took over the House and it also marked the arrival of Mrs. Dhawal as the Dame of H-House. Mr. Muinuddin continued till 1950. He was master in-charge, athletics, and is fondly remembered for his cheer "Hip Foot Foot Foot" at the end of an athletic meet. Mr. Shanti Sarup was the next one to take charge. He taught physics and was deeply involved in all the scientific activities. His health caused him a lot of problems and he died in darkness in 1961. Mr S.C. Aggarwal, our chemistry wizard, had a short stint as the Housemaster and handed over to Mr S.L. Sharma. A reputed teacher of mathematics and a great all-round sportsman held the reigns till 1971 when the Houses were divided into A and B. He became the first Housemaster of HA and Dr S.D. Singh took charge of HB. In 1973 Mr R.D. Singh was appointed the Housemaster of HA. This arrangement lasted till 1977 when Mr R.D. Singh handed the baton to Mr A.N. Dar. A year later Mr U.C Pande succeeded Dr Singh in HB. They both were in full control of the House and started a great tradition of song and music and festivities at *Holika-Daan* – the night before Holi. Mr Pande left School in 1984 and Mr Iftikhar Hassan (ex 5-T) took over in HB. Mr Dar followed suit in 1987 handing over the reins to Mr D.P. Lahiri. Both of them had short stints of a couple of years each. Dr S.L. Ganguly took charge of HB while Mr D.S. Vahali (ex 3-T) became in-charge of HA. This arrangement lasted till 1997 when Mr Martand Singh (ex 331-H) took over from Dr Ganguly. In another two years' time Mr Vahali was replaced by Mr Vinay Pande. In 2003 the Houses were reunited and Mr Pande took charge of the combined House. He left in 2004 when Mr Gursharan Singh (ex 219-H) took over Hyderabad House. He had Mr B.C. Chamola as the Assistant Housemaster for some time and Mr Harendra Chakhiyar as his assistant. On Mr Gursharan Singh's appointment as the Dean of Activities, Mr Chamola took over as the Housemaster and Mr John Xavier became his assistant. That is the way it stands now.

House Histories

The 'House of Lords' as it was christened by some of its alumini has had a great run all these years. There have been some well-known politicians on both sides of the border – India and Pakistan – and one of our longest serving ministers at the centre. There have been distinguished captains of industry, bureaucrats, writers, sportsmen and media people. The Old Boys have achieved great heights in the defence services, in financial and banking services and also in technical spheres. Social and community service have found quite a few votaries. Golfers, cricketers, polo players, squash and tennis players have excelled at various levels. Hyderabad House has perhaps the maximum number of boys in The Doon School governing body. At the moment two of the youngest members of the Board are H-House alumni. It has also given the School a Headmaster and quite a few other who have made their mark in the field of education. Music, Art and Dramatics have also found active participation. I can also recall a couple of outstanding names in medicine and surgery. Hyderabad House can genuinely be proud of the achievements of the Old Boys who have fanned out in all directions and brought glory to the House and the alma mater.



Tata: True as Steel

Barritt House was the other House which started in 1935. The boys were based in the rooms now part of Kashmir House. Mr. Barrit was living in Chandbagh Villa which was eventually to become Tata House Housemaster's residence. In 1936, the present Tata House building was almost ready and Mr. Barrit moved out with his boys to the new location. Some work was still pending and so the boys slept in the classrooms in the Main Building. They also used the washrooms next to the then chemistry laboratory in the Main Building.

So Mr. H.E. Barrit became the first Housemaster of Tata House. In the winter of 1937 he suddenly left to take over Rajkumar College, Rajkot. The Headmaster Mr. Foot, took charge for sometime before he handed it to Mr. Kidd who was in the saddle till the end of 1939. By then the legendary Mr. R.L. Holdsworth had joined the School and was appointed the Housemaster in 1940. The House flourished under him for the next 11 years. Mr. K. N. P. Nair who had done a stint at the Holding House, moved on to the main Tata House in 1951. He was in charge till Mr. S. P. Sahi was promoted from the Holding House to take charge in 1958. He continued till 1967 when he quit to take over as the Headmaster of Scindia School, Gwalior. Mr. O. P. Malhotra then moved over from Jaipur House to shoulder the responsibility.

In 1971, the Houses were divided into A and B. The division was vertical in Tata House. Mr. Malhotra continued with TB while Mr. R. N. Kunzru took charge of TA. In 1978, Mr. Malhotra handed over TB to Mr. D. N. Varma. Mr. Kunzru continued till 1981 when Mr. R. P. Devgan assumed charge of TA. This arrangement continued for a while, though Mr. P. Burret officiated for a year when Mr. R. P. Devgan had gone abroad. Mr. Arun Kapur had taken over TB in the meantime. He held charge for five years before handing over the baton to Mr. Satinder Kumar. Mr. R.P. Devgan had finished his tenure in 1992 and Mr. Anton Shiroman succeeded him. He was there for just two years before Mr. V. M. Pokhariyal took over. Mr. Deepak Sharma took over TB, at approximately the same time. This arrangement continued for the next 4-5 years before Mr. Madhav Saraswat assumed charge of TB. He and Deepak Sharma continued their stewardship of the House till 2004 when Mr. Saraswat left.

It was precisely at this time, that the authorities decided to merge the two Houses. It was decided to revert to the old system of one House one Housemaster. Mr. Deepak Sharma shouldered the burden for a year and completed his tenure. In 2005, Mr. Piyush Malviya was appointed as the Housemaster and under the new scheme of things Mr. P. K. Joshi was chosen to assist him.

House Histories

In 2008-09 a change was made. Mr. Arvind Chalasani became the Housemaster and Mr. Debashish Chakrabarty was appointed his assistant. In a year's time Mr. Chalasani left the School and Mr. Harrinder Chakhiyar took over Tata House with Mr. Skand Bali as his assistant.

Tata House with its motto *True as Steel* is thriving, and is still perhaps the strongest building on the campus. It can justifiably take pride in providing two Headmasters to School, an Air Force Chief, a mountaineering legend, an internationally renowned sculptor, some outstanding sportsmen on the national scene, an ex-Chief Minister, two prominent Ministers in their respective states, two MPs and a couple of MLAs, at least two generals in the army, an Air Chief Marshall, a number of other senior Air Force officers, and a number of diplomats and captains of industry. There are scores of others who have distinguished themselves in different spheres and have brought credit to themselves, their House and their School. Many boys of the second generation have passed through its portals and the third generation is very much there and the cycle shall carry on and on.



Jaipur:

House of Eagles

Seventy years have gone by since Jaipur House shifted to its present premises. It actually started as Thomas House in 1936, in the buildings now known as Kashmir House. It is the third House in the chronological order of The Doon School. The building was made ready in 1937 and a group of 49 boys moved into it with Mr Thomas in command.

Mr CL Howell-Thomas thus became the first Housemaster of Jaipur House,. He was keen on swimming and was the moving spirit in starting the first cross-country competition in February 1939. The cup for this was donated by the four Housemasters. Another notable event was the holding of the postponed Founder's Day of 1939 in the courtyard of Jaipur House in March 1940. Mr. Thomas suddenly decided to join the Army after the first term of 1941, and Mr V.N. Kapur took over as Housemaster. He was keen on scouting and organized our games and P.T structure very effectively. An event worth recording here was the visit of Pandit Nehru and Mrs Gandhi in May 1947. They had supper in Jaipur House and went on to see the performance of *Androcles and the Lion* in the Rose Bowl before returning to Mussoorie. Another 'first' was the appointment of two brothers as School Captains for successive years in 1946 and 1947. Mr Kapur finished his tenure in 1951 and Mr. S.C. Roy took over as the next Housemaster. He was a man with varied interests. He took active part in Tagore plays, was part of a number of relief expeditions to Bihar and Bengal, and was also in charge of the Film Society(now known as the Audio-Visual Squad). He completed his tenure and handed the baton to Mr. Gurdial Singh, He had been a tutor of Hyderabad House and was supposed to take over that House in 1962. However, he was selected as a member of the first Indian Expedition to Mt. Everest. He decided to forgo his chance and opted to move over to Jaipur House in the following year. H-House's loss was J-House's gain. He indeed has been 'the Guru' of mountaineering in India and was an inspiration to everyone. He was an integral part of the successful second Everest Expedition in 1965 and Mr O.P. Malhotra officiated for a term. Mr Gurdial Singh's contribution to swimming and life-saving was no less and will always be remembered.

In 1970, Jaipur House was divided in two parts- JA and JB. Mr Gurdial Singh continued with JA for another two years before being made the Deputy Headmaster. Mr K.C. Gupta was the first Housemaster of JB. He taught chemistry and was in charge of athletics. He conducted the Dehradun District Sports for many years. Mr S Kandhari (ex 122-T) moved over from JB to take over JA and a year later I switched

over from JA to replace Mr. Gupta in JB. Both of us had been tutors of J House for long and functioned as two Housemasters of a single unit. We did maintain a common Common Room and my cycling parties in mid-term contained boys from both the Houses. We also had the will and understanding to run it as a combined House. In 1980-'81 we made a clean sweep of all inter-house games competitions- except the House Cup in cricket. We were lucky to have a spirited, lively and energetic set of boys who blossomed into sincere and responsible young men. In 1982, Mr Kandhari left to take over the Welham Boys' School and a year later I was made the Deputy Headmaster. Mr Sheel Sharma (ex 345-K) moved into JA and Mr Sumer B Singh (ex 299-J) replaced me. As he was on leave Mr Iftikhar Hassan officiated for almost a year before handing it back. Mr Sharma was master in-charge, hockey, but dominated the games scene in the School. Mr Sumer Singh was quite effective on the field but his greatest contribution was compiling the history of the School and his book *Doon – The Story of a School* is standing testimony to it. He did not stay long and left to take over Lawrence School, Sanawar, as the Headmaster. Mr Suniel J David replaced him. Mr. S.L. Ganguly officiated for some time when Mr Sharma went for a sabbatical. Mr Sharma and Mr David carried on the good work till 1992 when the former became the Dean of Activities. Mr Philip Burrett then stepped into his shoes. In 1995, Mr. David was also made a Dean and Mr Jayant Hari Har Lal (ex- 404 H) succeeded him in JB. Theirs was an eventful tenure. The Common Room was shifted to a part of the original Dining Hall and a new Library and IT room was also established in the remaining part. The most noteworthy event of that time, however, was the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of the House in 1997. It was an exhilarating evening and a video of it is still available. In the year 2000, Mr. Jayant HH Lal was promoted to the post of Deputy Headmaster and Mr Burrett was made a Dean the following year. Mr Louis Dias stepped into JB while Mr Sumit Dargan took over JA. A new pantry christened 'Cutlet' was created in the original Kitchen area, in memory of the late Mr Sandeep Malhotra (ex- 460 JB) who was known by that nickname in the House.

When Mr Dias left the School in 2003, the House again became one with Mr S Dargan as the Housemaster and Mr. K.L. Ahuja as his deputy. This did not last long and Mr. Dargan relinquished his charge in 2005. Mr. K.L. Ahuja was made the full-fledged Housemaster and Mr. A Shukla took over as his assistant. The present Housemaster is Mr. Sanjiv Bathla and his assistant is Mr. Rashid Sharfuddin. The building itself has been renovated and the boys who were living 'in exile' in the newly-built Foot and Martyn Houses are back home. The lone camphor tree still stands majestically in the midst of all the brick and mortar. Many a group of boys have used it as a wicket for sharpening their cricketing skills. The gulmohr and cassia trees have grown and the litchi trees in and around the House still bear fruit. They remind me of the ingenious ways the boys used to raid the trees for raw and almost inedible leechies. Most of the hedge around the courtyard has disappeared but some of it still thrives.

The Old Boys have fanned out in all directions and have brought glory to the House as well as the School. Jaipur House can be truly proud of an internationally acclaimed writer, two Magasaysay award winners, two Chairmen of the Board of Governor, the first Rhodes Scholar and the first Chairman of the Board of the Chandbagh School in Pakistan. As a matter of fact our Old Boys have been ministers, diplomats, judges and captains of industry in that country. J-House Old Boys have dominated the media – electronic as well as print, in India and abroad. We have had artistes, painters and actors, and fashion designers who are well known. The armed forces have had a fair representation and they have distinguished themselves. So have our boys in the other Central services. Investment bankers, financial consultants and chartered accountants have dominated in their fields. Some of the top industries have J House Old Boys at the helm. Social Service and medicine have attracted quite a few. A number of them have donned the national colours in squash and golf and others have represented different teams in cricket at national level. Two of them are Cabinet ministers in their respective states at the moment. We have quite a few stalwarts in the legal profession. There are some prominent Old Boys in farming, floriculture and environmental protection as well. I may still have left some names in this general survey and offer my apologies if I have.

Apart from this, six ex-Housemasters have risen to the post of the Deputy Headmaster of the School. The only boy who has captained the School in all the three major games in the same year hails from J House, The origin of the trophies for excellence- the Marker Cups is also rooted in this House. I hope the Eagle will keep on flying and soaring higher and higher in the future as well.



Kashmir: House of Gentlemen

The fourth House in School started as Gibson House in 1937 and was named Kashmir House in due course. Jaipur House had moved into its new location by the end of March 1937. The new entrants were accommodated in the same building, now a part of Kashmir House. In order that the House might not be too junior, thirteen boys from Martyn House (now Hyderabad), five from Barritt House (now Tata) and three from Thomas House (now Jaipur), were moved into the new House as its 'Pilgrim Fathers'.

Mr. J.T.M Gibson thus became the first Housemaster of Kashmir House. He was an avid mountaineer and an enthusiastic outdoor man. In May 1937, Kashmir House took a trip to Rishikesh which was described as the longest trip on record till then! In June 1937 there was a fierce storm which uprooted the corrugated sheets of Hyderabad and Kashmir Houses and deposited them on the Main Field.

In March 1938, the famous civet cat incident occurred. Mr. Martyn and Mr. Gibson were firing guns at each other on the opposite ends of the culvert in front of Kashmir House, apparently chasing a civet cat! Mr. Gibson also led a party from H House from Donga to climb Bhadraraj, starting at 3 am, carrying lanterns. Nag Tibba was climbed for the first time by a Kashmir House party, using the same technique, two months later.

By the end of the summer term of 1942, Mr. Gibson had joined the navy and handed the House over to Mr. T.N Vyas, who held the House for two years and handed it back to Mr. Gibson on his return. A couple of years later Mr. Vyas became the principal of Mayo College, Ajmer, and Mr. Gibson was appointed the first Principal of the Joint Services Wing of the National Defence Academy. Mr. Din Dayal became the Housemaster. He was at the helm for two years before Mr. Gibson came back for his third and final stint as the Housemaster of Kashmir House. At the end of 1953 he took over as the principal of Mayo College, Ajmer, and handed over the baton to Mr. K.C Joshi. He was a great all-round sports-man and became a popular Housemaster. A casual remark by a junior on Mr. Joshi was, "Mr. Joshi seems to know everyone's grandfather", became quite pertinent. His was the time Rajiv Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi were in Kashmir House and he handled everything very well. There were a number of visits from the Prime Minister Pt. Nehru and Mrs. Gandhi. On one of these days Kashmir House was having a 'feast' and Mr. Joshi invited them for it. Pundit Nehru accepted with one provision- no one else should be invited. Mr. Martyn was the only exception. There are quite a few photographs commemorating the historic occasion. Mr. Joshi ended his tenure in 1964 and Mr. K.B Sinha succeeded him. It was in 1970 that the Houses were divided into KA and KB Mr. Sinha continued with KA while Mr. Hensman was appointed Housemaster of KB.

Mr. Sinha retired from the School in 1971 and Dr. H.D Bhat took over KA. He had a short stint of three years before passing the reins over to Mr. B.G Pitre. Mr. Hensman carried on with KB and made it a cohesive unit. He handed the baton to Mr. Bhuvan Vaishnav in 1981. His friendly nature and effective handling of situations made quite an impact. In 1982 Mr. Pitre completed his tenure and was succeeded by Mr. H.C Pant. He decided to continue staying in his old residence and so Mr. Vaishnav moved into the original Housemaster's residence. The big event in their tenure was the Golden Jubilee of School, presided over by the Prime Minister – Rajiv Gandhi – an Old Boy of the House. He did visit School despite his busy schedule. Mr. Pant died in a tragic accident in the School swimming pool in 1990. Dr. S.C Biala took over KA, and the following year Mr. Vaishnav completed his tenure and handed KB to Mr. D.M Sharma. They both carried out good work till 1990-2000. Mr. Sharma first left School and Mr. Biala went on to become the principal of another school. Dr.

House Histories

Arvind Shukla became the Housemaster of KB while Dr. M.C Joshi took Charge of KA. This arrangement continued till 2003 when the Houses were reunited and Dr. Shukla became the Housemaster. A new system of assistant Housemasters was introduced. It was Mr. A.K Chalasani and then Mr. A.N Chowdhary who were appointed to this post. Mr. Shukla completed his tenure in May 2010 and Mr. A.N Chowdhary was elevated to the Housemastership while Mr. Manu Mehrotra was appointed his deputy and this is how it stands now.

Kashmir House with its chinar leaf emblem can justifiably be proud of its alumni. Apart from a dynamic Prime Minister of the country, it has given, over the years, ministers in charge of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Education, Tourism etc. It has certainly provided the largest amount of parliamentarians and members of various legislative bodies. At present we have the longest serving Chief Minister, a serving minister of state at the Centre and four members of Parliament. There have been corporate heads, bankers, consultants, chartered accountants and intellectuals. Some of the pioneers in the hotel industries and fast food joints are Kashmir House Old Boys. There are many distinguished names in social service, medicine research and IT. Some Old Boys made a mark in squash at national and international levels, while others have excelled in golf, swimming, cricket and weight-lifting. I can recall two names in the spiritual field while there are many others who have made their mark in creative endeavours. This list can go on and on. Old Boys have breached every field: it is now up to the present generation of Kashmir House boys to keep the flag flying high.



**Oberoi:
House of Honour**

There was no mention of Oberoi House at the time of the Golden Jubilee in 1985. It was sprung on us a couple of years later. There was considerable opposition from many quarters. Mine was mainly on technical grounds – conduct of inter-house games. Well, everything was brushed aside and it became a fait accompli in 1991.

Boys were given the choice to relocate and many opted for the new House. Some senior boys were, however, given the bait to become authorities in the new house, and thus migrated. Mr. M.C. Joshi was appointed the Housemaster of Oberoi A and Mr. S.D. Bhatia became the Housemaster of Oberoi B. There was some teething trouble and some problems had to be sorted out. Mr. Joshi held charge for a year and handed over to Mr. N.K. Bedhotiya, who took a sabbatical in 1994 and Mr Shashank Vira officiated as Housemaster. Mr Bedhotiya came back and carried on till 1996 before he left School. Mr. Janojit Ray was the Housemaster for the next two years, and then he also left. Mr. Derek Mountford took charge and managed the House till 2002. He was keen on physical fitness and he made the boys follow it in almost military-like precision. He picked up another job at the end of 2002 and so, Mr. Dhillon took over and continued till 2006.

In Oberoi B, Mr. S.D. Bhatia continued till 1998 and was replaced by Mr. P.K. Nair in 1999. He did a good job till 2004 and he was elevated to the post of Dean of Studies. Mr H. Farooqi was made the new Housemaster. The division of OA and OB lasted till the end of 2007.

Then, Oberoi House was made one unit in 2008. Ms. Nargish Khambatta was appointed as the Housemaster (or Housemistress!) with Mr. K.V. Arjun Rao as her assistant. In 2009, Mrs. Khambatta resigned from the School and Ms. Purnima Dutta was appointed Housemaster. Mr. Arjun Rao was on a sabbatical, so Mr. S. Bali took over as the assistant Housemaster for a year. Mr. Arjun Rao came back and returned to his post, and that is how it stands now.

Foot and Martyn, the Holding Houses

Since 1940

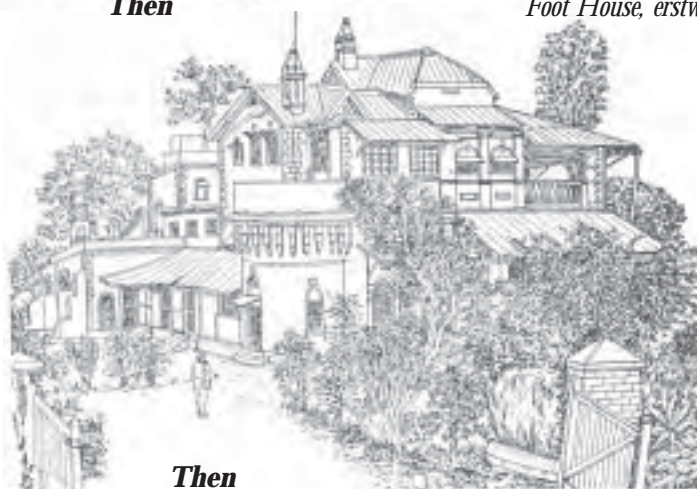


Then

Foot House, erstwhile Gladys's Villa



Now



Then

Martyn House, erstwhile Chestnuts House



Now

It started in the year 1940, in a building across the road which belonged to a Trust. A special path (near the chemistry lab) led to a break in the boundary wall and one could walk across to this house. New boys spent a term or two in this protected atmosphere, supervised by a husband-wife team.

Mr Clough was the first Housemaster and a tenure of two years was counted equal to one year in the main House. In 1944, Mr Clough left and Mr. C.P.S. Menon succeeded him. He lasted for a year, and Mr KNP Nair took over. He moved to Tata House in due course and Mr S.P. Sahi became the Housemaster. He was in-charge till 1958, and handed over to Mr BP Chandola who carried on to the Campus. It was decided to bring Holding House on to the Campus. It was decided to divide it in two parts. Foot House served J and K houses and Chestnuts held the boys for T and H Houses. Mr Chandola continued with Foot House while Mr B.S. Sharma took charge of Chestnuts House.

In 1972 this concept of Holding Houses was done away with. It lasted till 1980 when first Foot House and then Martyn (old Chestnut) House were restarted. *[Ed.: Until around 1991, four Houses were divided equally amongst the Holding Houses. The establishment of Oberoi House, a fifth, was unforeseen and the admission of new D formers into O House complicated the division of Holding Houses. The boys were divided amongst the two Holding Houses, with Foot housing Oberoi 'A' and Martyn Oberoi 'B', hence some D form boys were in the same and in different houses simultaneously.]*

Dr. H.D. Bhat was in-charge of Foot House in the years 1980-83. Mr. C.K. Dixit (1984-92), Mr. D.C. Bhatkoti (1993-97) Mr. A. Qezilbash (1998-2007) succeeded him one after the other. Mr. H Chakhiyar lasted for a year or so and handed over to Mr. Debasish Chakraborty in the beginning of 2010.

Martyn House, which was rechristened from the Chestnut House, had Mr. Omendra Singh (1981-85), Mr. N. Painuli (1986-94), Mr. P.K. Nair (1995-98), Mr. P. Malviya (1999-2004) and Ms. Purnima Dutta (2005-08) in succession as the Housemasters. In 2009, Ms Stuti Bathla was appointed as the Housemaster and that is how it stands now. The system of induction was also changed. The old House arrangements were done away with and the new division was based on odd and even School numbers.

(Sketches of the current structures of Foot and Martyn Houses by Digvijay Gupta)

The CDH

Abhinav Mittal discusses the importance of the Central Dining Hall today, in contrast to dining in the separate houses

When I first got to know that until 1970, students dined in their respective Houses and that there was no Central Dining Hall, I was no less than shocked.

Today, the CDH forms an important part of the School: not only is it one of the most imposing structures in School, I feel the CDH is pivotal to the School. Today, students reside as a House, play as a House, and conduct activities as a House; in fact, students live as a House. The only three times when we are regularly brought together as a form or even as a School within our walls, are at classes, Assembly and during meals. This form-unity and School-unity has greater significance today, with the increased perception that House spirit is fast overshadowing School spirit. Unity within the House is as high as ever, while a similar brotherhood is lacking between form-mates in different Houses. Dining in Houses would undoubtedly draw strong opposition from the students today, as in



Line art sketch of the old CDH by Rathin Mitra

The only three times when we are regularly brought together as a form or even as a School within our walls, are classes, Assembly and meals.

our Dosco life, we are rarely able to establish similar bonds between form-mates of other Houses, as we do with those in our House (what

we now refer to as 'our form'). In fact, there was a suggestion to even allow free dining in the CDH a couple of years ago, rather than seat ourselves House-wise, to serve this purpose.

The construction of a School dining hall was first discussed in 1935, before the School opened. The issue was proposed by a Board member, G. Anderson, but Arthur Foot disagreed with the proposal, as it was against his vision for Doon. Doon was meant to be characterized by comradeship and brotherhood, which would be lost in one large hall. The issue again came to the fore under JAK Martyn, when intensive debate on the issue was carried out through the *Weekly*. The argument in favour of the issue was based on economic reasons, as less workers would be employed in one central dining facility, and costs would be drastically reduced. The Old Boys opposed the proposal in cognizance with Foot's vision for the School, and formed a committee to voice their opposition. The Board of Governors sought support for this proposal through the *Weekly*, and the plan for

The issue was proposed by a Board member, G. Anderson, but Arthur Foot disagreed with the proposal, as it was against his vision for Doon.

the CDH was finalised. The Old Boys eventually joined the Board of Governors for fund-collection for the structure. Designed by the late Shaukat Rai (ex-6 H '39), the CDH came up in 1970, a distinct building on campus with its concrete finish, compared to the predominant, old-fashioned style of the other School structures. Today, it stands clad in the ubiquitous red brick and is a modern and handsome building.

Although we have compromised on tradition, this move has perhaps been to the community's benefit in the long run. How ironic it is that while the CDH was earlier opposed to on grounds on closeness and brotherhood, it is currently integral to the School for the same reason.

(Reference: *Doon – The Story of a School*, Sumer Singh)

The Many Purposes of the Multi-Purpose Hall

Built in 1970, the Multi-Purpose Hall was originally intended to serve as a School auditorium. Over the past few years, it has certainly lived up to its name. The Weekly does a brief roundup of the many 'purposes' it has served.

School auditorium: This is the most obvious function of the Multi-Purpose Hall. The Hall hosts Assembly, debates, quizzes, the inter-house music competition, the Doon School Model United Nations Conference, plays, talks and a number of other School functions. It is at its most glamorous during the music competition, festively garlanded, or at DSMUN, elaborately set up to serve as the General Assembly. It is also the contingency venue for many of the Founder's Day celebrations in case of rain.

Library: In the year 2007, when the Kilachand Library was being renovated, the books, shelves and furniture were moved into the MPH, which functioned as a library. Interestingly enough, the Kilachand Library was built enclosing the original auditorium, which was remodelled into a library.

Teachers' Centre: The Teachers' Centre is located in the basement, towards the rear entrance. This venue is where most workshops take place for students and teachers. For many of us, it is also our yoga classroom!

Examination venue: One of its most unpleasant purposes! This hall is where boys appear for their Board exams (also Trials and mock-Trials).

Saturday night entertainment: Films are usually screened in the MPH on Saturday nights.

Sports Facilities: The Hall has a well-equipped weight room in its basement. There are indoor badminton and basketball courts. In 2005, the final round of the Afzal Khan Basketball Tournament was cancelled due to rain. As a result, the title was shared between The Doon School and Amrit Model School, Abohar, who then played an exhibition match inside the MPH. The boys also perform gymnastics and play table tennis here. Recently, boxing, too, has become an important activity here. An Olympic-sized boxing ring is set up inside the MPH during the Inter-House Competition.



*Line art sketches by **Rathin Mitra**, former Art master at The Doon School*

Banquets and dance floor: The MPH served as an eatery during the DSMUN Conference, 2009. It is also the preferred venue for socials, when it transforms into a party spot, complete with a smoke machine and disco lights.

Dining hall: When the dining hall was undergoing renovation during 2006, the Multi-Purpose Hall served as a dining room. Tables were moved in from the CDH and a covered path was constructed from the kitchen to the MPH to allow the cooks and bearers to ferry food from one building to another. A water cooler was installed near the entrance. D form boys were seated on the stage. A PA system for making mealtime announcements was also set up. Pedestal fans were installed to allow better ventilation.

Quarantine ward: Last year, during the swine flu scare, the MPH was cordoned off into a quarantine ward (that led to its being dubbed the 'Multi-Purpose Hospital'). Beds were moved in and all boys diagnosed with flu (or suspected to have swine flu) were admitted in the MPH.

Accommodation: One of the more unnoticed functions of the building, the MPH also has guest accommodations towards the rear of the building.

Parent-teacher meetings: Since this year, the MPH became the venue of the Parent-Teacher Meetings, with each teacher having a desk inside the Hall rather than in classrooms in the Main Building.

With a Prayer and a Song

Yuv Vir Khosla and Arifeen Chowdhary remark on Assembly songs as a tradition at School

One of the many things that keep all Doscors together, if not physically, then in their hearts, is the songs that they sang when they were at School. These songs remind them about the time they spent at Chandbagh, about the little things of their School life: the shuffling at Assembly, the changes-in-break given out for talking, giggling and wrong conduct. The Headmaster often reflects on the different nostalgic expressions of Old Boys whom he comes across at different gatherings and reunions. On one instance, he spoke about how they reminisce about their mornings, standing in the Assembly and singing the same songs that we sing today.

It is interesting to note that *Jana Gana Mana* by Rabindranath Tagore was chosen as the School Song in 1935, and later adopted as the National Anthem in 1947

The prayers and Assembly songs are inherent aspects of School life. They provide a suitable atmosphere for marking the inauguration of the academic day. The D-formers can be seen with their song books, learning the songs they are to sing for the next six years of their lives while the rest of the School sings from memory. What is

The Doon School needs a School Song. Our School emblem gives us an identity and so will the School Song and a consensus certainly needs to be taken on this issue

remarkable is how every member of the community is able to memorise all these songs, composed in different languages. Each has its own message: devotional, as in *Charanaprante...*, inspi-

rationals as in *Chisti...*, or eloquent in simple faith, as in Kabir's *Moko kahan*. Each affects us, consciously or unconsciously, with the power and beauty of its melody and words.

The original collection of songs and prayers was compiled by AE Foot from various sources, predominantly RL Stevenson's *Prayers Written at Vailima* and *A Book of Prayers Written for the use in an Indian College* by JS Hoyland. Over the years, a number of Headmasters have added to this collection, bound as the *Prayers and Songs* book of the School. The hymns sung at Assembly were compiled by V Shirodkar, an old master of School, who has also set the lyrics to music in many cases. Before him, Sudhir Khastgir had introduced some of Tagore's songs to School. Later, V Deshpande expanded the collection of Assembly songs. Just like the bell, the School songs and prayers are harmonious with the very existence of School. The amalgam of a number of melodious voices and the orchestra reinforce the ethos and ideals of the founders of the School. The choice of our collection of prayers and songs was made a decade before Independence. It is interesting to note that *Jana Gana Mana* by Rabindranath Tagore was chosen as the School song in 1935, and later adopted as the National Anthem in 1947.

Another question in context, what should the School Song now be? Currently, there is no School Song, but through the Assemblies of the past many years, it is evident that *Lab pe aati hai* is the most frequently sung song. It is

**doonspeak**

Assembly songs are . . .

- Essential – **Kunal Kanodia**
- The one thing the School does together – **Spandan Agrawal**
- Should go on for another 75 years – **Shrish Srivastava**
- The voice of School – **Uddhav Prasad**
- What bind us, bring us together – **Shaurya Sinha**
- Anthems which express our values – **Siddharth Bathla**

for that reason that we feel the School Song should be *Lab pe aati hai*. Just the way Harrow has a School Song (which was sung when Winston Churchill visited the School as Prime Minister), The Doon School needs a School song. Our School emblem gives us an identity and so will the School song and a consensus certainly needs to be taken on this issue.

This year there was a proposal in the School Council to cancel Assembly in order to accommodate for an extra class and increase the number of Schools in a day from seven to eight. Considering the importance of Assembly and the songs, I am glad this proposal was rejected.

Old Values

Abhinav Mittal dwells on the importance of preserving our traditions in the face of modernity

Our School website proclaims: “Bricks and mortar do not make an institution”. What defines an institution is the identity it develops over time. This identity is the result of the continuous filtering of our thoughts and practices followed over years before we get just the right mix, that have passed down through generations and are called the traditions of the institution.

The senior-junior hierarchy in School is fast dissolving. Although the tyrannical dominance of seniors over juniors was never the tradition, the implicit respect for seniors always existed, ensured only through this hierarchy.

This identity of the School is the crux of the School's functioning; in essence, it is the heart of the institution. Our School must preserve its identity, for these are the values that are going to be passed on to all those who pass through its gates. This is what the School represents and wishes to inculcate in the future citizens of the nation. While this identity must be dynamic and may be adjusted for the community's progress, the core values must be retained.

Many a time, it is felt that traditions need to be done away with, as they hinder the growth of the institution. Ironically, traditions instead shape the institution and provide a path for it to follow, facilitating its growth only in a certain direction – a direction based on the community's belief of it being in the interest of its members. Traditions are symbols of the School's collective thought. While technology may advance and we may upgrade the facilities of the School, while we may become modern in thought as well as form, the School's traditions must be preserved, as this is how we earned our reputation and position amongst the top schools of the country. At this stage, we are fast moving towards modernity and making a bid to be recognized as an institution at the international level. While certain changes such as the introduction of IB are welcome as they help the students' intellectual growth, we must not do so at the cost of altering the ethos of this place. The senior-junior hierarchy in School is fast dissolving. Although the tyrannical dominance of seniors over juniors was never the tradition, the

implicit respect for seniors always existed, ensured only through this hierarchy.

Further, a tradition isn't formed in a day – it is shaped over years of the institution's growth, which is why people can relate to them, and form associations with them. Fundamentally, we resent change; changing our practices causes strong opposition. I am not saying that we continue with traditions simply because we have always been doing so; we must eradicate those that are detrimental to the School or that hinder its growth, and then continue with the others because of the intangible importance they have for the community. Some things are meant for our sentiments, rather than always for practical benefit. In such a dynamic time, we must maintain our traditions as the community is at home with them. Traditions are an inherent aspect of the Dosco nostalgia.

The School is not facing a crossroads between traditions and modernity, as they can be accommodated

We must retain the core values and ideals of the past, and preserve our traditions, allowing the School to grow on those proven lines.

alongside each other. Undoubtedly, the School must advance and adapt itself to the new generation in terms of the facilities on campus; only then can we grow as an institution. Yet, we must retain the core values and ideals of the past, and preserve our traditions, allowing the School to grow on those proven lines. Knowing that change is the only constant, these traditions become all the more grounded, connected with the past.



School traditions are. . .

- A thing of the past – **Gaurang Ahuja**
- The identity of the School – **Spandan Agrawal**
- Indispensable – **Yash Malhotra**
- Necessary to carry on – **Rishabh Verma**
- Are being compromised for modernising the School – **Pranjal Varshney**
- A subject of much dismay these days – **Kanishka Malik**
- The pillars of School – **Anmol Jamwal**
- Something Old Boys talk to their sons about – **Arjun Sethi**

When I Was in School

KV Arjun Rao reflects upon his time in a boarding school and shares his experiences and memories (Reprinted from issue no 2228, dated September 26, 2009 of The Doon School Weekly)

Where do I begin? So much to say, so few words (I'm notorious for writing rather long pieces but the *Weekly*, unlike my other publishers, has always indulged me) and I don't even know where to start. So, let me say the one thing that I'm most famous for saying, "When I was in school..." and begin. There are so many things to say but here's a sample – my Top 5, if you will:

1. The Master's word: was gospel. No one argued with it, questioned it or thought about it – we just blindly accepted it. And we suffered because of it. I didn't know how to think critically (I still don't, not technically, anyway) and 'out of the box' was out of the question. I suppose because of my loud voice and rather annoying habit cultivated by my History teacher of asking questions, I was always at the receiving end of a rather large number of sticks, chalk and dusters. However, all of it did teach me something – if people are trying to shut you up, it's probably because you've asked the question that bothers them and makes them question themselves or because they just don't know the answer. But not once were they man (or woman) enough to admit it. It was slap, slap and away.

But you all, all of you who study at Doon, are so lucky. You've never had to go through all of this. You're not only encouraged to ask questions but you're also taught how to do it! You question policy decisions, awarding of prizes and you are always provided with answers (most of which are read in the *Weekly*). And the entire exercise is valuable not only for you who are going to be making decisions of your own in the future and must be able to ask those difficult questions, especially of yourself, but also for the School. We are here for you. Without it sounding sickly-sweet, you complete us.

But the most depressing fallout of this entire process of questioning is the near-absence of boundaries or, sticking with our Indianness, at least a Line of Control. While in the '90s teachers were still hated and complained about among our peers, there was never any outward show of disrespect. You knew where you had to stop and you did. And not once did anyone ever have to pull you up and speak to you, least of all the Headmaster.

Today, with teachers' hands tied (thankfully!), there is very little that this adult trying his or her best to deal with 25 kids day in and day out can do if things start to go wrong (as they occasionally do). And you kids are conscious of this and make life hell for this unsuspecting soul who has arrived with the best intentions to teach you or help you out in the House. The kinder a teacher is towards you, the worse the situation tends to become. You refuse to do work in that class, you resort to de-

stroying furniture in the classroom, you vandalise the premises with messages of hate about him or her and you choose to walk out on him or her. Of course, this is not true of most of the students nor is it true of most of the teachers, especially those you perceive as having an iota of talent within them. Of course, we're here for that. Use our talent – there are 75 of us here – suck every drop of that talent out from us and grow as a human being. But also realise that just because a person is simple, does not brag about where they've come from and where they studied, it does not mean they have no talent and nothing for you to gain from. Also, because a person is in a position of power and you have something to gain from his or her influence, don't delude yourself into believing that you will get all you want if you laugh at their bad jokes and constantly go to them for advice. Most teachers are fair and honest, for if we don't have our integrity, what do we have?

2. We took it like a man: the most disappointing thing about discovering that someone has done something wrong and is in dire need of disciplining, counselling or punishing is the fact that for half an hour you have to listen to him (one of you!) whine about how it wasn't your fault, how you didn't want to do it but your peers or your seniors forced you to, and my personal favourite: how a teacher has a grudge against you (don't be so full of yourself – you're not that important. Yet.).

There was a certain amount of pride in getting into trouble, especially in boarding school – read any of the famous books or accounts of boarding school and along with the deprivation and lack of emotional development is the number of times they were in trouble. And how they were doled out magnificent punishments – either by teachers or by prefects – and even today, ex-DoscOs speak of famous slaps that "flung me out of the classroom and into the corridor". Come on, it nearly completely built the entire legend of teachers of the Old School. While I'm glad that I've never had to slap a student and I'm even more glad that it isn't allowed any longer, I do feel that it has resulted in the creation of a whole generation of wimps that can't take anything – punishment, heartbreak, disappointment, low marks – God, the list can go on and on!

If you've done something wrong, be man enough to accept the blame for it. Stand up with your head held high and declare for the whole world to hear: "I did something wrong and I had a great time while doing it. Do your worst!" and believe me, you'll have a story to tell your kids.

When I was in School

3. All this whinging, griping and complaining was unheard of: beautiful synonyms for the same awful word. We were so busy (just like you are), always behind our schedules (again, like you are), never studied through the year like our teachers begged us to (still not sounding familiar?), that the time of the day you couldn't wait for was when you finally got into bed. The odds of us having the energy to actually think about the things that weren't going the way we wanted them to was so exhausting, that you just gave up on it. That said, the one thing that we did dedicate a lot of time and energy to was discussing how our luck with the girls was running out (if it was ever there to begin with). We were just so grateful to be able to make it to the next morning (tough when you think of the lethal triumvirate of your prefects, your teachers and the awful PT that we were put through ever morning), that we slept soundly.

Why are so many of you turning into complainers? It's only natural, I guess, because you don't know what's out there (more on that later). Don't get so stuck in the whining about why things are not working out and why everything is not the way you would like it be, that you miss everything else on the way. If you think there's something wrong, go out there and fix it! Don't wait for anyone else to do it for you. Remember: "You can't always get what you want. But if you try some time, you just might find, you get what you need."

When was the last time you appreciated someone? There are so many people who are labouring to make life easy for you. And life can always be better. There can always be more. You can always want more. You can always have more. But sometimes, it's just good to sit back and thank the stars that you're here and not out there, alone, afraid, without anyone to lean on.

4. There was so much pride in hearing someone say, "I give you the Class of...": I finished from school ten years ago. Some (I should be honest – most) of my closest friends are from my class at school. And why not? We had grown up together, lived in the same rooms and dorms together, flunked the same Maths tests and played on the same teams (I know it doesn't look like much now but there was a time...sigh), it was only obvious that we would still be close. And now, just like it was back then, we stand up for each other. You expected to get it from your seniors and your teachers but your classmates were always on your side.

But here I find the opposite. Kids hate school not because their seniors are bullying them but because members of their own class have decided to mete out some bizarre form of justice that they believe is lacking. The first time I witnessed someone being pushed around by his own form, I gaped incredulously. And I saw it happen again and again. And because it happens within areas where seniors will never be seen, it is barely noticed. We assume that you will look out for each other, not give up on each other.

It's a shame, really. You all will forever be the 'Class of ...' together. And if there is someone who will help you out at any time in life, it is these guys you grew up with. But if you push them away, then what happens?

5. We didn't care about the "big, bad world": I have by this time spent as much time at Doon as a D former who joined in 2003. I had forgotten what it was like when I finished school. I knew nothing about colleges and the life that they had to offer. After seven years in a protected environment, I found myself in a city that didn't care about me; I knew no one and all my friends were so far away from me. And I can never thank God and my parents enough for making that decision of moving back home for me. I would never have met anyone other than the people I knew from school, never have decided to develop any sort of skill and would never have found this life that I have come to love, respect and cherish.

And the same thing happened to me last year. Doon has this brilliant ability of giving you a life that you can only dream of – clean air to breathe, freedom of thought and expression, independence of thought (if you choose to be brave enough to exercise it), safety (personal and professional) and an apartment that I would have to pay for through my nose if I worked anywhere else! I forgot about what was going on out there. I forgot that there are people, living very happy lives, oblivious to us living on our own planet here in Chandbagh. I forgot that there was more to life than Socials' duty, toy duty and night rounds. And I hit rock bottom. And it was only when I was away that I could come to terms with what Doon is all about.

Don't allow yourself to fall into the trap of being like some of the people I know who can only talk about inter-house matches and how things were so much better in their time. Find the world and you will find that there are things more important than whether you were fed a nutritious meal or not. Go out there and find life and you will find that there is more to it than winning a cup or being awarded a colour. Be decent, be humane, be kind, for that is all anyone will remember of you and not whether you were a captain or not. And live life. No wait, I mean live life.

So, that's that. The largest crib of the term. Make of it what you will. Take from it what you want. Trash it, smash it, rip it, shred it. Just remember that it's all true.

Letter To The Editor

Two For The Platinum

Last night I dreamed I went to Chandbagh again. I drove to the gate on which there was a small board which said, "The Doon School – for Indian boys." Through it, and down a long drive, with the Main Field on the left and the tennis courts, Main Building and a *dalchini* tree on the right, up to the residence of the Housemaster of Hyderabad House, with my hostel behind.

Going to The Doon School was for me a progression from Welham Boys', where I had been from the age of six. All new boys went to the Holding Houses, which I found was quite a bore, but Hyderabad House deputed a 'buddy' to show me the ropes, tell me the rules and help generally.

To those of you [readers] who are not Doscocs, let me familiarise you with The Doon School Estate. Down the road was the Main Gate, with a driveway that led to the ivy-laden School building, now passing the Art School on the left and Tata House on the right. To carry on, one passed the Rose Bowl, scene of many social gatherings or School plays and the like. Further down were the workshops for various utilities and here was the carpentry shop where I made my first tea-tray (which was admired by my mother, naturally!). To retrace one's steps was to go round the School hospital, arrive at the tennis court, or turn right and make a long detour, past the staff quarters, swimming pool, Skinner's – the second, large playing field – a grove of lovely litchi trees, Jaipur House and, past them, to the other gate and out. But here we cut across, back to the Main Field, the cricket pavilion and the other end, Kashmir House and Hyderabad House, which are one long, double-storied building. Teachers' houses are interspaced all over.

Now, I will recount titbits of some extracurricular activities. As I am sure, a host of boys will tell you, dear readers, of the more normal school routines and teacher/student activities. However, I will tell you about KNP Nair, Housemaster of Tata House, who taught us math. Mr Nair had eyes at the back of his head. When he was busy writing on the blackboard, some boys would talk softly to each other, and a piece of chalk, aimed unerringly, would hit one of them on or near the nose. He would have certainly won an Olympic gold medal had there been such an event.

Having settled down in Hyderabad House, the routine of School, PT, classes, games, etcetera, kept one active and very busy. At meals in the House Dining Rooms, the Housemaster sat at the head of the Prefects' Table and from there made his daily announcement.

We would look forward to this as Mr Moinuddin laced everything with a malapropism, such as "Look up the notice board on the notice". Once when Mrs Foot, the Headmaster's wife, attended a function, he gave the cheer, "Three cheers for Mrs Hip! Foot, foot, hooray!"

To break the monotony of School activities, young boys have their pranks, and so did we. Like the highwaymen of old, our gang of four, Shomie, Amirzeb, Saifuddin and I, went on a litchi tree raid near Jaipur House. Shomie selected a tree laden with juicy fruit from where, if necessary, we could make a quick getaway – foresight that served us well. Saifuddin climbed up the tree, while three of us kept guard. As bunches of litchis were thrown down to us, they were stuffed down the fronts of our shirts. A dog barked. The contractor shouted – he was the owner of the fruit, after all – and we fled. Whilst we ran for all we were worth, the contractor's men hurled stones via slingshots at us. We made it safely to the Hyderabad House bathroom door, via the back door. Amirzeb, the son of the Wali of Swat, suffering from chronic asthma, was wheezing so loudly that the Housemaster came to investigate and we were caught by him, the lesser of the two evils.

Soon after were the holidays and we all went home. My return to School was put off by a term because there was massive communal rioting in North India. When I did get to School, it was to find that many friends who were Pakistani, would never come back.

Founder's Day would come around in October. We liked it when the Chief Guest took a keen interest in student activities being demonstrated for him. Shomie and I were in the chemistry laboratory and we showed Mr and Mrs DR Das how to make guava jelly, explaining the chemical reactions that took place. Thus the son of the founder of The Doon School was presented by his son, the grandson of the founder, a bottle of guava jelly we had made. Years have passed and now Founder's Day is coming round again. It is with great regret that I am going to miss the special festivities that will mark 75 years of The Doon School. I herewith send my best wishes to the boys and staff – I now have a grandson studying at School and seeing the School prosper and grow is a matter of great pride as, after all, The Doon School and I are of the same age.

(Ita'at Hussain, ex-176 H, '53)

*Ed.: Ita'at Hussain served as the School
Captain from 1952-53]*

(The Best of) Unquotable Quotes

I will throw my threw at you!

SNA throws his weight.

Are you intimidated?

Sarvashreshtha Singh, we shall inform you.

What the why?

Siddharth Bidasaria, why, why, why?

Talks mean no fun.

AKM, we agree!

The bowlsman hurtled towards the batter.

STB, howzatt!

You will have a surprise test day after on Chemical Kinetics.

MTS, what's the surprise?

I can't die to save my life.

Dhruv Velloor struggles for survival.

One plate of boneless paneer, please.

Nilesh Agarwal, half-vegetarian.

Let the fire heat up.

Milind Pandit waits patiently.

Heating it will take tomorrow.

B Dinesh Reddy, future-plans.

Are you intermidated in the thickness of the School calendar?

Yash Mall, you certainly are.

Could I have some lip gloss?

Arnav Sahu grooms himself.

She is the main protagonist.

Vigya Singh, the critic.

Thank you for being with here tonight.

Uday Shriram, "... tonight's gonna be a good night!"

Light off ko band kar do.

PKD wants total darkness!

We are going to revolute!

SBL, "You say you want a revolution. . ."

All batman to the left, all bowlman to the right.

Saumil Aggarwal, middle-man.

BKC got postponed.

Abhilaksh Lalwani schedules.

We are the under-horses.

ANC, coach extraordinaire.

What a slab of cube!

Saarthak Singh, awestruck.

Put the gol circle.

STB designs.

Stop bitching on me.

Arifeen Chowdhury gets touchy.

I have to go to the work room to do some Weekly.

Arifeen Chowdhury, diligent.

Are you medically infit?

NTC doesn't buy it.

I am capable of beating up you.

Vikram Singh Gill negotiates aggressively.

There is a lot of humid rain in the air.

Saarthak Singh, weatherman.

The School Cricket Team played a Welham Boys' match against Welham Boys' School.

PKN, announcer extraordinaire.

I amn't saying that.

Utkarsh Jha defends himself.

Oh my damn!

Madhav Dutt, outraged.

I wake Shubham you up.

Madhav Dutt, early bird.

Oye! Lower down!

Umang Newatia demands silence.

Check the name of your spelling.

PDT spells it out.

I'll rap you apart.

Nilesh Agarwal, the bully.

Be a lady of your man.

Nilesh Agarwal demands fidelity.

Collect your Ouching Chits for PTM.

SJB, in pain.

To shut down and shut up a computer sucks up a lot of power.

PKB celebrates Earth Day.

Water is the food brain.

Shourya Gupta rehydrates himself.

Bring the book full of trunks.

Uday Shriram's library is dukedom large.

India is indebted to England for a great deal of its culture.

Arnav Sahu on Indo-British relations.

I sure I am keep up.

Pranjal Varshney, keeping with the times.

Turn it O-double-F-F!

Shashank Peshawaria commands.

I'll tell to your mom.

Siddharth Bidasaria, sneak.

I swear on your own mom.

Dhruv Mahajan, we believe you.

Hitler was inspired by philosophers like Nietzsche and Fietzsche.

Saarthak Singh, Alan Bullock in the making.

He doesn't have his own originality.

Shaurya Sinha alleges.

Andhere mein light kaise dikhta hai?

Siddhart Bidasaria seeks enlightenment.

My jokes are very well.

Vaibhav Gupta, healthy joker.

All boys who wish to join the Organising Committee for the Chuckerbutty Debates should assemble after breakfast outside lunch.

Itihaas Singh demands attendance.

Everyone got down to a bang start.

Arifeen Chowdhury kicks off.

Editors' Choice:

The Best of 2010

A BASKET OF ORANGES

Walking stealthily through the orchard, the young boy looked over his shoulder. He saw the house, some distance away, still dark, and felt comforted. The farmer had definitely not seen him entering his orchard. As he slipped furtively out of the orchard and headed towards his shack a few minutes' walk away he wondered what his sister would be doing.

It was a cold winter night and the sound of thunder rolled in the distance. As he walked back home, his face glowed with pride: it was the first time he had managed to sneak out a basketful of oranges. He felt a vague sense of happiness that he and his sister would finally be able to have something other than a few slices of stale bread. This thought reminded him of the days he had spent with his father. Those had been the best times of his life. He had received two hot meals each day and had kept relatively warm even during the winters. However, his father had gone to war and nothing had ever been heard about him again. Now the only family he had was his younger sister, and he was forced to make ends meet by stealing necessities, even though he hated doing so.

Arriving at home, he was greeted by his sister, who was always eager to see him. As soon as he placed the small basket on the damp ground she peered in and, looking at the oranges, said, "Can we cook them?" The brother let out a small laugh and patted her on her back. Asking his sister to behave, he walked out of the shack for a quick dip in the stream that ran nearby. He whistled to himself as he bathed, feeling happy that he would be able to have a full plate of food consisting of oranges, bread and eggs (nimble pocketed when the shopkeeper's attention had been elsewhere) for the first time in many months. He felt a warm and pleasant wave surge through his body at the thought of it.

He dried himself lazily while sitting on the bank and contemplated whether he should visit Mr Dalal's farm and try his luck at asking for a little milk. But he decided against the idea and walked back to his house, kicking the dust and rocks on the road. As he neared the shed he heard the sound of weeping and smelt something burning. He quickened his pace as he was worried his sister might have had one of her 'ideas' again. As he entered the shed, he saw a sludge of orange and burnt bread all over the damp earthen

Saturday, October 23

A short story by **Utkarsh Jha**

(Reprinted from issue no 2243, dated March 13, 2010)

floor. He was taken aback for a minute. He failed to believe that his dream had been destroyed. When he questioned his sister, she told him that she had tried to help him by making a proper cooked meal.

For an instant, he felt rage rising like a dark tide. His hand rose, as if involuntarily, to strike the little girl. Sanity came like a dash of cold water as he thought with horror: 'Let me never let this cruel poverty rob me of more than material things.' All of a sudden, he felt the anger subside. He bent down and hugged his sister. "Dry your tears," he told her. "There are plenty of oranges in the world."

* * *

In the Dark

A short story by **Uday Shriram**

(Reprinted from issue no 2238, dated February 6, 2010)

I'm standing alone in the dark. Naked. There are no walls. No matter how much I run in one direction or another, everything is unchanging. There isn't anything to lean against, nothing to hold. I scream. I scream again. No reply. Not even an echo. The ground around me is hard and smooth. Unforgiving and unbreakable. I slam my fists on the ground. And I can't feel any pain. I run forward without thinking and trip over my own feet, fall flat on my nose. The blood and tears flow down immediately. But I can't feel any pain. I can't smell the blood. I can't feel the warmth of the tears inundating my face. The only sense still active is my hearing. I scream again, if just to reassure myself of this. Again. Shriller, more banshee-like. My face is pressed against the ground. I can't feel if it's cold or warm. There is no breeze to send shivers through my body. I punch myself in the gut. The air is blown out of me, but I can't feel pain. I ram my knuckles into my jaw. It dislocates. Hangs, limp and lifeless. I poke my thumb into my eye. I can feel the insides of my eyes, the blood and flesh all over my palms. I press harder into my eye, round and round, just because it is so fleshy and disgusting. I put the same thumb into my mouth. My tongue cannot taste the remnants of my eyeball. I grab my lower jaw, stick my tongue out, and with one motion, let my teeth do the rest. I try to feel around for my severed tongue on the ground. It is wet and sticky. But now I have something to hold on to.

Kanishka Malik provides an insight into the impact of economic independence on career choices
(Reprinted from issue no 2248, dated May 1, 2010)

Living the Change

If there is any event which I feel is at par with our political independence, it is our economic independence (1991). Our booming corporate sector, the IT revolution, the banking bubble, the rise of the new middle class and the current growth rate can be accredited to the economic reforms of 1991. However, what I personally find most interesting about this national landmark is how it has affected DoscOs in their choice of careers.

We have often heard visitors, ex-DoscOs, masters and even students conducting Assembly talks rue the fact that DoscOs today, unlike in the past, choose to opt for jobs in the private sector instead of participating in the administration and bureaucracy. Indeed, when The Doon School was first set up, it aimed at producing students who would lead the government as parliamentarians, civil servants and armed forces officers. That is perhaps the reason why a large number of DoscOs chose to join the Civil Services and politics. But if we take a deeper look into the economic policies of India before the 1991 reforms, we will discover a number of other reasons as to why the administrative service was one of the favourite choices of profession.

During the pre-economic independence era, Nehruvian socialism defined our polity. Due to flawed economic policies and a restricted private sector, the best jobs were in the administration. The trend of the 'sarkari naukri' was at its peak then. The 'License Raj' and certain policies of the government had stultified the growth of entrepreneurship, business and privatisation. The bureaucracy was the most powerful organization then and innumerable DoscOs participated in it. If anyone wanted to be involved in the private sector, the probability of finding a good job in India was extremely low, and migrating to other countries or handling some established family business was the only other method to fulfill such an ambition. Once the reforms came and the economy opened up, our private sector received a huge impetus and is today one of the major players in the global market.

Nineteen years after the reforms, trends have certainly changed. The ideal job these days is to work for a multinational corporation or some other organization in the private sector in India itself. My generation has more opportunities in business and entrepreneurship than our predecessors had. When circumstances are so favourable, it is quite likely that one would choose a career in business management, investment banking or engineering, rather than getting into the politically-influenced spheres of government and administration.

When the circumstances are so favourable, it is quite likely that one would choose a career in business management, investment banking or engineering, rather than getting into the politically-influenced spheres of government and administration.

Now the question which has been frequently asked is whether this sudden departure of DoscOs from the administration and bureaucracy is a matter for concern or not. I do not think this is something to worry unduly about. The

"The same way the School takes pride in alumni like Rajiv Gandhi, Karan Singh and other prominent leaders, it would love to boast of an Anil Ambani or a Sunil Mittal."

School's founder and other prominent members of our community wanted to see DoscOs leading the country in the political and administrative spheres. I feel it is as important for us to lead the country's private sector and be a key player in our rather new and potent economy. In the same way that the School likes to take pride in alumni like Rajiv Gandhi, Karan Singh and other prominent political leaders, it would today love to boast of

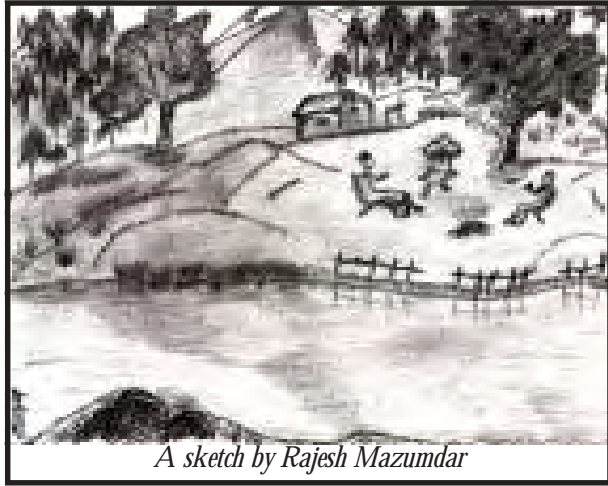
an Anil Ambani or a Sunil Mittal. Why shouldn't the School be proud of the time when DoscOs will be the strength of one of the strongest corporate communities in the world? Why shouldn't DoscOs, twenty-five years down the line, count amongst its old Boys a successful, first-generation billionaire who has made full use of the opportunities that we have right now?

I am in no way undermining the quality of the jobs we once preferred. The administration and the civil services are still some of the best jobs in the market. But at a time like this, when our corporate sector is booming and opportunities are abundant, it is necessary for DoscOs to join this boom now and strive for strong positions, in order to dominate it in the future. This would not only strengthen one's own position but would also strengthen our alumni in a new, powerful and important sphere of the country.

Gross Value

Rajesh Mazumdar reflects upon knowledge and ignorance

(Reprinted from issue no 2242, dated March 6, 2010)



A sketch by Rajesh Mazumdar

Three of us were sitting around a fire on white sand. It was dark and chilly. The river was gurgling in front of us and the sound of its waves gently washing the smooth sand was calming. The twigs were burning with joy, while the thin branches wanted to join in, but the log was stubborn. We earnestly desired it to blaze for more warmth, little realizing that there was greater gross in it. Water and fire, so different in character, were subtly engulfing us. Suddenly, the unruffled serenity was broken by the bark of a desperate muntjac, a specie of deer found in the Himalayas.

The silence was broken by the call of the deer, and my friend asked, "What is it that we know?" "A lot", I replied without much thought. "I know who I am, my work, my issues, relationships, about books, events around me and much more." After listening patiently, he asked again in a deep voice, "What you know is knowledge, isn't it?" We fell silent as we realized the deeper connotations of his inquiries. He meant something else. We venture into the realm of knowledge and accept it, without wondering what it does to us. Was he questioning knowledge?

There was an impulsive hiss and a shower of sparks in the fire, as if it wanted to participate in the conversation.

He continued, "Knowledge is the past; it is irrelevant for the present. How can we be aware of the *present* if our thoughts are pestered by the *past*? How can there be clarity in perception if it is sullied by the opinions of others? Knowledge drapes the self and fattens the ego."

We were humbled. There was a riot of words in our minds and a silent revolt was fomented. The other

friend, who was quiet till then, uttered courageously, "Is it not necessary for the world we live in? It makes us learn many lessons of life." I joined him and added aggressively, "And, moreover, we need to know what happened in the past to make our future better. Don't you think so?"

He broke the silence and asked again, "Has our life become more significant and meaningful with knowledge? Have we not become crooked, saddled with knowledge? Is knowledge not an escape from fear of not being important?"

We did not search for answers to these queries. We just tried to reflect on the entire conversation.

"Knowledge takes us far from realism, from true being, and is an impediment. It colours our thoughts by force and creates stacks of images. We rejoice in getting trapped in the web of pseudo-intellectualism and, with it, we hang in the midst of a virtual world." After having had his say, he got up, smiled, and went towards the hut to retire for the night.

There was a sudden breeze and the flames went wild. We saw the twigs and the thin branches evolving into a pure and subtle form, but the log was still adamant. It was full of itself. I saw so much of myself in it.

* * *

Clouds

A poem by Arifeen Chowdhary

(Reprinted from issue no 2244, dated March 20, 2010)

They move in vast numbers,
Like a vast exodus of refugees;
With no destination,
No land to call their own.

They fly free,
With no complications.
Only a few feathered creatures,
Flying through once in a while.

How carefree they are,
Just lofting around
Vast amounts of space.
With no friend or foe
And love or betrayal,
How does it feel?

Being as pure as snow,
All alone, close to the heavens.

I muse: since we are
Under the same sky;

Do we all see,
The same clouds?
Whenever I see a cloud,
I give it a message;
Hoping it will fly to you,
And deliver it.

The Editor's Dilemma

Abhilaksh Lalwani

(Reprinted from issue no 2239, dated February 13, 2010)

There he sits on the judgement chair:
Slashing left –slapping his head – cutting right
Breaking down, laying the language bare –
Not an apostrophe is out of sight.

And then he goes back to the beginning
And slashes, and slaps, and cuts,
No signs in his eyes of forgiving –
He strikes with red where it most hurts.

And then the martyred corpse is taken
To a chair of further judgement –
Where the limp carcass is laden
With some catchy embellishment.

And still at the end of it all, in the end,
After drafts on drafts of coffins have gone,
And he has gone, and drafts have gone,
There still is an error that does it all rend.

But, that is not all. He thinks to himself:
“Had I but that one eternal ink had
That will allow me to revise myself:
I would never have chosen to be this”.

Backstage

Shivam Goyal

I set the stage.
I sweep the floor.
I fetch the water.
I pick the waste.

I light their lives.

They play on stage,
Lit like gods.
I stay in the wings,
Falling in their shadow.

Deceived

Arifeen Chowdhary

Shattered,
Downtrodden,
Despised by all,
Lost in thought,
He labours without reward.
His actions betray him.
His work is unnoticed.
He wonders:

Does
Light exist in Thy world?

Cadenza and Coda

A poem by Sriyash Kishorepuria

(Reprinted from issue no 2245, dated March 27, 2010)

Long has it been since
The first and second and third movement.
The exposition exposed,
The development complete,
The grand recapitulation recovered,
And soloist displayed.
Peace in calmer moods searched,
The finale return to the grand beginning,
And the obstinacy of the rondo resolved.

The trill on the dominant played,
The virtuosity of the soloist predominant
Over the many.
The theme and its intrinsic variations conveyed.

All has come to pass.
The violins have taken flight,
The bass has stood its ground;
The cellos have sung,
The flutes and oboes descended.
The clarinet has wept its tears,
The trumpet has shrieked and cried.
Only the poor bassoon stands misunderstood,
Confused for a clown.

All has come to pass.
The conductor is emptied, the soloist played out.
Moods have changed.
The final blow of the tonic,
Then Silence,
Music, Sound, then Noise.
All fleeting:
Soon to be forgotten
Or even worse,
Lost.

Goldfish

Uday Shiram

I see the world from my panopticon.
Beer-bellied pretenders strutting about,
Eating popcorn and cheeseburgers,
A window with elephants and race-cars
And more open-mouthed people.

A misshapen monster wags his fur
And fogs up the glass, staring me down.
I stare back and accidentally see
His insides through his parted teeth.

I cannot see the garden outside,
Covered in little mounds of mud,
Each with its hidden secret.
I cannot see that my final self
Is somewhere in the grass among the ants.

दून, तुम ध्रुवतारा हो

डा. एस. सी. ब्याला (पूर्व अध्यापक)

सतीश रंजन दास के सपनों की साकार मूर्ति दून -
तुम आदर्श हो भारतीय संस्थाओं का,
भारतीय अभिभावकों का, शिक्षकों का,
और उस हर व्यक्ति का जो तुम्हें जानता है..... पहचानता है
क्योंकि तुमने अंतर में वह सब कुछ समेट रखा है,
जो किसी आन्दोलन से कम नहीं।
जिसमें सरलता है, समर्पण है, जिसमें जागरूकता है, भव्यता
है, विशिष्टता है और है मील के पत्थर तैयार करते
उत्तरोत्तर उन्नत शिक्षकों को छूने की कामना।
1935 से अब तक के परिदृश्य में -
पीछे मुड़कर देखना तुम्हारी अदत नहीं रही,
शायद इसीलिए तुम्हारा सान्निध्य पाकर,
गुरु अपने शिष्यों के साथ चल दिए नई राहें तलाशने।
कर्मभूमि गढ़वाल ही क्यों,
भारत का कोई कोना अछूता नहीं रहा,
जहाँ तुमने अपनी अद्भुत गाथा न लिखी हो।
अद्भुत संकल्प है तुम्हारे सृजनकारों का,
तुम्हारे नीतिकारों का और कर्णधारों का।
राष्ट्रीयता की अक्षत मूर्ति दून, तुमने तैयार किया है -
क्रांति ला देने वाले कितने ही मसीहाओं को,
जो नेता भी बने, अभिनेता भी बने,
सैनिक भी बने, उद्योगपति भी बने,
पर्वतारोही भी बने और देश-विदेश में नाम कमाकर,
शिक्षा में....कूटनीति में, साहसिक जगत में,
तुम्हारी लौ जलाते चले गए।
75 वर्षों की तुम्हारी यात्रा अमिट छाप छोड़ती चली गई।
अविस्मरणीय तुम्हारी पहचान, नेतृत्व करने लगी,
और चाँदबाग का नाम चंद्र सी शीतलता प्रदान करने लगा।
बड़ा अच्छा लगता है जब मैं तुम्हारे बारे में सोचता हूँ,
भाग्यशाली समझता हूँ अपने आप को,
कि तुम्हारी लौ के जलने में कहीं मैं भी भागीदार बना।
तुम्हारा कोई सानी नहीं है और हो भी नहीं सकता,
क्योंकि हमेशा चलते दमकते रहने वाले तुम,
भारत का ध्रुवतारा हो।

ईश्वर का अस्तित्व

चंद्रचूड़ शुक्ल

ज़हन में घिर गया वो ला इंतहा क्यों कर हुआ

जो समझ में आ गया वो खुदा क्योंकर हुआ।

एक विचार जो आजकल के वैज्ञानिक युग में हम सभी के मन मस्तिष्क को मथता है वह है ईश्वर के अस्तित्व का। मनुष्य अपने आप को सृष्टि का निर्माता और पालन कर्ता समझने लगा है। वह सभी नियमों की व्याख्या में आनन्द और गर्व का अनुभव करने लगा है। एक बड़ा सवाल सभी के सामने है कि क्या ईश्वर है? अगर है तो क्या है, कैसा है और क्या करता है?

मनुष्य के पास ज्ञान के सीमित साधन हैं और ईश्वर असीमित है। ईश्वर को समझने और सिद्ध करने में मनुष्य

के सीमित साधन समर्थ नहीं हैं। यहाँ मेरा मानना है कि जिसे हम समझ नहीं पाते उसे उसे नकार देना पलायनवाद से अधिक कुछ नहीं है।

किसी भी वस्तु या विचार को सिद्ध करने के चार प्रमाण हैं - प्रत्यक्ष, अनुमिति, अनुभव और आप्तवाक्य। सृष्टि की व्यवस्था की नियमितता ईश्वर के होने का प्रत्यक्ष प्रमाण है। संसार की

मृत्यु सत्य है। इसे सभी अस्तित्ववादी और नास्तिक स्वीकार करते हैं। जो मरता है, वह जनमता भी है। जो जनमता है उसका कोई न कोई जन्मदाता भी होता है। इस श्रृंखला की अंतिम कड़ी का ही नाम ईश्वर है।

रचना और पालन को करने वाला ईश्वर है इस अनुमान से ईश्वर का होना सिद्ध होता है। मनुष्य में सुन्दरता, सच्चाई और अच्छाई के अनुभव से और महापुरुषों और धर्मग्रंथों के वाक्य से हमें ईश्वर के अस्तित्व का बोध होता है।

अस्तित्व को हम दो रूपों में देख सकते हैं - भौतिक और निराकार। अगर कोई दिखाई नहीं देता उसे नकारना उचित नहीं है। सगुण और निर्गुण भक्ति शाखा के चिंतकों ने चाहे वे तुलसी, रसखान, सूर या मीरा हों और चाहे वे कबीर या रैदास हों सभी ने ईश्वर के अस्तित्व को किसी न किसी रूप में को स्वीकार किया है।

तर्क की अपनी सीमाएँ होती हैं। जहाँ तर्क समाप्त हो जाता है, वहाँ ईश्वर का अस्तित्व साफ होने लगता है। इसका उदाहरण यह है कि बिग-बैंग के बाद की घटनाओं को किसी सीमा तक तर्क द्वारा समझा जा सकता है, लेकिन बिग बैंग क्यों हुआ और किसने किया इसका एक मात्र जवाब है ईश्वर। इसी बात को एक सिद्धांत के रूप में कहा जाए तो रहस्य का दूसरा नाम ईश्वर है।

मनुष्य अपनी सामर्थ्य से परे जहाँ वह पहुँच नहीं पाता ईश्वर को साफ खड़े देखता है। सामर्थ्य की परिभाषा के अंतर्गत तर्क, ज्ञान, समझ आदि सभी आ जाते हैं।

हमारा अपना अस्तित्व हमारी चेतना के आधार पर ही होता है। हमारी चेतना की उपस्थिति सीधे-सीधे ईश्वर की ओर इशारा करती है।

मृत्यु सत्य है। इसे सभी अस्तित्ववादी और नास्तिक स्वीकार करते हैं। जो मरता है, वह जनमता भी है। जो जनमता है उसका कोई न कोई जन्मदाता भी होता है। इस श्रृंखला की अंतिम कड़ी का ही नाम ईश्वर है।

मानव सभ्यता का विकास दो धाराओं में हुआ - नदी-घाटी और महाद्वीपीय क्षेत्रों में। नदी-घाटी क्षेत्रों में बारिश, जल और ज़मीन आदि को ईश्वर माना गया। इसका सीधा सा कारण यह था कि इनसे मनुष्य की आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति होती थी। महाद्वीपीय क्षेत्रों में युद्ध से सम्बंधित देवी देवताओं की अवधारणा हुई। इसका भी कारण साफ था - वे लोग बंजारे थे और उनकी ज़रूरत जानवरों से लड़ना और अन्य जनजातियों से लड़ कर अपने अस्तित्व को बचाए रखना था। इससे सिद्ध होता है कि ईश्वर के विविध रूप होते हैं। यहाँ हमें यह भी

समझ लेना चाहिए कि वह कालसापेक्ष, स्थानसापेक्ष और आवश्यकता के सापेक्ष भी होता है।

पदार्थ और शक्ति एक ही मूल शक्ति से उत्पन्न हुए हैं जिसे वैज्ञानिक भाषा में ग्रैंड यूनिफाइड फोर्स कहा जाता है। रिचर्ड फैनमैन जैसे कई वैज्ञानिक इस मूल शक्ति को ही ईश्वर मानते हैं क्योंकि सभी कुछ इसी शक्ति जन्मा है।

गुरुत्वाकर्षण, विद्युत-चुम्बकत्व और आणविक शक्तियाँ ये तीन शक्तियाँ हैं जो ब्रह्माण्ड को चलाती हैं। अपनी बुद्धि से मनुष्य ने इन शक्तियों को नियम के रूप में व्याख्यायित कर दिया है। ब्रह्माण्ड में ये शक्तियाँ इतनी व्यवस्थित हैं कि उन्हें देख कर ग्रैंड डिज़ाइन का बोध होता है जिसका निर्माण एक पूर्ण बुद्धि ही कर सकती है। स्टीफन हॉकिंग्स जैसे प्रतिष्ठित विद्वान भी इस विचार को मानते हैं तथा उस पूर्ण बुद्धि को ईश्वर की संज्ञा देते हैं।

गीता में ईश्वर को समय कहा गया है। हम तो काल में बंधे हुए हैं। हमारे अपने काल खंड से परे क्या है, इस बात को हम जान ही नहीं सकते। ऐसी स्थिति में सबसे असान लेकिन सबसे मूर्खतापूर्ण और बचकाना तरीका यही है कि हम ईश्वर के अस्तित्व को नकार ही दें। घोड़ा अपनी आँखों के आवरण से बाहर कुछ देख ही नहीं पाता, इसका अर्थ यह नहीं कि उसके दाएँ बाएँ कुछ नहीं है। हम भी अपने कनपट्टे के हटा कर देखेंगे तो हमें भी ईश्वर साफ दिखाई देगा।

किसी विचार का खंडन ही उसका मण्डन है। अगर कोई इस विचार को नकार रहा है कि ईश्वर नहीं है, इसका अर्थ यह है कि वह दूसरी तरह से ईश्वर के अस्तित्व को स्वीकार ही कर रहा है। यह केवल मनुष्य का अभिमान ही है जिसे पालने के लिए वह कई बार इस विचार को नकारने की कोशिश करने लगता है कि ईश्वर है। कबूतर के आँख बन्द कर लेने पर बिल्ली का अस्तित्व समाप्त नहीं हो जाता है। अतः ईश्वर का अस्तित्व तो निश्चित रूप से है उसे चाहे किसी भी नाम से जाना जाए।

दो रुपये की दाढ़ी

अरविन्दनाभ शुक्ल

गर्मी आई, बरसात आई और सर्दी भी आकर चली गई। हमें लगता रहा कि ज़िन्दगी में कुछ हो ही नहीं रहा। न कोई

मेरे इतिहास का फैलाव कुछ मिनटों से ज़्यादा में है भी नहीं। बहुत हुआ तो कुछ घण्टों में मेरी और मेरी फ्रेंचकट की दास्तान को भुला दिया जाएगा। पर ऐ यहाँ वहाँ चिपकी फ्रेंचकट दाढ़ियों! तुम्हारे सावधान होने का समय आ गया है। तुम अपने को जो चाहे मानो, जमाना तुम्हारी कीमत केवल दो रुपये आँकने लगा है।

हलचल, न कोई हंगामा। पिंजरे में तोता है तो सही लेकिन कतरनों का गट्ठा भर है। न बोलता है, न पंख फड़फड़ाता है। चोंच मारने का तो सवाल ही नहीं उठता। मन में आया कि कुछ किया जाए। एक ढर्रे पर चल रही सूखी - सूखी सी ज़िन्दगी में बदलाव का छिड़काव किया जाए। घर बदलने की सोची तो यह डर लगा कि न जाने नया मकान मालिक कैसा

हो। घर का फर्नीचर बदलने की सोची तो सेलरी स्लिप की याद ने डरा दिया। नौकरी बदलने के तो ख्याल भर से पसीने छूटने लगे।

पत्नी से सलाह ली तो उन्होंने मुस्कराते हुए झट कह दिया कि कुछ भी कर लो। जो उन्होंने न कहते हुए भी कह दिया था, वह इस प्रकार था - वैसे भी जो हालात अब हैं, उनके और अधिक बिगड़ने की तो कोई गुंजाइश अब बाकी ही नहीं है। उन्होंने लगे हाथ यह सम्पुट भी लगा दिया कि और कुछ न बने तो दाढ़ी ही रख लो। बात सुनकर कलेजे में कुछ चुभन महसूस हुई तो हमने नासमझी की दवाई का कॉम्बिनेशन धीरज के साथ बनाकर गले से उतार लिया। यह दवा रामबाण है। चूक की कोई सम्भावना ही नहीं। इस दवा के प्रभाव से हमने बड़े से बड़ा ज़हर उतरते देखा है। जिस बिच्छू के काटे का कोई मंतर न हो उसका विष इस कॉम्बिनेशन की एक खुराक से उड़न छू। हमारा भी चित्त तुरन्त शान्त हो गया। इधर चित्त शान्त और उधर लो बस हो गया निर्णय। सलाह को हुक्म माना और तैयारी शुरू कर दी।

सबसे पहले बदलाव के आधार को परखने की ठहरी। बदलाव की नींव चूँकि चेहरे पर ही रखी जानी थी इसलिए चेहरे की छटा को तसल्ली से शीशे में निहारा। हालात कोई खास उत्साहजनक न थे। दिल घबराकर बैठ जाता उससे पहले ही वे मज़दूर ध्यान में घूम गए जिन्हें इमारत के निर्माण से पहले ज़मीन की साफ-सफाई करते देखा था। फिर क्या था, पत्नी और आयकर विभाग वालों की नज़रों से बचाकर रखे गये पैसों को खोज निकाला। उनसे विलायती साबुन की बट्टी खरीदी। बट्टी को घर लाकर उसपर अपने चेहरे को देर तक रगड़ा। इसके बाद पुनः आईने के सामने खड़े होकर स्वयं को आलोचक की निगाह से देखा। उम्मीद तो यह थी कि आईना टूक - टूक हो जाएगा, पर कम्बख्त ऐन मौके पर दगा दे गया। एक खरोंच तक भी तो नहीं आई बेहया पर।

हफ्ता बीतते बीतते चेहरे पर उगी खूँटियाँ झाड़ - झंखाड़ में बदलने लगीं। यथासमय, जतन से रखे गए पनामा के ब्लेड को कागज़ की तर्हों में से निकाला। बड़े जतन से उस ब्लेड को रेज़र पर चढ़ाया। सावधानी के साथ कर दोनों गालों को चिकना करना शुरू कर दिया। मूँछ और ठोड़ी के बालों का होठों किनारों पर ज्यों ही सांस्कृतिक समन्वयन सम्पन्न हुआ हुआ, केश-उच्छेदन की कार्रवाई को तुरंत रोक दिया। रोकना ही था, फ्रेंचकट दाढ़ी तैयार जो हो गई थी।

एकांत में आईने के सामने चेहरे को दाँए - बाएँ, ऊपर - नीचे, वक्र - अतिवक्र कोणों पर रखकर अपनी कला को परखा। एकाध बाल काटने की ज़रूरत महसूस हुई तो वह भी किया। चेहरा कोई खास भला महसूस न हो रहा था। सही कहें तो ऐसा लग रहा था जैसे ठुड्डी पर रुई चिपकाकर उसे काले रंग में रंग दिया हो, पर परिवर्तन की मर्यादा रखते हुए उस चेहरे को अपनी और ईश्वर की मॉडर्न आर्ट का सम्मिलित प्रयास मान कर सराहा।

पत्नी और बच्चों ने देखा तो उन्होंने भी ठहाका मारकर हँसते हुए हमारे नये रूप की प्रशंसा में अपना योगदान दे दिया।

आगे चलने से पहले लगे हाथ यह भी बता दिया जाना चाहिए कि हमने फ्रेंचकट को ही तरजीह क्यों दी। सबसे बड़ा कारण

तो इस कट में जुड़ा हुआ फ्रेंच शब्द है। हमें लगा कि फ्रेंच शब्द के साहचर्य से फ्रांस के कैफे, रेस्तराँ, जेंटलमैन, वाइन, खुशबू और भाषा आदि से अनायास ही जुड़ जाने का अभूतपूर्व मौका हाथ आ गया है। सोचा कि चलिए इसी बहाने लल्लू के धुँआते चाय के खोखरे से छुटकारा मिलेगा। सुबह से शाम तक साक्षात गैस का गोदाम बने रहने वाले देसी धुरी की गैस विसर्जन की क्रिया का शिकार बनने से जान बचेगी। नमक चाट कर हलक से उतारे जाते देसी ठर्रे की महक से बचने का मौका मिलेगा। मन को लगने लगा कि गलियों के किनारों पर दीवार के सहारे बहती हुई द्रवीभूत खुशबू से छुटकारा पाने का अवसर मिलने को है। सड़ियल और पिलपिलाती मानसिकता वाले लोगों की गालियों से गंधाती भाषा से बचाव की सम्भावना दिखाई देने लगी। और, सबसे बढ़कर फ्रांस जैसे महनीय विदेशी राष्ट्र के साथ मानसिक तौर पर सम्बंध की स्थापना का सपना पूरा होने के असार दिखाई देने लगे।

याद तो उस समय फ्रेंची शब्द भी आया, जिसका तात्पर्य एक ऐसे वस्त्र से होता है जो पहनने वाले और देखने वाले दोनों इज़्ज़तदार पक्षों की इज़्ज़त बचाए रखने के काम आया करता है। वैसे, कुछ लोगों का तो यह भी मानना है कि फ्रेंचकट दाढ़ी भी एक प्रकार की फ्रेंची ही है जो भीतरी सतह पर बौद्धिक रूप से नंगे प्राणियों के सम्मान की रक्षा में सतत् संलग्न रहा करती है। पर, गनीमत यह है कि इस प्रकार के लोग संख्या में काफी अधिक हैं जिसकी वजह से उनकी बात का कोई महत्व नहीं रह जाता।

कमजोर लोग हमेशा से संख्या के बल पर अपनी हैसियत जताने की कोशिश करते आए हैं, खासतौर से देश में प्रजातंत्र स्थापित होने के बाद से तो उनकी इस निरर्थक कोशिश में लगातार बढ़ोतरी ही होती चली जा रही है।

मित्रों ने इस परिवर्तन का राज़ जानने में ज़मीन आसमान एक कर दिया। सवाल पर सवाल दागे। हम बार बार कहते रहे कि इस परिवर्तन का कारण परिवर्तन की इच्छा के अलावा कुछ भी नहीं है, पर किसी ने एक न सुनी। शाम तक जो कहानी प्रचलित हो गई थी उसके हिसाब से इस बदलाव का मुख्य कारण हमारी कंजूसी और अमरीकियों की चाँद पर बस्ती बसाने की इच्छा की तरह बढ़ती हुई महंगाई को बताया गया था। जब बात हमारे पास तक पहुँची तब तब तक उसने ब्रह्मज्ञान का रूप धारण कर लिया था।

मामला समझ के बिल्कुल बाहर था। हमने कुहनी घुटने पर और ठोड़ी हथेली पर टिका कर देर तक इस पहेली को हल करने का प्रयत्न किया कि हमारी कंजूसी और बाज़ार की महंगाई फ्रेंचकट रखने का कारण कैसे हो सकती हैं। जब सिर के बाल तक इस गुत्थी को सुलझाने का प्रयत्न करते हुए दुखने लगे तब जाकर हमने सच्चे ब्रह्मजिज्ञासु की तरह अपने ज्ञानी मित्रों की शरण में जाने का निर्णय किया और गये भी। उनसे जो कहानी पता चली वह इस प्रकार थी -

हम यनि शुक्लजी दाढ़ी बनवाने के लिए नाई की दूकान पर गए थे। हमेशा की तरह घर से चलते हुए, श्रीमतीजी ने दाढ़ी - बनवाई के आठ रुपये हमारी जेब में डाल दिए थे। एक भी पैसा फालतू न था। दूकान पर जाकर पता लगा कि नाई ने

दाढ़ी बनाने के रेट आठ से बढ़ाकर दस रुपये कर दिए हैं। हमें असमंजस की स्थिति में पाकर नाई ने सलाह दी कि आठ रुपये की दाढ़ी तो अभी बनवा ली जाए और दो रुपये की फिर कभी। हमारे इसरार करने पर भी उसने हमारे पुराने ट्रैक रिकार्ड को देखते हुए दो रुपये का काम उधारी पर करने से साफ इंकार कर दिया। मरते क्या न करते, उसकी बात माननी ही पड़ी।

तो ये जो फ्रेंचकट दिखाई दे रही है, वह दो रुपये की बची हुई दाढ़ी है।

मुझे यह मानने में कोई ऐतराज नहीं है कि मैं तो छोटा सा नाचीज़ प्राणी हूँ। इतना ज़रूर है कि कागज़ की सात तहों के भीतर सहेजकर रखे हुए मेरे ब्लेड में अभी भी थोड़ी धार बाकी है। कहने को कोई कुछ भी कहे और सोचने को कोई कुछ भी सोचे, लेकिन सच यह है कि मैं किसी नाई की मेहरबानियों का मोहताज़ नहीं हूँ जो दो रुपयों की छूट के बदले मुझे फ्रेंचकट रखने पर मजबूर कर देगा। दाढ़ी रखी है तो अपनी मर्ज़ी से रखी है। जिस दिन मन होगा उस दिन पहला मौका मिलते ही अपनी फ्रेंचकट दाढ़ी को मूँड डालूँगा।

मेरे इतिहास का फैलाव कुछ मिनटों से ज़्यादा मैं है भी नहीं। बहुत हुआ तो कुछ घण्टों में मेरी और मेरी फ्रेंचकट की दास्तान को भुला दिया जाएगा। पर, ऐ यहाँ वहाँ चिपकी फ्रेंचकट दाढ़ियों! तुम्हारे सावधान होने का समय आ गया है। तुम अपने को जो चाहे मानो, जमाना तुम्हारी कीमत केवल दो रुपये आँकने लगा है।

गुस्सा

उमा शंकर गोस्वामी

मुझे समझ नहीं आ रहा,
जब मेरे चारों ओर खुशी है,
तो मैं उदास क्यों हूँ?
जब गा रहे मेरे आस पास सब लोग हैं,
मातम क्यों मना रहा हूँ मैं,
क्या पागल हो रहा हूँ मैं?
दिमाग में भरा मेरा गुस्सा है,
दिल में भरा वह विद्रोह है,
तन में जल रही यह आग है,
आँखों में आँसुओं के बादल क्यों हैं?
जब मुझे अपना गुस्सा दिखाना है,
मानता कोई क्यों नहीं मुझे?
अलग नहीं हूँ मैं,
हाथ तुम्हारे भी हैं, मेरे भी,
पैर तुम्हारे भी हैं, मेरे भी,
दिल तुम्हारा भी है, मेरा भी,
इंसान तुम भी हो, मैं भी,
पर हूँ क्यों मैं इसके बावजूद जुदा?
दे दो तुम मुझे अपना जवाब,
मत तड़पाओ मुझे, झेल चुका हूँ बहुत,
सब बेकाबू है, किया किसने यह जादू है,
दिलाओ मत गुस्सा मुझे,
बनते बड़े हो तुम डरपोक, वीर,
आओ मेरे सामने, दूँगा मैं सबको चीर।

चीख

प्रतीक अग्रवाल

उसकी चीख अभी तक मेरे कानों में गूँजती है,
जिसके लिए मैंने आवाज़ नहीं उठाई,
चाहता तो था, पर हिम्मत ही जुटा नहीं पाया।
तेरह साल, तेरह हफ्ते और तेरह दिन पहले,
एक सुनसान सड़क पर चल रहा था मैं,
कोस रहा था इस दुनिया के नियमों को,
जिसके पथ पर चलने से मैंने सिर्फ खोया ही था।
ज़िन्दगी के इस बेरहम मोड़ पर,
सिर्फ कदमों की आवाज़ साथ थी -खट...खट...खट...
और तभी मेरा अकेलापन बाँटने को,
एक चीख मेरी ज़िन्दगी का हिस्सा बनी।
मैं खुश होता अगर वो चीख ज़िन्दगी में आती ही नहीं,
या मुझे वो चीख सुनाई ही नहीं देती,
या मैं उस चीख की तरफ ही न जाता।
पर, मैं गया और वो चीख आई,
आई और अपने साथ एक तूफान लाई,
ऐसा तूफान जिसने मेरी ज़िन्दगी में कुछ भी नहीं छोड़ा।
शहर के बेबस कोने में उस लड़की को देखा था मैंने,
उसकी मासूम और डरी आँखें, माथे की कसी रेखाएँ,
पसीने से चपटे बाल,
और वो दर्द भरी मदद माँगती लम्बी चीख,
आज भी याद है मुझे।
और याद है उसकी लाचारी खुद को उन चार भेड़ियों से
बचाने जंग में,
जिन्होंने न उसकी चीखें सुनी और न उसकी लाचारी देखी।
पर, मैंने तो सुना भी और देखा भी,
तब भी मैंने आवाज़ नहीं उठाई,
लड़की चीख रही थी और उन चार हैवानों से डरा मैं,
वहाँ खड़ा सब चुप-चाप देख रहा था।
लड़की का चेहरा आज भी नींद में काँपता छोड़ जाता है।
वह मासूमियत एकदम मेरी बेटी जैसी,
वह डर उसकी आँखों में आज भी साफ दिखाई देता है,
और वो मदद की आशा जिससे मैंने आँखें फेर लीं।
खुद के लिए इतनी बार लड़ा हूँ
पर उस रात मैं बुज़दिल, दूसरों के लिए लड़ता हुआ डर गया।
मैं देवी का भक्त हूँ, पर उस रात,
मैं विश्वासघाती उसकी ही रक्षा करते डर गया।
दुनिया के नियमों को रोज़ कोसता हूँ,
पर उस रात, मैं ढोंगी स्वयं उन्हीं पर चल पड़ा।
वहाँ से बिना कुछ बोले मैं घर की ओर चलने लगा,
कुछ देर तक उसकी चीखें सुनाई दी,
पर फिर उसकी चीखों ने भी उसे धोखा दे दिया।
अगले दिन अखबार में उस वारदात की खबर पढ़ी,
पहले तो विश्वास न हुआ,
फिर एक और बार पढ़ी, फिर एक और बार.....
कितनी बार भी पढ़ता, हकीकत तो बदल नहीं सकता था,
लिखा था - लड़की की ज़बरदस्ती में मौत,
चार पकड़े गए हैं, एक अभी तक गायब और गुमनाम है।

सोचा न था!

सैफ अली

सोचा न था कि कभी ऐसा हो जाएगा,
एक तमन्ना पूरी होने के कारण मुझसे,
इतना कुछ छिन जाएगा।
ए खुदा, तू लाजवाब है।
कुछ देने के बाद,
छीन लिया तूने मेरा पूरा संसार।
अकेला हो गया हूँ मैं, बिलकुल अकेला,
पता नहीं तूने मेरे साथ ऐसा खेल क्यूँ खेला।

अमानत में खयानत

यश अग्रवाल

ऐ मनुष्य, जिस रत्न को पूर्वजों ने सालों तक संभाला, उसे
तूने गिरवी रख डाला। तुझ पर हाथ रख कर जो पृथ्वी कहती
- मेरा लाल, तू कृतघ्न, बन गया उसी काल। जिसका सालों
तक तू करता रहा गुणगान, चढ़ा दिया तूने उसी का बलिदान।
हे मानुस, तूने यह क्या कर डाला - जहाँ रहते थे प्रभु वहीं पर
बहा दिया नाला। जिसकी जपता तू सारे दिन माला, कर दिया
उसी का दामन काला। जिससे तू लेता है आहार, उसी पर कर
दिया तूने प्रहार। जहाँ लगता था सावन का मेला, वहाँ तूने
कचरा-कूड़ा धकेला। हे मानुस, तूने यह क्या कर डाला, जिस
थाली में खायी उसी में छेद कर डाला। जिस पवित्र धारा में
करता था तू स्नान, बना दिया उसे ही कूड़ा-दान। जो कल तक
करता था जाप, आज कर रहा केवल पाप। बरसों लगायी
जिससे सुविधाओं की आस, आज क्यों निकाल रहा है उस पर
भड़ास। हे मानुस, तूने यह क्या कर डाला, जिसकी करनी थी
रक्षा, उसी का कत्ल कर डाला।

माँ

मुदित अग्रवाल

भगवान का दूज़ा रूप है माँ,
उसके लिए दे देंगे जाँ।
हमको मिलता जीवन उनसे,
कदमों में है स्वर्ग जिनके,
संस्कार वह हमें सिखलाती,
अच्छे बुरे का फर्क बताती।
हमारी गलतियों को सुधारती,
हम पर प्यार बरसाती।
तबीयत अगर हो जाए खराब,
रात-भर जागती रहती,
माँ बिन जीवन है अधूरा,
खाली खाली, सूना सूना,
भर देती जीवन, देकर सपन सलोना।
पेट हमारा पहले भरती,
स्वयं बाद में खाती।
हमारी खुशी में खुश हो जाती,
हमारे दुःख में, आँसू बहाती,
कितने खुशनसीब हैं हम,
पास हमारे, हमारी माँ है।

भारत राष्ट्र और बाधक परिस्थितियाँ

सनत कुमार ठाकुर

जब तक आम ज़रूरतें जैसे बिजली, पानी मकान और सड़क जैसी चीज़ें आम जनता के पास नहीं हो जाती, तब तक यहाँ कुछ नया करने के बारे में सोचा भी नहीं जा सकता है।

भारतवासी जब अपने बीते कल को याद करते हैं तो उनका सर फख्र से ऊँचा हो जाता है। इतनी धनी और गहन संस्कृति समूचे संसार में किसी राष्ट्र की नहीं होगी जितनी भारत की है। भारत की मिट्टी पर ही अशोक, चंद्रगुप्त प्रथम तथा द्वितीय, अकबर, महाराणा प्रताप और न जाने कितने शूरवीर योद्धाओं ने जन्म लिया। हज़ारों साल पुरानी सिंधु घाटी की सभ्यता से भारत की प्रमाणित शुरुआत मानी जाती है पर लाखों के अनुसार भारत तो हज़ारों सालों से है।

भारत दुनिया का दूसरा सबसे तेज़ विकास करने वाला देश है और दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा प्रजातंत्र है। आज़ादी के बासठ सालों में अनगिनत बाधाओं के होने पर भी इतनी प्रगति शायद ही किसी राष्ट्र ने की होगी। सोने की चिड़िया कहलाने वाले इस देश के विकास को अच्छी तरह समझने के लिए ज़रूरी है कि पहले इस देश के विकास में बाधक परिस्थितियों को समझा जाए। यह सच है कि इस राष्ट्र के तेज़ विकास में अनेक बाधक परिस्थितियाँ हैं।

भारतवर्ष या भारतवासियों को जो सम्मान दुनिया से मिलना चाहिये वो अभी नहीं मिलता है। हमारे देश को अन्दर ही अन्दर खोखला करने वाली धोखाधड़ी, लाल फीताशाही, घूसखोरी और जाली मुद्रा का बढ़ता संकट भारत के विकास के लिये बहुत ही हानिकारक है। इन मुश्किलों को एक रात में हल नहीं किया जा सकता। इनके लिये भारतीयों और सरकार को एक जुट होकर ठोस कदम उठाने होंगे।

दूसरी बाधा भारत के अपने प्रशासन में है। एक सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार साठ प्रतिशत नेता साठ साल से ऊपर के हैं। आयु का मुख्य परिणाम उनके जोश और जिज्ञासा से हीन व्यवहार से पता चलता है। हमें संसद में नये विचारों वाले युवा और अनुभवशील नेता, दोनों की सामान ज़रूरत है। आज के युग में अगर प्रगति करते रहना है तो नये युग की सोच के साथ समझौता करना पड़ेगा हालाँकि हालिया चुनावों के बाद कांग्रेस ने कई नये नेताओं को जगह दी है, लेकिन अब तक वह स्थिति नहीं आई है जिसे संतोषजनक कहा जा सके।

मेरे मुताबिक भारत की प्रगति में जो सबसे बड़ी बाधा है वह है मूलभूत ढाँचागत सुविधाओं की कमी। जब तक आम ज़रूरतें जैसे बिजली, पानी मकान और सड़क जैसी चीज़ें आम जनता के पास नहीं हो जाती, तब तक यहाँ कुछ नया करने के बारे में सोचा भी नहीं जा सकता है।

भारत की अधिकतर आबादी गाँवों में रहती है। गाँवों को विकसित करने और वहाँ के लोगों में जागरूकता फैलाने से भारत को ज़्यादा फायदा होगा। समझने के बात है कि जितने विकसित हमारे शहर हैं उतने ही विकसित अगर गाँव भी हो

जायें तो लोग गाँवों को छोड़ कर शहर नहीं आयेंगे और साथ ही समूचे राष्ट्र की एक साथ एक जैसी प्रगति होगी।

भारत अभी भी जिस रफ्तार से विकसित देशों से बराबरी करने की ओर बढ़ रहा है, वह भी बहुत बड़ी बात है क्योंकि जिन देशों से भारत घिरा है, वे शत्रु न भी हों पर, मित्र तो बिल्कुल नहीं ही हैं। हमारे देश के पश्चिम का एक देश और उसके दल के अन्य गुर्गे राष्ट्र तो अपनी प्रगति से ज़्यादा दूसरे राष्ट्र के तबाही में ही अपनी सारी ताकत खो देते हैं। अमेरिका जैसे अन्य बड़े देश यह नहीं ही चाहेंगे कि कोई राष्ट्र उनसे ज़्यादा प्रगति करे, इसलिये वह उन्हें नीचे करने के लिये सारी कोशिश करेंगे। उनके लिए अब चीन को रोकना तो असम्भव है, इसी कारण वह पाकिस्तान की मदद कर भारत को दबाना चाहते हैं। हमें कूटनैतिक रूप से मजबूत बनना होगा। दूसरों की चतुराई का जवाब चतुराई से ही देना होगा।

किसी भी राष्ट्र का विकास तभी सम्भव है जब सरकार को जनता और जनता को सरकार का सहयोग मिले। इनमें से किसी एक के भी नहीं होने से दूसरे पर बहुत अधिक भार आ जाता है। रास्ता मुश्किल पड़े ही दिखाई देता हो पर एक पगडंडी है तो सही जो ऊपर की ओर बढ़ती जाती है। हमें उसी को पकड़े रखना है।

न जाने कहाँ?

सिद्धांत गुप्ता

न जाने कहाँ चला जा रहा हूँ मैं,
इन राहों पर,
इस अनजाने पथ पर,
न जाने कहाँ चला जा रहा हूँ मैं।
खोज रहा हूँ अपना लक्ष्य,
देख रहा हूँ अपने साथ,
कभी आते तो कभी चले जाते लोग,
कुछ पल का साथ लेकिन
फिर भी अकेला रह जाता हूँ।
निकला था सालों पहले एक लक्ष्य की खोज में,
फिर आ गया इस पथ पर चलते चलते,
सोचता हूँ कि कहाँ हूँ मैं अब,
पर फिर भी चलता रहता हूँ, अथक,
फिर समझ में आया,
कि यह पथ ही तो मेरी ज़िन्दगी है,
पता नहीं कि मैं अपने लक्ष्य पर पहले पहुँचूँगा,
या पथ ही पहले खत्म हो जाएगा।
न जाने कहाँ चला जा रहा हूँ मैं,
एक नए अनजान पथ पर,
आशा की डोर पकड़े।

दिखावा

चैतन्य फतेहपुरिया

मेरे पास एक गाड़ी है, अरमानी के कपड़े हैं और तो और आधुनिक टच स्क्रीन फोन भी। आज के युग के एक साधारण नागरिक की हालत कुछ इस प्रकार हो गई है कि दिखावा ही उसकी समाज में पहचान का प्रतीक बन गया है। हम उसे दिखाना चाहते हैं जो हमारे पास है। कई बार ऐसा भी होता है

कि जो हमारे पास हमारा नहीं होता उसे भी हम अपना दिखावा चाहते हैं। दिखावा एक ऐसा भाव है जो हर मनुष्य अपने को दूसरे से अधिक साबित करने के लिए करता है। दिखावा जात-पात में भी कभी कभी भेद-भाव करने का एक माध्यम बन जाता है। इस समाज में अब हालत इतनी बुरी हो गई है कि दिखावा ही लोगों की सोच और दिखावा ही उनकी फितरत बन गई है।

आज के ज़माने में हर कोई अपना नाम करना चाहता है। नाम करने के लिए या प्रसिद्धि पाने के लिए मनुष्य को योग्य होना ज़रूरी है, लेकिन इस योग्यता की लोगों ने कुछ कुछ अलग ही परिभाषा गढ़ ली है। लोग सोचते हैं कि लिवाइस या एडिडास से ही उनकी पहचान बनती है। सच्चाई यह है कि जाने-अनजाने में ऐसे ही लोग दिखावे को बढ़ावा दे रहे हैं। हमारे प्रिय दून स्कूल में भी इसी मुद्दे पर कभी कभी भेद भाव हो जाता है। कोई लडका अगर किसी अंतर्राष्ट्रीय ब्रांड के स्थान पर किसी देशी ब्रांड के जूते पहने तो सारा का सारा वर्ग उसके पीछे इस तरह पड़ जाता है कि कुछ दिनों में उसे किसी बड़े विदेशी ब्रांड के जूते खरीदने ही पड़ जाते हैं। अगर ऐसा न हो तो उसके अपने ही दोस्त उसे चिढ़ाने की कगार पर आ जाते हैं। इस दिखावे के कारण आज के मनुष्य की योग्यताएँ छिप रही हैं। वह सोचता है कि दिखावा ही उसके लिए सब कुछ हासिल करने की तरकीब है, लेकिन यह मुनासिब नहीं। जीवन मेहनत के सीमेंट से ही बनता है न कि दिखावे कि रेत से। दिखावा मनुष्य को खुद की एक गलत तस्वीर दिखाता है और मेहनत उसे एक सही राह दिखाते हुए उसे नेक बनाती है।

छोटा या बड़ा

श्रेय राज कपूर

आपने अपने जीवन में कभी कभी कुछ ऐसी बातें महसूस की होंगी जो आप के अनुसार स्वभाविक होंगी। इन में से एक यह भी होगा कि बड़े (यानि कि बलवान या फिर उम्र में बड़े) अपनी ही प्रजाति के छोटे लोगों को बेकार मानते हैं और उनके साथ बुरा व्यवहार भी करते हैं। अगर आप अपने आस पास नज़रें दौड़ाएंगे तो आपको मालूम होगा कि कितने ही कनिष्ठ छात्र (जूनियर्स) अपने वरिष्ठ छात्रों (सीनियर्स) के आगे आने से डरते हैं। इसका कारण कोई राज़ तो है नहीं फिर भी बताए देता हूँ, उन्होंने इसका अवश्य अनुभव कर लिया होता है कि उनसे बड़े उनके छोटे होने का फायदा उठाकर कहीं उन्हें अपना कोई काम न दें।

मैं उम्र (और लम्बाई) में अपने सहपाठियों से छोटा हूँ। लोग मेरे इस शारीरिक बचपन का कई बार फायदा भी उठाया करते हैं। मैं शायद मार खाने के डर से उनके द्वारा दिए गए काम सही तरह से पूरा भी कर देता हूँ, लेकिन इस डर में मैंने अपने लिये एक ऐसा पर्यावरण भी बना लिया जिसमें मैं अपने आप को श्रेष्ठ मानता हूँ। खुद के साथ लोगों के द्वारा किये बरताव ने मुझे सोचने समझने का नया तरीका सिखाया। अब मेरा विचार इतना बदल गया है कि कलतक मैं जिनकी खिल्ली उड़ाता था या घृणा करता था आज उन्हीं लोगों के लिये मैंने अपने दिल में एक विशेष स्थान बना लिया है। लोग अच्छा व्यवहार सिर्फ उन्हीं से करते हैं जिनसे या तो उन्हें कोई काम होता है या फिर जो उनसे सम्बंध रखते हैं, लेकिन चीज़ों

में अपने मतलब को देखने की यह भावना ठीक नहीं। मैं चाहे छोटा हूँ लेकिन मैं जो कर सकता हूँ वह अन्य लोगों को मुश्किल मालूम पड़ता है। मैं सोचता हूँ कि चाहे कोई भी हो - छोटा या फिर बड़ा, सब की इज़्ज़त एक अनुसार ही करनी चाहिये क्योंकि हर वस्तु या व्यक्ति का अपना महत्व ही है।

मैं सोचता हूँ कि मैं चाहे छोटा क्यों ना हूँ लेकिन मेरी ज़रूरत वहाँ पता चलती है जहाँ मेरी रोशनी नहीं पड़ती।

पल में परलै होयगी

रितेश शिन्दे

*तुम हँसते हुए आग पर चल सकते हो,
तुम चाँद से आगे भी निकल सकते हो।
यदि ठीक तरह शक्ति का उपयोग करो,
तुम समय की धारा को बदल सकते हो।*

जीवन में कुछ क्षण ऐसे होते हैं जिनके खोने पर मनुष्य का जीवन कठिन हो जाता है। उन्हीं क्षणों का सही उपयोग हो तो मनुष्य अच्छे काम कर समाज पर छाप डाल जाएगा, अपना नाम अमर कर जाएगा।

*'रात गँवाई सोय कर, दिवस गँवायो खाय।
हीरा जन्म अमोल था, कौड़ी बदले जाय।'*

कबीर का यह कथन सत्य ही है। जो मनुष्य समय का सदुपयोग नहीं कर सकता, उसका जीवन व्यर्थ ही है।

समय के सदुपयोग से मैं यह नहीं कह रहा कि हमें पढाई ही करनी चाहिए बल्कि यह कह रहा हूँ कि हमें खाली पलों का उपयोग विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में अपने विकास के लिये करना चाहिए चाहे वह संगीत हो, खेल या कोई कला ही हो।

परिश्रम और समय का सदुपयोग ही सफलता की कुंजी है। आलस सारी मुसीबतों की जड़ है।

*काल करे सो आज कर आज करे सो अब।
पल में परलै होयगी बहुरि करेगा कब॥*

समय के छोटे से छोटे भाग को भी बर्बाद नहीं करना चाहिए। जो अपना काम भविष्य के हाथों में छोड़ देता है वही सबसे बड़ा मूर्ख है।

अगर दून स्कूल का ही उदाहरण लिया जाए तो हममें से कुछ ही हैं जो रोज़ाना सुबह पी.टी. के लिए उठना पसन्द करते हैं, लेकिन शायद इस बात पर किसी ने आज तक गौर नहीं किया कि यही पी. टी. हमें स्वस्थ रखती है और हमारे व्यवहार को अनुशासित करती है।

सारा संसार समय के अधीन है। सूर्य, चाँद, तारे सभी समय पर दिखते और छिप जाते हैं। जब प्रकृति भी समय की पाबन्द है तो हम क्यों ना हों?

खाली बैठना, गप्पे हाँकना मनुष्य की बरबादी का प्रतीक हैं। इसी लिए कहा जाता है कि - 'खाली दिमाग शैतान का घर है। जीवन में काफी लोग सफलता के पीछे भागते हैं, अपने विकास के पीछे नहीं। मैं सोचता हूँ कि विकास और सफलता की प्रक्रिया पर हमें अधिक ध्यान देना चाहिये, जो समय के सदुपयोग के माध्यम से ही ठीक हो सकेगी। काबिलियत के पीछे दौड़ोगे, सफलता झक मार कर पीछे आएगी।

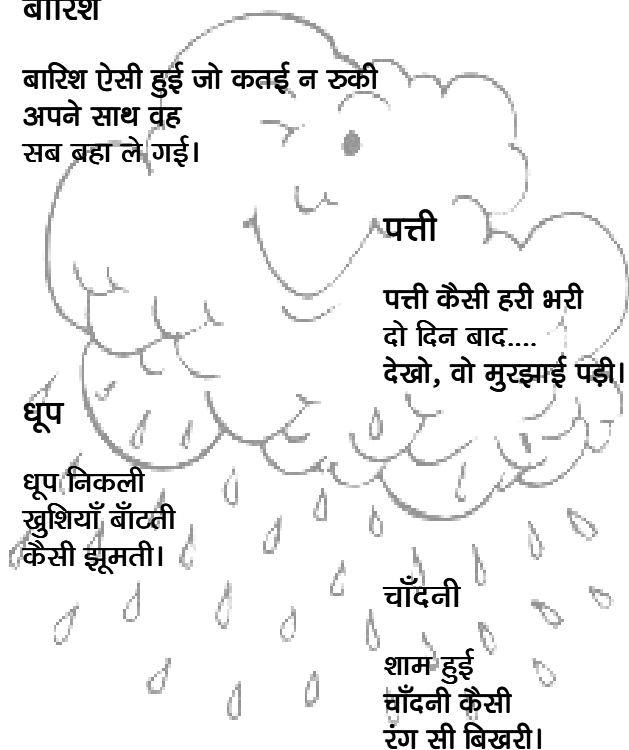
जीवन में समय का भी काफी महत्व है। जिस प्रकार धनुष से निकला तीर, मुख से निकले बोल वापस नहीं आ सकते उसी प्रकार बीता हुआ पल दोबारा पाया नहीं जा सकता। हमें बीते हुए पलों की चिन्ता छोड़, वर्तमान में जीना चाहिए। समय तो अपनी रफ्तार से चलेगा ही, हमें समय का सही तरह उपयोग अपने मुताबिक ही करना होगा। जीवन के मधुर रस का भोग करने के लिये समय की महत्ता को समझना काफी ज़रूरी है। अगर हम अपना काम सही ढंग से करें, नियमों का पालन करें तो समय हमारे पीछे भागेगा हम समय के पीछे नहीं।

कुछ छोटी (हाइकू) कविताएँ

वल्लवी शुक्ला

बारिश

बारिश ऐसी हुई जो कतई न रुकी
अपने साथ वह
सब बहा ले गई।



बिजली

बादल में बिजली ऐसे चमकी
जैसे माँ शाम ढले
अपनी ट्यूबलाइट ऑन करे।

प्लास्टिक

सुधांशु अग्रवाल

अगर आप अपने आस पास की चीज़ों का ध्यान रखते हैं तो आप को यह बात भी मालूम ही होगी की आज ज़्यादातर चीज़ें प्लास्टिक की थैलियों या प्लास्टिक की परतों में लिपटी हुई आती हैं लेकिन जीवन को आसान बना देने वाली ये चीज़ें क्या हमारे पर्यावरण के लिए ठीक हैं?

प्लास्टिक हमारे जीवन को आसान बनाता है लेकिन पर्यावरण को इससे जो नुकसान पहुँच रहा वह एक चिंताजनक रूप में सामने आ रहा है। इसके बनाने में कोयले और तेल का इस्तेमाल किया जाता है जो कार्बन डाई आक्साइड और अनेक ग्रीनहाउस गैसों का उत्पादन करता है जो इस धरती को गरम भी कर रही हैं। इन गैसों के कारण ही ग्लोबल वार्मिंग होती है जो धरती के वातावरण के गरम होने की प्रक्रिया है, जिसके कारण तापमान बढ़ रहा है और पर्यावरण में गंभीर बदलाव नज़र आ रहे हैं। गैसों के उत्पादन के साथ साथ इसे बनाने वाले कारखाने इतना कूड़ा कचड़ा भी निकालते हैं जिसको नदियों में डाल दिया जाता है और बहते पानी के साथ ये ज़हरीले पदार्थ सभी को नुकसान पहुंचाते हैं। धरती इसे हज़म नहीं कर पाती और इसका डीकम्पोजीशन नहीं हो पाता जिसके कारण यह जैसी हैं लाखों साल तक ऐसी ही रहेंगी।

प्लास्टिक के इस्तेमाल के साथ आती है इसे सही ढंग से इस्तेमाल करने की ज़िम्मेदारी। हम इसका प्रयोग तो करने हैं लेकिन इस में इतने लापरवाह हैं कि हम इन्हें इधर उधर ही फेंक देते हैं। आपने कभी न कभी प्लास्टिक के थैले कभी किसी पेड़ में लटके और कभी किसी नाली में अटके तो देखे ही होंगे। गाय भैंस कभी कभी प्लास्टिक की थैलियाँ जाने अनजाने में खाद्य पदार्थ समझ कर खा लेती हैं जिसके कारण वह मर जाते हैं और फूड चेन में ज़हर आ जाता है।

प्लास्टिक से कैंसर भी हो सकता है। प्लास्टिक की बोतलें इस्तेमाल करने से प्लास्टिक पानी में आ जाता है जो हमारे मुँह से होते हुए हमारे शरीर में जाता है।

प्लास्टिक की समस्या की कारण कई देशों ने काफी सारे कदम भी उठाए हैं। मैं सोचता हूँ कि हमें भी उनकी तरह ही कई कदम उठाने चाहिए और इसके प्रयोग को बंद करना चाहिए।

गणतंत्र: एक विचार

रोहन श्रीराम

बोलने वाले और सुननेवाले संवाद के दो सिरे हैं। जैसे बिना सुनने वालों के बोलने वालों का कोई महत्व नहीं है, वैसे ही बिना प्रजा के नेताओं का कोई स्थान नहीं है। यही बात प्रजा पर लागू होती है। इन ही आदर्शों पर हमारा भारत का गणतंत्र स्थापित है।

भारत दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा गणतंत्र है, लेकिन सच यह है कि आज गणतंत्र गिरने की स्थिति में है। समाज को सही तरह से चलाने में हर इंसान को अपना सहारा देना होता है। पर आज स्थिति यह हो चुकी है कि न तो ही नेता अपना कर्तव्य निभा रहे हैं और न ही जनता। भारत में आज नेता खुद के मुनाफे के लिए ही काम करते हैं। भ्रष्टाचार बढ़ता जा रहा है। जनता के कर का सही इस्तमाल नहीं किया जा रहा है। कल की ही तो बात है जब कामनवेल्थ खेलों से थोड़े दूर पहले एक पारपथ पुल टूटा जिसकी कीमत

पाँच करोड़ थी। क्या आपको लगता है कि जनता का सारा पैसा इस पुल को बनाने के लिए इस्तमाल किया गया होगा या फिर यह पैसा भ्रष्टाचारी नेताओं की जेब में गया होगा।

मैं यह भी कहना चाहता हूँ एक लोकतांत्रिक देश में अधिकार तो है पर जनता सही तरह से इन अधिकारों का पूरा इस्तमाल नहीं कर पाती। यह ही एक प्रमुख कारण है कि भारत में तरक्की उतनी तेज़ी से नहीं आयी है जितनी तेज़ी से आ सकती थी। भ्रष्टाचार को खत्म करने की जगह जनता आज नेताओं के साथ मिलकर भ्रष्टाचार को बढ़ावा दे रही है। लोग भी बस नखरे करते हैं और खुद देश के विकास के लिए काम नहीं करते और, बोलना आसना होता है पर करना मुश्किल। भारत में कोई भी यह बात नहीं समझता है, या फिर समझना चाहता ही नहीं है और दोनों ही स्थितियाँ खतरनाक हैं। नेता लम्बे चौड़े भाषण देते रहते हैं और लोग आलोचनाएँ करते रहते हैं, परन्तु असल में काम कोई नहीं करना चाहता। भारत की अदालतों में करोड़ों केस सालों से लंबित हैं तथा उनके बारे में कुछ नहीं किया जा रहा है। भारत में लोग आलसी हो गए हैं और दिल से काम करने का किसी को शौक नहीं है। जो काम करता है वह भी सिर्फ रागात्मक सोच के साथ करता है।

बोलने वाले के पास कोई सुनने वाला नहीं और अगर कोई सुनने वाला हो भी तो उसका कोई फायदा नहीं क्योंकि वह सिर्फ अपने फायदे के लिए बोलता है। नेता और जनता दोनों स्वार्थी हो गए हैं जिनकी वजह से भारत की उन्नति पर असर पड़ रहा है। नेता सिर्फ लोगों की उम्मीदों झूठे वायदे के रूप में बढ़ाते हैं और जनता बेवकूफों के तरह उनके जाल में फस जाती है। अंत में मैं सिर्फ यह कहना चाहूँगा कि हमारे देश के पलटते हुए गणतंत्र को बचने के लिए हमें भ्रष्टाचार का अंत करना होगा, और नेता व जनता को एक दूसरे के हाथ में हाथ मिलाये काम करना होगा, ताकि भारत आसमान छू ले।

प्रौद्योगिकी

प्रबल जिंदल, वरुण गुप्ता, अक्षय शरण

प्रौद्योगिकी - यह एक ऐसा शब्द है, जो शायद आज की दुनिया में सबसे महत्वपूर्ण है। यह शब्दकोष में पाया जाने वाला एक शब्द मात्र ही नहीं है, बल्कि अब तो प्रौद्योगिकी एक क्रांति का प्रतीक है। आज की दुनिया प्रौद्योगिकी पर पूरी तरह से निर्भर है। अगर प्रौद्योगिकी न हो तो शायद दुनिया न चल पाए। जैसा श्री ईडियट नामक फिल्म में किसी ने कहा था कि पेंट की जिप से लेकर एटम बम तक, आज हमारा काम प्रौद्योगिकी पर अवश्य निर्भर है। जैसे हम प्रौद्योगिकी पर निर्भर करते हैं प्रौद्योगिकी भी अनेक चीज़ों पर निर्भर करती है।

सर्वप्रथम, गणित के विषय पर नज़र डालें तो अनेक सवालों में प्रौद्योगिकी का ही प्रयोग होता है। चाहे हम प्रौद्योगिकी से जुड़े किसी प्रश्न का उत्तर ढूँढ़ें या अबैकस और कैलकुलेटर की मदद से किसी समस्या को सुलझाएँ, तो हमें यह ज्ञात होता है कि तकनीक ज़िन्दगी के हर मोड़ पर मौजूद है। जोड़-घटा आदि सब कुछ प्रौद्योगिकी पर ही आधारित है। इस

तरह गणित में, प्रौद्योगिकी एक अहम् किरदार निभाती है। चाहे इमारत बनाने की तकनीक हो या मिसाइल गणित हर जगह है। हमारा भारत अपनी कला के लिए विश्व भर में मशहूर है, और आश्चर्य की बात नहीं है कि इसमें प्रौद्योगिकी का इस्तमाल किया जाता है।

चाहे वह साहित्य हो, नृत्य या संगीत हो, प्रौद्योगिकी तो शामिल होती ही है। कला को प्रदर्शित करने के लिए हर आदमी की अलग तकनीक होती है और इस कला के निर्माण में भी। हर एक व्यक्ति की सोचने की क्षमता अलग होती है तो इसी वजह से कला भिन्न-भिन्न रंगों में पाई जाती है। मनुष्य इस समाज का एक अहम् अंश है। इसकी वजह से ही उसकी अपनी संस्कृति होती है एवं अपने संस्कार होते हैं। यह जीवन का नियम है कि हर काम किसी न किसी कानून-कायदे पर चलता है। इसके चलते प्रौद्योगिकी भी कुछ नैतिक और कानूनी मानदंडों से अलग नहीं है। पहली बात यह है कि वह प्रौद्योगिकी समाज में स्वीकार की जाती है या नहीं, दूसरी यह कि उस कार्य का परिणाम कैसा है। इस संसार का सारा काम तो मनुष्य के मन से ही चलता है। इसलिए हमें किसी भी व्यक्ति का मनोविज्ञान पता होना चाहिए ताकि हम उस प्रौद्योगिकी के उद्देश्य को समझ पाएं जिसे उसने बनाया है। पर सच्चाई यह भी है कि तकनीक हमारे और हमारे समाज तथा पर्यावरण के लिए हानिकारक होती है। अंत में यही बात सामने आती है कि प्रौद्योगिकी एक अच्छी चीज़ है लेकिन जब तक अपनी सीमा में है, इसका गलत इस्तमाल नहीं करना चाहिए।

वर्षा हो रही थी

शिवांक सिंह

वर्षा हो रही थी,
तुम छाता लिए,
मेरे आगे से गुज़री।
मैं सोच ही रहा था कहाँ जाऊँ,
जब नज़र तुम पर पड़ी।
मैं भीग रहा हूँ, तुम सूखी हो,
तुम छाते में आने को कहती हो,
मैं शर्माकर न्यौता कबूल कर लेता हूँ।
छाता अब मेरे ऊपर है,
लेकिन मैं भीग रहा हूँ।
एक अजीब सी शांति छा चुकी है।
ऐसा लगता है कि,
तुम कुछ कहना चाहती हो,
लेकिन कह नहीं रही।
मैं ठिठक कर 'हेल्लो' कहता हूँ,
शायद बात आरम्भ करने की,
तुम्हारी मुश्किल को
मैंने आसान बना दिया।
बात आगे बढ़ जाती है,
हमारे बीच की दूरी कम हो रही है।
मेरी धड़कने बढ़ रही हैं,
तुम भी असहज हो।

साथ चलते चलते काफी वक्त हो चुका है,
तुम्हारी साँस मेरी गर्दन पर महसूस हो रही है।
मैं भीग रहा हूँ।

What are *you* doing for the rest of your life?

Namrata Pandey, Head, Careers Information, Education and Guidance Department

In 2010, the School has begun the process of developing its careers curriculum to meet the needs of each and every boy as he looks ahead to the rest of his professional and personal life. The curriculum this term has been aimed at boys from A-SC form.

Below are some of the highlights:

1. The department has been renamed the Careers Information, Education and Guidance Department. This is because informing, educating and guiding each boy through the myriad of choices in a professional and knowledgeable manner is based on the best advice for each individual boy. It is non-biased and is at the very core of 'best practice' in careers guidance.
2. The department's focus in guidance for the boys is research and evidence based. The guidance is also focused with university choice, on the concept of 'the right fit' for each and every boy. To ensure that the best choices are made for each boy, the School is developing a careers curriculum to develop the boys' research and planning skills. **Full participation by each and every boy in the research process is the key to effective and appropriate decisions and choices made.**
3. The department has been re-located to the library with a central modern equipped office and a resource library which will be further developed as part of the School's ongoing commitment to careers provision.
4. The appointment of Dr Harold Snedcoff, to the department as specialist US university adviser and his regular visits to Doon to work with boys from A form in groups and on a one-to-one basis. With his personal experience at Brown, Dr Snedcoff brings an Ivy League perspective to the US college process.
5. The further development of Oxbridge preparation from S form onwards by the Headmaster as well as advice and preparation for Russell Group universities in the UK.
6. Enhanced provision for professional interview training for all SC form boys.
7. A dramatic increase in visits from top liberal arts colleges, Ivy League representation from UPENN in the US, Russell Group Universities including University of St Andrews and University of Exeter in the UK, Canadian visits including University of British Columbia and University of Toronto and Les Roches International School of Hotel Management, Switzerland and Glion Institute of Higher Education, Switzerland.
8. The Canadian Trade Commission organised a visit of key Canadian universities in May. The Canadian High Commission organised a fair for Doscors featuring twenty top universities in Delhi.
9. Doon has become a SAT centre enabling boys to sit for SAT Reasoning and SAT Subject tests.
10. Doon has also become a Cambridge Assessment Centre which enables our boys to take the ELAT and TSA Exam in school.
11. New visits from universities have also included Hong Kong University, ranked No 1 in Asia for the second year in succession and return visits from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.
12. Doon hosted the CIS US American Fair for the first time welcoming over thirty universities including Tufts, Duke and Vassar.
13. I have visited leading universities in Singapore and in Madrid, Spain.

Feedback from boys from the batch of 2010 has reinforced the School's advice. From Singapore, boys including Aruj Shukla, Shrey Gaurishankar, Tushar Aggarwal and Vibhas Pahuja spoke to the Headmaster at an Old Boys event in Singapore in August, with the words, 'we thought we would be here for a nice time. The work culture is phenomenal!' The Careers department's response 'You don't say! We did tell you!' In India, boys have been accepted by top universities. Rishi Sood and Melvin Michael are at St Stephen's College, Archit Kumar and Siddhant Mittal are at SRCC, Varun Srivastava is at National Law School, Bhopal and Pranjal Singh at National Law College, Bangalore. Nikhil Sardana is studying Business at Hindu College with his music as a distinct advantage.

From the US comes news from Aaditya Gupta at University of Berkeley, California, who has reported to Dr Snedcoff that the international reputation of his professors has attracted students from Italy to attend the courses at Berkeley. The US features heavily in the destination list this year. Har Naresh Singh is studying Entrepreneurship at Babson College which has an outstanding reputation for entrepreneurship. Vedant Chandra and Aashray Patel are studying at Depauw University, Vishnuu Mallik is studying at University of Minnesota, Arjun Kapur is studying at Claremont McKenna College, Harsh Vardhan is at Purdue, Ankit Chowdhary, Vinayak Thapliyal and Vijay Karan Kapur are all at University of Michigan and Amitabh Sahai is at University of Virginia. We are represented in the UK by Abhilaksh Lalwani reading English Language and Communication at King's College, London, Mohd. Ashik Salam is reading Law at Cardiff University and Anamitra Chatterjee is reading Business Management at Exeter. Australia, Switzerland and Malaysia are all represented this year.

Winning Essays

Rules are Rules

Vivek Santayana's winning entry in the Bakhle Memorial Essay Prize Test, 2010, wherein he explores the cycle of subversion and the re-establishment of order

Our ready acceptance of the common phrase “rules are meant to be broken” can be attributed to an innate affinity for witticisms and the impetuosity of adolescence. It is because of our youthful recklessness or immaturity that we often harbour a casual disregard for rules, content with claims of great achievers being born outside the rules. However, without descending into a debate on the veracity of such claims, one must consider the notions

A rule is a construct. It is a moral, ethical or social code that an individual is expected to conform to. It may be an unwritten convention, popular belief, constitutional law or mere intuitive wisdom, but it is, in principle, a mandate meant to be followed. Rules are rules: they must be respected and followed.

of rules and subversion. A rule is a construct. It is a moral, ethical or social code that an individual is expected to conform to. It may be an unwritten convention, popular belief, constitutional law or mere intuitive wisdom, but it is, in principle, a mandate meant to be followed. Rules are rules: they must be respected and followed. For any society to function, it is imperative that it be governed by certain rules. Absolute subversion, as a corollary, would lead to absolute lawlessness, and society would degenerate into disorder. Yet subversion is inevitable, as only subversion leads to a reestablishment of order within society.

In order for a society to function, it is imperative that there be in effect certain rules that govern the actions of every individual. While each member of society is granted

liberty, that liberty is curtailed at the point where it transgresses what is due to another individual. Rules ensure that one individual does not trample upon another. This is the principle at the foundation of civil society. A biblical parable to underline this tells us of Moses' ascent to the mount during the first revelation of the Ten Commandments. In his absence, his people, the Children of Israel, gradually yielded to a suspicion that Moses was dead. Bereft of any 'rules', absolute disorder ensued. As Freud initially held, the 'id' must be restrained by a 'superego', or subsequently the subconscious drive by societal conditioning, lest our inherent drive tend towards disorder and chaos.

The word 'chaos' is derived from the Greek myth that the world was created from an abyss of chaos. Drawing from this, order must emerge from chaos and disorder. After returning to his people, Moses punished them by flinging the tablet of the Commandments at them in his rage. Subsequently, order prevailed. Subversion of order is inevitable – as a result of human instinct – and a necessity. Order cannot perpetuate without re-establishing itself through a subversion of disorder. It is a 'carnavalesque' cycle, as Mikhail Bakhtin would discuss. The term 'carnavalesque' was coined

If rules were not broken and laws were not violated, there would be no system of consequences or punishments. Crime and their punishment is merely a demonstration of the power and supremacy of the law.

based on the Rio Carnival. The origin of the theory lay in the ceremony of the Feast of Fools, in which a common peasant is made Don of a castle for a day. He may do as he pleases for the duration, including cohabiting with the wife of the real Don. However, at dawn the following day, he would be beheaded, signifying a return to order. This revolution is a release of tension within the system of society and its order. In light of such disorder, rules will reassert themselves. Without such intermittent degenerations, the society will collapse, as order will not perpetuate. It is essential that order reassert itself through the subversion of disorder. If rules were not broken and laws were not violated, there would be no system of consequences or punishments. Crime and their punishment is merely a demonstration of the power and supremacy of the law.

Hence, notions of law and order and their subversion – rules and their breaking – are cyclic. They compound each other. A rule is a rule, but it will only be followed if it is broken and those that break it are punished. They are part of the same design. There would be no order had there not been chaos. As in Ted Hughes' *Apple Tragedy*, God himself took Adam and Eve to the apple tree, He created the cider that plunged the world into disorder, and He was thoroughly pleased with Himself: order and disorder are part of the same design. It is a rule that rules must be broken so that they can reassert themselves.

The Measure of Happiness

Revant Nayar's entry in the Bakhle Memorial Essay Prize Test, 2010, which secured the second place, in which he measures happiness through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

The burden on my chest starts easing. My stomach feels warm and light. My eyes begin to sparkle, my face begins to glow, and I begin to walk with a spring in my step. You will probably declare that it is the sensation of 'happiness' that is flooding my being. Yet, this interpretation of happiness is, in my opinion, quite superficial.

What I have described in the previous paragraph is nothing more than a temporary fit of joy. But this pales before the real beauty of what I would call 'true' happiness. If you ask a reductionist about the 'measure of happiness', in a particular person, he might attempt to measure the hormonal secretions of that person, or record his body heat, heartbeat, blood pressure, et cetera, which he would declare to be signs of the 'emotional state' of a human being. Yet, such staunch reductionists are rare, and most people have their own conceptions of happiness, which do not rest on rationality.

The measure of happiness can be somewhat sustained when we consider Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It states that a human being is at a different stage in his hierarchy, according to what gives him happiness. At the base lie people who desire nothing more than food, clothing, medication, et cetera. Then, there are those who desire to be employed and be married as well. But there are people who transcend this as well, and are only 'happy' if they are unique and distinguished individuals. And at the top are those who are engaged in the pursuit of creativity, knowledge or spiritual gratification, in addition to the 'needs' previously mentioned. Note that there are actually not 'needs', they are objectives that people make up their minds to attain, the acquiring of which will give a true sense of elation. They define the limits of different peoples' capacities of being happy. You, I am sure, have transcended the first two stages of this hierarchy and pity those who desire nothing more than basic necessities. You pity them because you have experienced a truer, more vivid shade of happiness. Your life is full of passions and aspirations above the basic ones; it is in the pursuit of these goals, rather than fulfilment, which gives you this happiness.

Platonists have a slightly different way of approaching the subject. According to them, happiness is merely the ability to access the ethereal world of ideals, where for every object or being on earth, there is the 'ideal' object or being, superior and more beautiful in all aspects. Some visualise this as the 'Platonic cave'. According to this notion, ordinary human beings are bound in shackles, and made to face the wall of a cave. There is a light source behind, and certain objects between the light source and the people. They hence only witness the 'shadows' of the true objects, and remain trapped in the dull and gloomy 'shadow world' of physical objects. Yet, there are those philosophers or artists who break free from the chains and experience a much more 'real' world. The extent to which these 'real' objects can be contemplated is the measure of happiness. And truly, those who love to write often find a certain ecstasy in contemplating these ideas, which is not to be found in observing physical things. Even the Greek concept of 'idealization' in Mathematics, which laid the foundation of this field, is due to the creation of abstract ideals.

Speaking of Greeks, one can only imagine their horror and disappointment at the state of civilization today. At that time, the most elite and the rich, as well as the rulers themselves, were philosophers and mathematicians. It was these intellectual activities, the pursuit and creation of thoughts and ideas that imparted true joy. Trade and business was for the slaves and they described cities full of merchants and bankers as 'cities of happy pigs'. 'Happy' carries undertones of sarcasm and refers to the superficial sense of contentment and the shallow sense of triumphs that those who were engaged in such material activities experienced.

You will find that over the course of this essay, I have described the measure of happiness in a rather abstract fashion. Of course, notions such as that of the 'Platonic cave' are mere analogies to the mental activity. But despite there being no concrete backing for these notions, they convinced me. The 'hierarchy of need' has been represented by various thinkers in the past in different forms. Kierkegaard actually linked these to happiness, claiming that the higher the aspirations of the individual (according to the levels laid down in the hierarchy) the greater the happiness. Russell notes, in the *Conquest of Happiness*, that momentary impulses of gratification, due to sexual or other stimuli, do not represent happiness. These wild impulses to do what is termed as 'sinful' actually leave one with a 'sense of sin' and that sucks away all feelings of joy. But even always being 'morally right' does not breed true happiness. According to Wilde, art breeds true happiness, and art is 'not an acquisition of personality and emotion; but an escape from these'. I am sure you too can define 'the measure of happiness in your own way. This is what makes you unique. This is what makes you human. This is what makes you happy.'

Beyond Boundaries

Kanishka Malik, comments on the lack of content on contemporary issues in the *Weeklys* of the past, and how the Board plans to resolve this issue

Going through the previous issues of the *Doon School Weekly*, I noted the lack of content on contemporary affairs. We are all aware of the important national and international events that took place over the past sixty to seventy years, yet there was minimal debate and discussion over them in the *Weekly*.

If we flip through the *Weeklys* of 1965 and 1971, two years when our country was at war, there were no opinions or discussions about the situation and stage the wars had reached. There were no comments on the causes or extent of the war. The only pieces concerned with the war were regarding the achievements of certain ex-Doscocs in the military. Moreover, political events such as the Hindu-Muslim riots over the Babri Masjid in 1992, the declaration of Emer-

gency in 1975, or even the various disputes in Kashmir in the last century were never remarked on. Other important events such as the Green Revolution, nationalization of banks, the Bhopal gas tragedy or the economic liberalization were never commented on at the time of their occurrence either. The only contemporary issue that was discussed to a notable extent (that I came across in my readings) was the Naxal movement in the 1970s.

However, I do not want to be over-judgmental as one cannot visualize the situation just through the *Weekly*. There may have been other fora for discussing contemporary affairs. There was certainly restricted access to such information, in contrast to the situation now. Maybe the School was too young then and was focused on itself, because, through the *Weekly* columns, it is evident that the community concentrated on matters related to the School and its ongoing activities. Most of the pages were dedicated to reports or personal accounts of some event. There were two or three-page long cricket reports but no articles on affairs taking place outside the School. Although School events were important, they should not have been the only subjects for discourse. One is forced to ask the question – was the School insulated? The *Weekly* is undoubtedly supposed to chronicle issues pertaining to the School, but the events I am referring to were unprecedented and epochal. Our motto reads *Knowledge Our Light* and contemporary issues constitute an integral part of this ‘knowledge’. The inaccessibility to information or our narrow outlook made us ‘insular’, as the then Editor-in-Chief Dwaipayan Banerjee wrote in his article, *Stop Fooling Yourself* (last printed in issue no. 2188 of the *Weekly*). We were either ignorant or just too full of ourselves. This not only reflects problems with members of the Board, but also the problems of the community.

It is after noting these aspects of the *Weeklys* published over the past decades that we decided to look beyond the School’s boundaries and bring to light pertinent issues for the community to collect and discuss. Print and electronic media are certainly valuable sources of information, but the School needs a forum for the students to voice their opinions on national and international affairs. Just last term, the Board had begun brainstorming and formulating ideas for the forthcoming issues. We decided to build a knowledge base and start writing articles which would be an incentive for others to participate. That is why this term we addressed issues like economic liberalization, droughts, and parliamentary proceedings. I remember that Shikhar Singh, the Editor-in-Chief in 2007 addressed contemporary issues and started a section called *India under the Scanner*. We now aspire to take similar initiatives and hope our efforts bear fruit.

The *Weekly*, along with reporting contemporary School events, would like to act as a medium for students willing to speak on these subjects on a regular basis. After the inception of MUN and through the technological tools that are available to us, it is evident that we have myriad sources of information. Such developments in School will certainly aid in the national and global awareness that we hope to bring about. Considering the kind of access we have to information now and the importance of that information, it is time for us to come out of our cocoon and broaden our outlook. Initially, there will be immaturity in our viewpoint, but that is always the case at the beginning of such an undertaking. The knowledge base might seem underdeveloped, but that is something that can be addressed. It will only, however, be achieved through reading and using the School’s platforms to discuss one’s opinions. The *Weekly* aspires to be one of those fora and help the community members strengthen their knowledge base to an extent that by the time we pass out of School, we have honed our ability to discuss and deliberate, comment and analyze, argue and connect with what is going on in the country and around the world. Hopefully, that will add some extra glow to the lamp of knowledge.

The *Weekly* is undoubtedly supposed to chronicle issues pertaining to the School, but the events I am referring to were unprecedented and epochal. Our motto reads ‘Knowledge Our Light’ and contemporary issues constitute an integral part of this ‘knowledge’.

A Tricycle in the Veranda

*The Doon School Weekly interviewed **Roshni Kandhari**, daughter of Surinder Kumar 'Charlie' Kandhari (ex- 122 T '52), Housemaster of Jaipur House (1972-1982), and also the wife of the School counsellor, ANJ. She is currently the School horticulturist*

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): How would you respond to the claim that you were 'born and brought up' on campus?

Roshni Kandhari (RSK): Well, I can't refute it! I was born here and brought up here, partly. I lived here till I was eight-and-a-half years old. I was influenced greatly by my surroundings. After all, I was eight years old. I remember the greenery and the labels on every tree. I would go for walks every evening with my father who would read those labels out aloud. And I guess somewhere the interest stuck. I went to Welham Girls' School, where they did have a gardening club which I joined. But all they did was look after the garden once a week.



All in all, I had a great childhood with a tricycle in the veranda. I was happy, like any master's child. I would talk to the gardeners or water the rose gardens. My father was also a keen gardener. Of course, I wasn't involved with any activities. I only spent my childhood here, like my daughter is spending hers now. My interaction with boys was more informal.

DSW: So what was School like in those days?

RSK: Everything was very informal, right from the people to the landscape. I remember we would go to the Headmaster, Eric Simeon's, house for tea parties. Now, it has become much more specialized. But the boys were wonderful. I remember they would carry me on their shoulders. Of course, this might have been to curry favour with my father, but it doesn't matter because they were still nice to me. There was Vijit Ramchandani, who was house prefect in Jaipur House. I also remember Ardeshir Vakil, the author of *Beach Boy*, whom I called uncle. We would go for long walks in the garden. I feel boys back then were not shy of interacting informally like this. There was no hierarchy within the community, and even if there was I wasn't conscious of it. They were bold, just as the boys today, but perhaps just had fifteen minutes more time.

There was also a good batch of boys in Jaipur House, and I have fond memories of all of them. I also accompanied some of them on midterm. They were patient and considerate with a child. Even if they were annoyed, they didn't show it. They were always nice to me, and again, it was probably because I was their Housmaster's daughter. Boys were more informal then, I think. Some, today too, have the same qualities. They just take a little more time to open up.

DSW: By saying 'fifteen minutes more time', do you mean they were under less pressure?

RSK: No, not really. They were under just as much pressure then as boys are now. They had fifteen minutes more time, certainly, but that was not because they had more spare time, but because they spent their time differently. For instance, they had no computers. They would spend that time outside, or playing. Boys still spend a lot of their time outdoors, but they spent more of it back then. They had their pens, pencils and many informal games to play. They would even have a chat with masters. I don't know what it is exactly, but the present boys have taken two years to be comfortable with me. Earlier, it happened very quickly. Boys can still come over any time, but they have become more reticent and the interaction more formal. As far as their interest in plants goes, I think boys today have the same level of interest.

Things have become much more formal, and that, I guess, is the sign of the times everywhere. That, perhaps, cuts down the interaction between boys and masters, who begin playing a more professional role. I cannot comment on pastoral care because I do not know too much about what happens today, but

(contd. on the next page)

A Tricycle in the Veranda

(contd. from the previous page)

I do remember that, in those days, the Housemaster was your counsellor. You didn't have a resident counsellor on campus. Whatever problem you had, you would go to the Housemaster, who would guide or advise you.

DSW: So do you feel the School is becoming too commercialised?

RSK: I don't think it is right for me to comment on that front because I am not too involved with the administration. What I can say is that the standard of the maintenance has improved considerably, and that's because the School has more money to invest in maintenance. We can, therefore, preserve its heritage effectively. As for the boys, I am often pleased to see boys coming over and asking for books on horticulture, when they sometimes say, "I know that when I grow up, I want to live near a garden", because they are so used to this greenery. Besides that, I feel boys are more savvy with whatever it is they are doing. They know at a very young age what they want to do. I mean, I didn't even decide what I wanted to be until I was 21, at which point I decided to be a gardener (*laughs*).

Besides, one thing is for certain that the quality of life is improving in School. Also, we hear about gardens being turned to concrete structures. I think our School is the only place where the exact opposite has happened: we have turned the tennis courts at the south end of the Main Building into a beautiful garden.

DSW: Do you have any particular memories of the *Weekly*?

RSK: My father was the publisher of the *Weekly*. I remember he would have boys over frequently. They would sit until odd hours in our huge veranda, brainstorming for articles and planning issues. I remember Kanti Bajpai was the Editor of the *Weekly*, at that time. And so was Vakil, in his time. Then, there were Rahul Bhagat, Amitav Ghosh and Ram Guha. They would have to carry it to town on bicycles to get it printed. The boys would sometimes work so late that my father would sometimes have to cook for them. I feel some masters knew the boys because of the *Weekly*. If they hadn't worked together on its Editorial board, I don't think they would have known each other so well.

DSW: Are there any masters whom you remember?

RSK: Mrs Vaishnav has been here since then. There were also Mr and Mrs Pant and Mr RD Singh. All of them were very warm. Mr and Mrs Simeon, particularly, were very nice to staff kids. There were also Mr and Mrs Fanthome. A number of the masters since then became heads of various schools. I remember Mr Sheel Vohra was our neighbour, and he still has that same fifty-year-old scooter he used then! He would often get me *Kwality* toffees and litchis for my birthday. I guess I visited Mrs Pant most frequently to play with her three daughters. There was also a Mr Painuli, a Hindi teacher, who was a nice person. But boys would often take him for a ride. They would make up the most absurd stories, like losing their homework in an aeroplane, and he would believe them! He eventually took over a local school. Most of the masters I knew have left School.

DSW: Do you think schools with educational traditions like ours are still relevant today, when the focus of education is being dictated by market necessities?

RSK: Yes, certainly, if the world was to be interesting. Education is not about careers or money. It's about learning. Most importantly, it's about instilling morals and ethics. Your parents can worry about your career. Masters should not. They should be instilling morals and making learning an enjoyable process. Process is what we are talking about. You study and pursue a career to do what? Ultimately, you want to enjoy your life. So why not start enjoying it early, in School? I know that The Doon School will let you enjoy learning, although I am not certain as I studied at Welham Girls'. The bottom line is that such schools are more relevant. After all, you have come here to learn, not to have successful careers. And why can't we have failures? Everyone looks at failures differently. What matters is whether the boy considers himself successful or not and whether he has enjoyed his time in School or not.

DSW: Should The Doon School continue along the trend to globalise or should we remain unabashedly nationalistic?

RSK: I'm sure when you watched the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games and you heard our national anthem, you felt something. You felt proud to be an Indian. I feel we are still nationalistic. We should go global because that's where the future lies. But we can be Indian and global both at the same time. True Indians can bob up anywhere, as long as they hold true wherever they go to the Indian flag and national anthem.

Being Special

*The issue of 'specialization', whether boys must focus entirely on one area of expertise or be involved in a variety of activities, has been a subject of great debate in School, be it in the Weekly, the School Council or amongst members of the community. **Vivek Santayana** explores the dimensions of this idea*

'Specialization' is a new buzzword. The *Weekly* ran a feature on this (issue no. 2259, dated September 18), eliciting opinions from members of the community. An ex-Chief Editor of the *Weekly* wrote in an LTTE with his views on it (issue no 2262, dated October 9). Most students tended to the negative, that boys must, for lack of a better word, 'diversify' rather than confine themselves to a narrow range of disciplines. While the issue of specialization was highlighted in such a feature, I feel a single point-counterpoint debate, accompanied by a *Doonspeak* and an Opinion Poll, was insufficient in achieving any resolution to the issue. To begin with, it was viewed in two extremes, that versatility entailed general mediocrity and specialization an absolute neglect of disciplines outside one's area of expertise. Furthermore, only one aspect of specialization was considered, involvement in School activities (particularly sports), making the debate resemble a denouncement or defence of the prevailing notion of a 'typical Dosco', with appeals to tradition becoming inevitable.

It is only after experimenting in every field can we choose what suits us best. And, over time, we may find our interests changing. I personally rediscovered myself in School as I wrote for the *Weekly*, debated or ran on the athletics track.

It is high time we made some difficult choices. The Headmaster addressed us one morning during Assembly about how the pressure on the community is mounting because of the added burden of many activities, each as worthy as the other. We have had weekends torn asunder by many School events, each held on a massive scale. The Doon School Model United Nations Con-

ference and The Chuckerbutty Memorial Debates were held on consecutive weekends, followed by Test Week shortly after. The Kamla Jeevan Debates weekend also saw a rock concert and a talk on the Ayodhya dispute. The build-up to Founder's Day, with a score of exhibitions, publications, productions and the like, has been a nightmare of equal measure. We are bursting at the seams. There is only so much activity we can accommodate with seventy acres of campus, five hundred boys and seventy teachers. To complicate matters, boys are invariably involved in more places than one. I myself was a part of DSMUN and I debated for the School at Chuckerbutty (and, not to mention, had to ensure the *Weekly* came out at the same time). Not only is the School saturated with activities, STAs and events, but boys are taking up (and often, being made to take up) more than they can handle. This is costing us our rest, recreation time and, sometimes, happiness.

One of the comments in the *Doonspeak* was that specialization was "against the whole idea of The Doon School." On one level, I agree: I came to Doon – as have, I am sure, many others – because of the countless opportunities the School offers. It is only after experimenting in every field can we choose what suits us best. And, over time, we may find our interests changing. I personally rediscovered myself in School as I wrote for the *Weekly*, debated or ran on the athletics track. One can even call it an epiphany: I saw myself and that made me reconsider my objectives. They were certainly worthwhile investments of my time. More importantly, I enjoyed doing whatever I did. Contrary to popular belief, my involvement with these many activities did not affect my Board exam results. In fact, I would give credit for my performance to these many activities. While I never got the factual knowledge I needed to answer examination questions, I developed a mindset and an awareness that held me in good stead as far as learning was concerned: MUN and debating required me to teach myself the basics of economics, and that was before I opted for it as a subject. Likewise, a number of us have diversified academically. These media comprise a quasi-Waldorf system of teaching, all complementing the School curriculum.

Most of us come to The Doon School looking for a holistic, all-round education, – both intellectual growth and over-all character development – not just for a glowing transcript or for a good placement. But the demand of education has undergone a paradigm shift: one tradition held personality development

(contd. on the next page)

Specialization at Doon

(contd. from page 37)

was critical, especially in the modern era when modernity itself causes decay in our character. Today, we live in a different reality: market necessities have begun dictating trends in education and the competition is exponentially higher. We need our respectable placements and degrees if we want to have a bright future, one fitting to an alumnus of this institution. The 'idea of The Doon School' and the 'broad-based, holistic education' run the risk of becoming anachronistic if we are unable to cater to this one critical necessity of every individual: outstanding academic credentials. Academic excellence is not a priority; it is a prerequisite.

Of course, transcripts, placements and careers do not define who we are or what our lives have been like in School. Some of the most inspiring figures I have known in School have scored some of the most mediocre grades, but they continue to excel in what they do best. Conversely, some of the more mediocre people I have known have scored extremely well, and have, backed by their certificates, excelled. But I will always look up to them because they taught me how to write, run or climb mountains. Likewise, what we all will take from School, besides our school-leaving certificates or diplomas, will be the countless, minor experiences that mould our personality: shaking hands on the games' field after a heated football game, supporting an injured comrade on a midterm, knowing the rules and basic techniques of play of every sport, chivalry and etiquette, self-discipline and the other little things that shape how we relate with one another. Will we, most importantly, be happy in School unless we indulge in the things we love? These are things equally critical to a boarding school. Absolute exclusion from these activities will be detrimental. We should ask ourselves one simple question: what have we learned here that we would not have elsewhere? If we were to neglect these aspects of learning, we would take nothing from this institution.

We benefit greatly being all-round Doscors. But we have to remember education is also like a pyramid: we must have a broad base, but narrow down as we reach the top. There will be stages we will have to make difficult choices and let go of certain things; that is life.

I, personally, believe in specialization. But by 'specializing', I do not mean myopic focus on a few, relevant avenues. We benefit greatly being all-round Doscors. But we have to remember education is also like a pyramid: we must have a broad base, but narrow down as we reach the top. There will be stages we will have to make difficult choices and let go of certain things; that is life. The requirements of this day and age are taller pyramids, not broader ones. We must, therefore, be discerning: it is good to have a basic knowledge of a number of disciplines and be a jack-of-all-trades, as long as we focus on a handful and are masters of some. For that, we must prioritise what we do here and invest time accordingly, and not give equal importance to the dozen-odd activities School offers. Unfortunately, most of us lack on that front: we do too much. Often, we are made to do too much. Expectations sometimes do not account for our interests and intentions. The only corrective measure I can see is a strict rule that prevents boys from indulging too deeply in too many activities in the later, critical years of schooling. While boys should be free to participate in activities internally and learn from them, they should not, ideally, represent the School or their Houses unless it is in their chosen field of expertise.

Most of us are from a privileged background: we can afford to study for the sake of studying. This, I believe, is the greatest luxury: we have the freedom to learn, not acquire education under duress of the future. But even then, one cannot be careless about one's life after School. So while we should enjoy our freedom and pursue the things we love, we must be wary that the quality of our work does not suffer. We must balance the two or three fields we wish to excel in against the eight or nine others that we should explore.

Opinion oll

Do you think the School should introduce 'specialisation'?

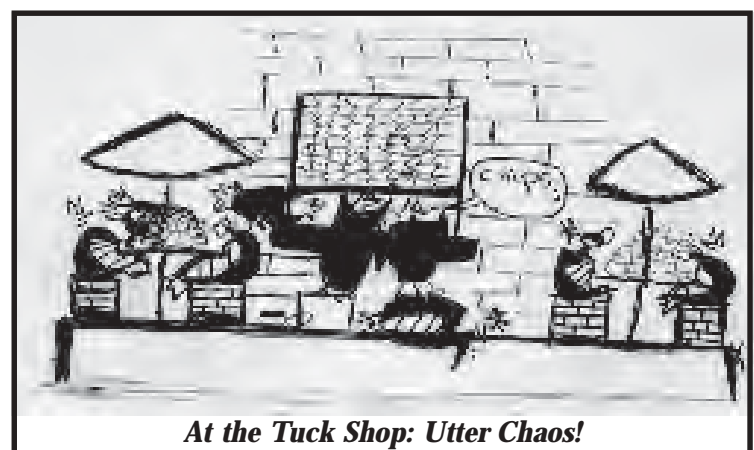
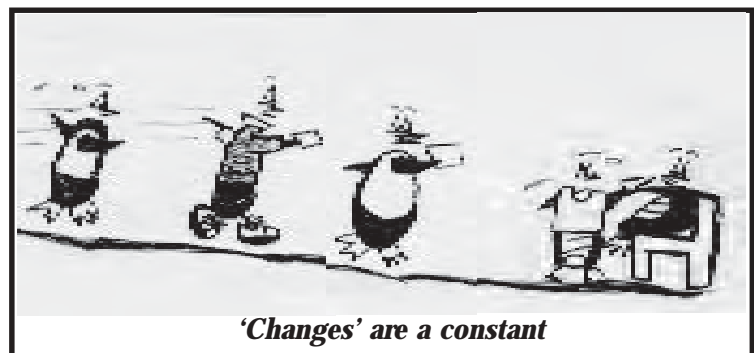
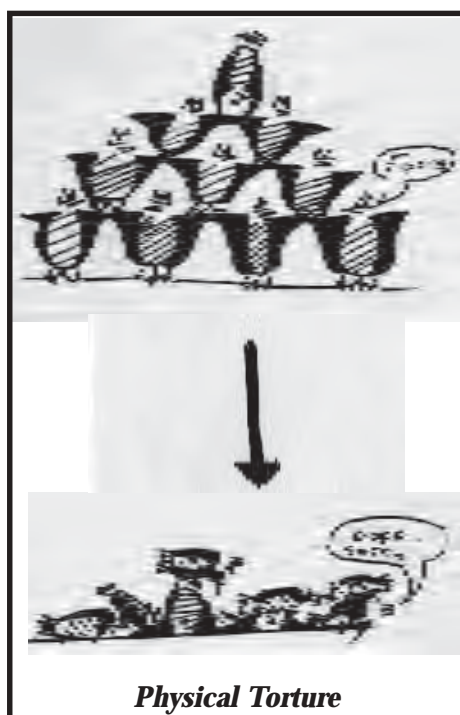
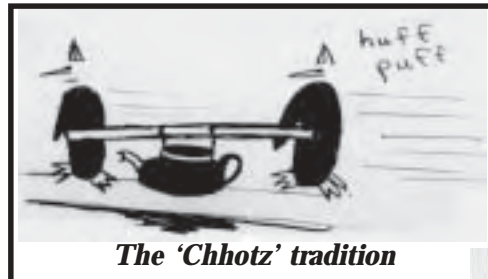
 **Yes 59 %**

 **No 41 %**

(437 members of the community were polled)

A FEW GLIMPSES OF THE CHANDBAGH LIFE

Madhav Dutt

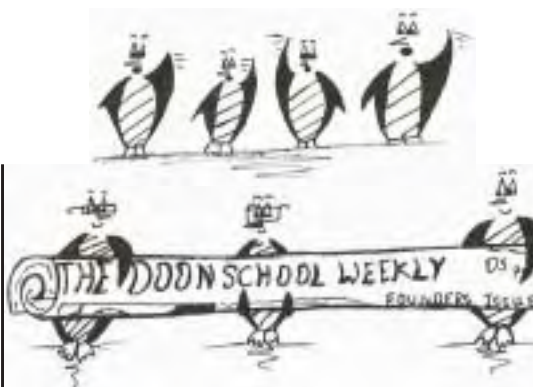


At the end of my tenure, everything I have written in the past year seems so ironic: in my first editorial, I expressed my aspiration to join the ranks of the eminent alumni writers; in my third, I anticipated the extravagance of this year's Founder's Day. At first, I was ambitious, excited and bursting with pride. I realise now how humbling the grandeur of the Platinum Jubilee and the rich literary tradition of the *Weekly* truly are. I recently chanced upon a notebook of my writings from four years ago, all private meditations that I never showed anyone. My initial reaction was disbelief that I once wrote the way I did, followed by chuckles at my awry prepositions (which still go wrong sometimes) and the pretentious use of words, syntax and attempts at versification. Overall, it reflected a wild enthusiasm to toy with words that was, thankfully, tamed into something much easier to work into an intelligible piece of writing. I was fortunate to have had the right kind of encouragement, guidance and training. I learned to love words. But my sporadic ramblings were still not a novel, nor did they have any literary merit. While the *Weekly* indulged these occasional spurts of creativity, my love for words and, often, my failed humour (if the countless travelogues, extended *vatalyses* and many interviews permitted, that is), it made sharper the realisation that I have a long way to go. My efforts must continue. Being a part of this journal, no matter how august it is, was never an end in itself, but always an effort and learning for a greater purpose: a love for writing. *The Doon School Weekly* has always been more to me than the School newspaper. Nevertheless, the most important part of being in any institution is knowing how to leave it elegantly. Besides, as Ernest Hemingway once said in an interview with *The Paris Review*, "newspaper work ... could help a young writer if he gets out of it in time."

(Vivek Santayana, Editor-in-Chief)

MOVING AHEAD

The outgoing members of this year's Editorial Board pen down their parting thoughts



ally all?" At this time, I tell myself: "Shashank, you may sing your swan song. But you will not cry. Because, in truth, you were nobody. And, in truth, the *Weekly* was never yours. It is never anyone's. And this is it, this is all." So, instead of lamenting my leave-taking, I will speak briefly about why the *Weekly* was important in my school life.

People have inspired me: right from the two Eds-in-Chief I have spent time with, from PCH and STB, to the Arifeens, Yuvs and Dhandhanias, who only had to smile, complain, scream, miss deadlines or crib about me, and I would be galvanised into the giving of what, at that moment, was my best. Truly, that's all it ever took. What has always left me in awe is that just the presence, the unity, the passion of a few people has resulted in so much energy, so much creativity, so many *Weeklys*. What would happen if the whole School were to have and act upon a common interest such as this! The *Weekly* gave me the environment, the motivation, to write. For me, it was a way of telling my truths and reaching out to people. It was a way of openly expressing the secrets of my life in the guise of fiction and poetry, so that other people might read my work, think of their own secrets and know that they were not alone. It was a way of giving shape and public airing to the otherwise inexplicable meditations of my heart. It was a way of living. Now, I must find another way, as my time is up.

I ask myself: "What now? Will they call me back in as Guest Ed? Will they ever think of me at all? Will they quote me in the Editorials to come?" And then I stop. Maybe I don't want to return. Maybe I want to be forgotten. Forever.

(Shashank Peshawaria, Editor)

Frankly speaking, I have not been amongst the hardest working people on the Board and I really had to strain myself to complete all my tasks. The *Weekly* has made me realize that even the smallest of them requires immense hard work. During my three years with the *Weekly* I have learnt how to think and manage time better. It is true that a person delivers his best under pressure. The problem is that there are only a few people who are able to sustain such pressure. A Board member of the *Weekly* is one of those few people. I clearly remember ASH and Pranjal Singh shouting at me every third week "Chandrachuda, why is the Hindi page not ready?" At that time I felt like quitting but the desire to be on the Board of the School's most prestigious publication never let me do so. These are the time-worn problems that are to be faced by every junior editor on the Board. However, when it was my turn to take over the post of the Hindi Editor, I realized that the criticism I faced was necessary. Now that I come to the end of my tenure, I feel nostalgic. I am very proud that I was a part of the *Weekly* for three years. With this I bid adieu to all and wish that the *Weekly* continues to be the voice of the School.

(Chandrachuda Shukla, Hindi Editor)



(Photo credit: Abhishek Jain)

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



IPSS® All rights reserved. **Printed by:** The English Book Depot, 16 Rajpur Road, Dehradun, Uttarakhand – 248009, India. **Published by:** Philip Burrett (not in picture), The Doon School, Dehradun.

Editor-in-Chief: Vivek Santayana **Editor:** Shashank Peshawaria **Hindi Editor:** Chandrachuda Shukla
Associate Editors: Kanishka Malik, Abhinav Mittal **Special Correspondents:** Arifeen Chowdhury, Shashvat Dhandhanian, Yuv Vir Khosla, Shivank Singh (not in picture) **Graphics Editor:** Madhav Dutt
Webmaster: Vishal Mohla **Assistant Managers:** Stuti Bathla, Priya Chaturvedi, Arvindanabha Shukla
Technical Assistant: KC Maurya (not in picture)



Signalling Saturday breakfast