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True Tolerance

Omar Chisti *expresses his views on secularism in our School.*

I first thought of writing this piece back in my C Form, but the prospect of having my thoughts out 'there', in the written immortal form, daunted me and I left the piece unstarted and unfinished, a constant nagging (1) next to the Draft label in my inbox addressed to Aditya Bhattacharya. Before you read further, this isn't a judgement on the degree of secularism in School, or a sob piece on the 'difficulties' I, or anyone else, face in School. It's a simple recollection of incidents in my school life which somehow define the undefinable, the 'spirit' of the secularism in this institution.

Being rather laidback in my religious duties, I might never have considered to think about my school-life through the lens of religion and co-existence and tolerance and what-not, had I not constantly encountered one haunting question in all conversations with adults outside the walls of this campus, sandwiched somewhere between the unavoidable 'Oh, Rajiv Gandhi's school?!' and 'Why were you sent to a boarding school?'- 'How do they treat Muslims out there?'. The question often isn't an innocent one, with undertones of the bitterness of expected marginalisation and ostracisation, but the answer has always been the same: "The same as everyone else. Except they give us better food." This answer, of course, is baffling for those NRIs used to children studying in India griping about microaggression, and the second statement often requires a lengthy explanation of our dining policy, but the stumbling way I talk about the 'a-religious-ness' of School certainly never helped matters. It is in this article that I finally want to set out what I've always wanted to say when faced with the question, by relating some stories from my four years in School.

Everyone reading this inside the campus instinctively knows what I mean when I say this School exists in a bubble of post-religiousness. Meat burgers and pepperoni pizzas are the stuff of collective gastronomical fantasy, the most conscientious vegetarian D formers (the kind who refuse to pass or refill bowls of chicken?) are found happily devouring butter chicken by their A form, a holiday is always just a license to play football and have a movie marathon in the common room, no matter which festival it's for, Diwali seems to be a Halloween with fireworks and no one ever gets the two Eids straight, no one cares what someone's religion is as long as they support the same football club and everyone seems to be an atheist



doonspeak

Secularism in School to you is...

Alive and well - **Mrs. Priyanka Bhattacharya**

I never thought it stopped existing -

Mr. Phillip M. Burret

Alive and kicking provided you yourself

practise it - **Ms. Stuti Kuthiala**

It is a pathway to sanity - **Sasyak Patnaik**

all the way until exams approach; in short, religion doesn't really seem to govern anyone's existence here.

Of course, there is an evolution of sorts in School, and not all who enter are exactly stalwarts of tolerance when they arrive – quite understandably so, since the environment here is unique.

Going back to the 'better food', well, anyone sitting on a table with a recipient of the 'halal bowl' knows very well that the CDH seems to put a disproportionately generous helping of the spices in the halal dishes, and leave all the watery gravy for the jhatka – an unfortunate side effect of large scale cooking, I

(Contd. on Page 3)



Regulars

'Relieved' of Duty

The following are the results of the **80th Inter-House PT Competition:**

Juniors:

- 1st: Oberoi
- 2nd: Tata
- 3rd: Kashmir
- 4th: Jaipur
- 5th: Hyderabad

Seniors:

- 1st: Hyderabad
- 2nd: Oberoi
- 3rd: Tata
- 4th: Kashmir
- 5th: Jaipur

House Cup:

- 1st: Oberoi
- 2nd: Tata
- 3rd: Hyderabad
- 4th: Kashmir
- 5th: Jaipur

Best P.T. Leader: Atrey Bhargava

Congratulations!

The Palette

A team comprising **eleven** boys participated in the **Earth Art Competition** held by **Hopetown Girls' School**. In the **Mystery Box** category **Nehansh Saxena** with four other students was placed **second**. **Tarang Garg** and **Ujjwal Maheshwari** were also placed **second** in the **Stick Sculpture** Category.

Well done!

B.G. Pitre

Amal Bansode was adjudged the **winner** in the seniors category of the **B.G. Science Short Story Competition, 2016**.

Congratulations!

"The optimist thinks this is the best of all possible worlds. The pessimist fears it is true." - J. Robert Oppenheimer

The Glory of Grace

The following are the results of the recently concluded **Inter- House Dance Competition:**

- 1st: Kashmir
- 2nd: Hyderabad
- 3rd: Oberoi
- 4th: Jaipur and Tata

Well done!

Maths Colloquium

The following are the results of the **Junior Mathematics Colloquium Prize Test, 2016:**

D Form:

- 1st: Tushar Jalan
- 2nd: Kabir Subbiah

C Form:

- 1st: Rushil Choudhary
- 2nd: Rubin Rastogi

B Form:

- 1st: Aneesh Agarwal
- 2nd: Harshvardhan Agrawal

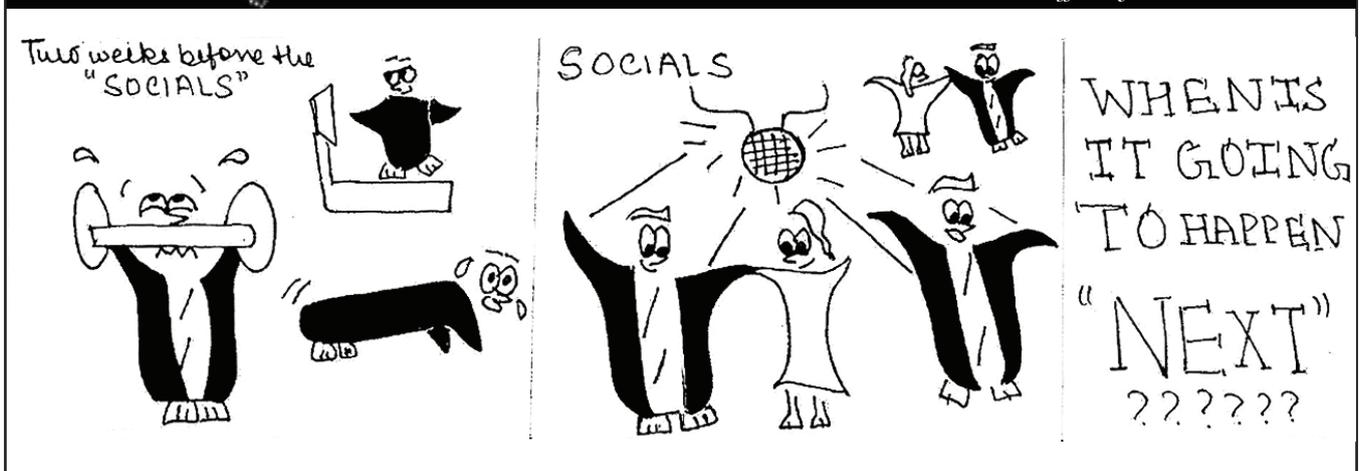
Kudos!

Around the World in 80 Words

Rain brought respite to the fire ravaged forests of Uttarakhand which were ablaze since February. Heat waves continued to sweep across Telangana, making the death toll rise even further. Sachin Tendulkar became the country's goodwill ambassador for the Rio Olympics. India slipped to fourth in ODI rankings. Trump was declared the presumptive Republican nominee for presidency. Brazil's embattled president Dilma Rouseff ignited the Olympic flame on Wednesday as a nationwide torch relay got underway, highlighting the problems of the nation.

Dosco Doodle

Socials
Ujjwal Jain



(Contd. from page 1)

suppose. Back in March, when the K House AT form was asked to fill out their dietary preferences, there was a unanimous NVH (And a certain excitable VH, whom I shall leave unnamed) across the table, and the Dame's refusal to grant the same was met with a chorus of "We converted!" The question raised here isn't that of why they weren't allowed to make the switch, but of how they were easily willing to say they converted just for some better chicken (The jury is out on whether there is an actual difference, but I can't really judge, can I?). And though the point is somehow mitigated by the fact that *Dosc*os would do anything to get better chicken, that is what I mean when I say religion just doesn't exist here in the divisive terms it seems to in the world outside the campus walls.

Going further back down memory lane, I remember a certain trip to Delhi by car for a tournament, soon after the Muzzafarnagar riots, when the communal tension in the region was palpable. While crossing the area, we came up with a foolproof plan: "If it's the Muslims, I say 'Salaam, we're Omar, Abdullah and Hamzah'. If it's the Hindus, it's 'Namaste, we're Raman, Raihan and Arjun. Cool?'. The confused reply, after a minute: "Yeah, but how do you know which ones are which?" Were we trivialising bloodshed with a joke? Or is it only when we trivialise artificial religious distinctions that we come up with societies free of such senseless bloodshed? I don't know, it's not my call, but I'll end with a shout out to all those here in School who have never made me feel like an outsider, and yes, I'd like a bit more chicken in my halal bowl, please, for as long as I have to end up sharing it with twenty other people.

The Roving Eye



Senior Editor 1 and 2 The Additional Weight

Last Sunday marked the first major step into the real world for SC form students. The concept of 'socials' has often been criticized due to its formal nature, one that is perceived to restrict youngsters from being at their best self. Nevertheless, preparation for socials involved haircuts, necessary shaves; cologne dipped clean kurtas and anxious, self-conscious smiles. In spite of all the delay in its organization, the event lived up to expectations.

We always witness three types of SCs at socials. The popular faction consists of those who are already well-known in our sister school for their deeds/misdeeds. The second group is the one which genuinely tries to interact with the other sex and make new friends, and the last one which values food over everything else and would not care less about the intricacies of socializing.

This year a few football fanatics found it hard to decide whether to witness Leicester make history or attend their first socials right from the very beginning. Thankfully the former notion was taken into view and six individuals arrived late and broke the good news to the rest of the eager football fans. After the initial moments of awkwardness, and the soulful performance by our band to the tunes of 'Rock On', 'What Katy did' and 'Back in Black', the *Dosc*os were ready to mingle. One could see the delight on the face of the School Boxing Captain who despite all forms of denial, continued his deep and meaningful conversations with the Sports Captain of our sister school. What made the event special for most *Dosc*os was that there was something else to do other than concentrate on the god like creations placed on the plates.

As the lights dimmed, our DJs turned up the atmosphere a notch higher and thus began the jam session. The girls in white and blue had their fair share of fun and while the School Squash Captain displayed his brilliant dancing skills by slow dancing to Swedish House Mafia, our School Swimming Captain impressed (hopefully) everyone with his moves. There were a few disappointments too; one could look at one of our Senior Editor's face and his distant expression to gauge how he missed the Athletics Captains of both schools.

After the traditional School Captains' dance, the stage went berserk and the various dance coordinators didn't fail to impress. Our Editor-in-Chief was back in form after his Mayo trip and the Tata House Captain did get his fair share of attention too. However, the duel for the Games Captain continued and onlookers were treated to an intense dance-off. The Hyderabad House Hockey Captain too was mesmerized by the smiles directed at him. One could see the blush on the 'cute' School Senior PT leader's face, one that truly launched the Sc form socials. There were a few people (including our two senior editors) who tried to make a quick getaway during the course of the jam session but were caught by the bouncers guarding both sides of the hall.

Ultimately, socials came to an abrupt end and our counterparts departed, much to the regret of many. But with new tactics up their sleeves, friendships forged and memories made; *Dosc*os have kept their fingers crossed over a plausible rumour of socials on the 8th and await hopefully, that unlike last time their rue wouldn't last for too long.

Countdown

Ritik Chamola (Ex-462 J)

30 minutes to collision

The neutral, automated voice from the klaxons that calmly recite this phrase is oddly fitting for the empty streets outside. Not a single person can be seen outside in the bright daylight. Never in my life would I have expected to have seen a deserted Times Square, without the bustling masses or the shining billboards that are almost synonymous with its name. Seeing the tatters of old advertisements hanging from the framework of old boards and defunct electric screens, but mostly the deserted roads, I can almost imagine I'm the only person on Earth.

I keep walking towards the bridge. The wind blows my hat off. It's oddly hot for a winter day, but I ignore the heat and keep trudging on.

Twenty minutes

When, at the dawn of 2016, NASA announced that it had sighted an interestingly large and accelerating asteroid that it would be taking a closer look at, no one was worried. 900 km across, they say, bigger than the one that killed the dinosaurs? Pfft. Everyone knows it's a hoax. As NASA also eventually revealed that, contrary to previous expectations, this huge body was directly in line with Earth's orbit, and was due to destroy our world in approximately two years, reactions got a little more interesting.

Humans are surprising creatures. In almost every apocalyptic film or book visualized, impending disaster is inevitably followed by mass riots on the streets, and massacres and lootings. Despite all likelihood that no one on the planet would be alive by February 14, 2018, nobody looted or vandalized. Sure, there were instances. People died. But for the most part, everyone behaved. It's almost like our entire race collectively decided that it would rather enjoy its last moments in a civilized world rather than ruining it early. This peace lasted right until last week.

A paper flutters and falls in front of me. I can see an advertisement for some Broadway musical. I should've seen it when I'd had the chance. Well, it's too late now.

Ten minutes

Speaking for the world, knowing we were doomed did wonders for us on a global level. All wars ceased. The ISIS faltered and broke apart. Young, scared jihadis returned to their homes and family, trying to meet them one last time. Pop culture dissipated as people stopped caring about the life of celebrities. Having limited time really brought the whole world to its senses.

We didn't give up. After they accepted that no amount of nukes could destroy an asteroid of that size, governments stopped pouring their money into defence and security, and collaborated on a global scale for a space program. Russia churned out blueprints for a massive craft that could save a select 1,500 each. Making one required a massive amount of material and technological advancement. Twenty were made before the launch, through the collaboration of various nations, before the meteor was close enough, theoretically enough to save our species.

I'm nearing the bridge now. I can spot discarded 'THE END IS NEAR' signs. I am too exhausted to even grin at the irony.

Five minutes

Mars was the destination, and everyone believed that for its colonization, we needed the smartest and most able group of humans on the planets. You couldn't buy a seat to Mars. People tried their best though. Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin, Kanye West, all tried. All failed.

My Jen was chosen. Fiancé Jen. Agricultural botanist Jen. Lovely, beautiful, smart Jen. Despite being at the top of her field, and excited, she declined offers. For me. It was hard, but I finally convinced her to go. I think she was personally happy she was forced to go...I just hope she doesn't forget me. This Valentine's nothing to celebrate.

Saying goodbye is the hardest when it's voluntary. Yet, as I saw that little dot in the sky, that space rock that grew imperceptibly bigger every night, I found solace in the fact that she had hope for survival.

I am at the bridge. I can see the river stretching ahead as far as I can see, and a sense of calm and acceptance washes over me.

One minute

All the ships left two months before the dot, now a large orb in the sky was due to hit us. I don't know how I managed to wake up every day and get out of bed, not knowing what had happened to her.

Thirty seconds

I'm all alone now. Everyone's holed in their home, praying it away with their family, or taking the cyanide pills that are so 'in' recently. 5\$ to take your entire family's life, 30% off. Announcement speakers were installed to tell us how much time we had left. Talk about a pick-me-up. I personally wish the meteor was striking on this side of the world. It would make the whole process of dying a lot faster.

Ten seconds

I'd prefer to go honourably, watching the illusion of sunset, as a 200 metre high wave from the Atlantic Ocean speeds towards the coast, and trying to fathom the destruction of this Earth. As I watch it getting darker, I just hope it's over quickly.

Zero.

A Diary Entry

Ms. Preeta Priyamvada

(This is a slice of the Doon Experience of a lady who works as a Consultant with the Careers Department in School and visits School regularly.)

I went out for a walk around 7.10 pm. It was getting dark. It had rained in the morning, so it had become cold. As I stepped out, I felt the cold of the air and, at the same time, the warmth of the soft lights coming out of the various red-brick cottages spread across the huge campus, but set apart by a good distance from one another.

The houses, some boarding houses and some masters' residences, which stand in groups of four to five in one neighbourhood, as if forming small colonies, are surrounded by pebbled paths and several century-old trees. These, and the rather eerie silence in the air disrupted only by occasional calls of nocturnal birds and the sound of crickets and beetles give the place an ancient feel, reminiscent of forgotten times! The masters' residences also have their own small well-manicured gardens around the houses with lovely colourful flowers.

There are cemented paths around the campus that lead to the various fields and playgrounds of the School and connect the houses to one another and to the main school building and the gates of the School campus. I heard some faint sounds of boys in their dormitories, some hustle and bustle indicating activity in their rooms as the boys prepared to settle down for their evening studies. I sped up for a brisker walk while savoring the pristine beauty of the surroundings.

As I took the turn from lower skimmers, from near Oberoi House, I spotted floodlights on the basketball courts and colourful jerseys brightening up the dusky air. It was like a huge spotlight falling from high above on just one part of a larger area, which was otherwise in the grey darkness of the dusk. A basketball tournament was going on. How cheerful it looked and how sporty and energetic, as the players dribbled and bounced the ball across the court. The young audience around the court seemed as focused on the game as the players. There was a high-pitched exclamation every time there was a jump-shot or a good attempt at it, and the sound of a falling tone each time the hoop was missed. This rise and fall, at quick intervals, of the sound of the cheering boys filled the air. I stopped by for a few minutes to watch the game.

It was fun to watch the game, but what really caught my attention was the rhythmical rise and fall in the pitch of the cheering boys. Moments of highs followed by the lows, then the anticipation of another high, and thus the game continued. A thought flitted through my mind. So it is with life! Isn't it? And these are ways in which the boys are learning about it.

And then I continued with my evening walk.



Under the Scanner

Uttarakhand's Forest Fires | Zoraver Mehta

Regardless of the blazing political fires raging across Uttarakhand, the state is currently suffering from a very real one. The series of forest fires have, until now, destroyed 3000 hectares of forest land, burnt down several villages and also taken a heavy toll on wildlife. A number of theories have been circulating on what or who is to be held responsible for this catastrophe, some of them being the timber mafia, the mischief of village children and the low rate of relative humidity; but most of all, the government's complete disregard for the preservation of preventive fire lines and organized boundaries laid out by the British nearly a century ago. Not only do forest fires effectuate air pollution, but also lead to great loss of biodiversity. Dehradun—it may come as a surprise to many—is on the World Health Organization's list of thirty most polluted cities in the world. India has vowed to itself, along with half the world that it will endeavour to fight pollution by increasing its forest cover and improving the quality of its forests. However, forest fires such as these are only worsening the predicament and need to be dealt with methodically and efficiently. We have to spread awareness and also act in accordance to save our very eminent but currently feeble state.

It was first believed that natural or environmental causes led to the fires but after conservationists and botanists began to unravel the actualities, something rather frightening came of it. The alleged nexus between the Forest Development Corporation and the Timber mafia is suspected of being responsible for the inferno. The first has the authority to cut trees, while the latter sells the accumulated wood worth crores of rupees. The forest dwellers are also reckoned to have set fire to certain parts of forest land, clearing it out for their own personal use. Four persons have already been arrested for lighting fires around the state and there is an ongoing investigation to confirm if they are connected with the timber mafia or any such organization. With such great extent of acquisitiveness, no amount of technology can help tide over the loss of natural resources.

It is ironical that Uttarakhand takes pride in being an "Abode for the Gods," but is sadly unable to care for its forests. Every year, these forest fires cause great damage worth crores of rupees. For more than a couple of weeks now, the hellfire in the jungles have been begging for our attention. Now, the National Disaster Response Force and the Indian Air Force are finally gaining control over the situation. We cannot just blame the government for their lack of technology to anticipate or contain such a situation, but also our insatiable greed and rapacious thinking.

Swarankur

Harrsh Dewan

Hindustani classical music once deemed to be purely ritualistic, has evolved to become the beautiful art that it is today. Being closely linked to our culture, it forms an irreplaceable part of Indian heritage. On Sunday, April 24, The Doon School had the unique opportunity to witness this art being performed by budding musicians. The event was conducted by the All India Sangeet Milon and was organized by an Old Boy, Mr. Pradeep Narain.

Our School, being the Dehradun venue for the All India Hindustani Music Competition also participated in this audition. Vihaan Bhatnagar, Rushil Choudhary and Anant Mohan represented our School in their respective age categories.

There was a buzz of excitement and expectancy in the Music School, with several young nervous musicians warming up for the audition.

The event began with the audition for Hindustani Vocals in the Juniors' Category. The judges, all musicians of national standing, gave their expertise to the young musicians on how to better their style and nourish their overall musicality. A variety of *ragas* were sung such as *Yaman*, *Multani*, *Kaamod* and the *Bageshree*. Rushil Choudhary, who sung *Raga Yaman* was placed in fourth position.

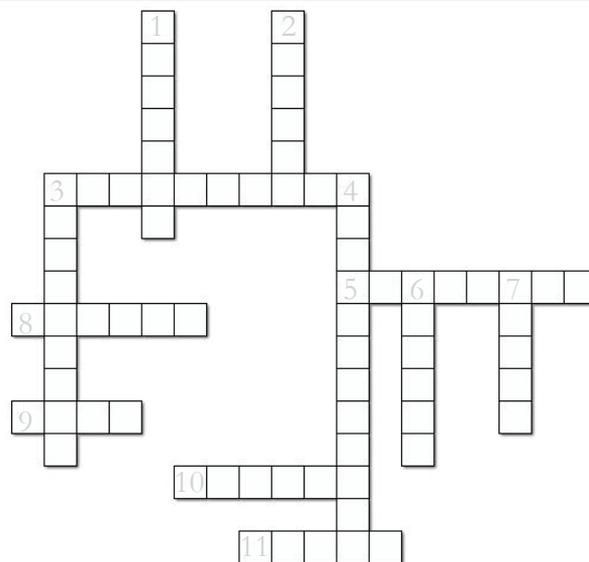
The largest participation was seen in the Mediums category (15 to 19 years) with fierce competition and more experienced vocalists. Vihaan Bhatnagar was placed second for his appealing and expressive rendition of a *bandish* based on performance of the alluring *Raga Bihaag*. The judges expressed their appreciation of the high level of skill portrayed by the participants, which was evidence of the amount of hard work they had put in for this audition. The final Seniors' category of the vocal section saw ambitious would-be musicians performing. The clarity and sheer range of their voice which they transcended into the emotive *bandish* was beyond compare. This also served as a great learning experience for the boys of the School choir who were present there.

Dexterity and rhythmic control was portrayed by all participants in the tabla section. Anant Mohan was placed second position for his performance which showcased the complexities of *teentaal* with admirable clarity.

Even though this audition only lasted one day, the young Doscos learnt a lot more about the history of the art and also gained essential knowledge which helped them practice correctly and improve the overall effect of their music, thereby doing justice to their art.

Crossword

Dramatics



Note: All persons referred to in the crossword are with reference to their surnames.

Across

3. The most famous Indian play amongst the British
5. The wife of Shakespeare
8. The turning point of the action in the plot of a play or story
9. The author of the book 'Les Miserables' which went on to become a world renowned play
10. William Shakespeare's longest play
11. Commonly referred to as the father of modern drama

Down

1. Traditional Japanese puppet theatre
2. The movement towards realism in drama first began in this country.
5. A device used in drama where a character speaks to himself/herself
6. A three line stanza constituting a sestet of an Italian sonnet
7. The Irish playwright of the late 19th century who wrote the play 'The Importance of Being Earnest'

10. Hamlet	3. Shaktuntala
9. Hugo	11. Ibsen
8. Climax	1. Bunraku
5. Hathaway	2. Russia
5. Soliloquy	7. Wilde
6. Tercet	
Down	Across
Answers to This Week's Crossword	

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