The Doon School Weekly (DSW): What does ‘being the School Captain’ mean to you?

Divij Mullick (DVM): The first word that comes to mind is service. I have been elected to this position in order to serve people by understanding their problems and helping them. Being an understanding leader is also very important, for we need juniors to be an integral part of this community and not excluded, which makes understanding them necessary. From this point, a School Captain ought to be an inclusive person: one who can hear all opinions and bring students together to work towards our School’s mission. With that, a School Captain is also someone who is approachable and can motivate students - both juniors and seniors – as everybody, at some point of time, needs support.

It is the sum of these qualities that I feel is what a School Captain should be. Nonetheless, it’s important to single out one point that is most crucial: affection. Every School Captain – and for that matter, all Prefects and even seniors – should be affectionate. It is this affection that builds bonds and friendships, which are the greatest means to accomplish anything as a team. It is these qualities that I wish to embody in my role, for I am but a servant of the school community.

DSW: Can you give us a brief note on the leadership style you plan to use?

DVM: My take on this might not be very orthodox or traditional, because everybody brings their own views and strategies to lead. My leadership style, which I explained during the School Captain’s address last Saturday, involves building a society based on dialogue. Students and Prefects must talk to each other, because that way we interact best. Also, since communication can never flow in just one direction, we must ensure that students give their Prefects feedback that is free and honest without fear. The house-wise feedback the Prefectorial Body receives will be discussed and worked upon in the Prefectorial Council, after which we will get back to people - that is how we plan to function.

We are currently in the middle of a transition and this style will definitely help us receive everybody’s views. That is what a democracy is all about; our school undoubtedly being a democratic unit, it is very important for all of us to share our opinions, for, like I mentioned, it enables teamwork and lets us work towards our common goal. Another thing which is important to my leadership style is reviewing the Punishment System. Currently, the system is quite confusing, and will be definitely reviewed this year for its efficiency and benefits to students. As of now, it is too early to give a time by which we’ll have reviewed and amended it, but the Prefects and I will begin right away. However, I believe that punishment should always be the last resort. We’ll be dealing with things using a gentle hand, because only when we are kind enough can we succeed. Nobody likes being shouted upon, and conversely, it would be better to use the power of positive bonds and friendships to keep discipline. The Prefects this year plan to do just that, because good bonds, gentleness and kindness are more effective compared to punishments, which just create a sense of disgust towards the Prefects. Punishments won’t lead to a very positive environment, and for a good one to exist around the school, it is integral we reduce our use of punishments and adopt this new leadership style based on dialogue and guidance.

DSW: In light of the Headmaster’s plan to modify the Punishments System, what are some of the

(Contd. on Page 3)
Regulars

Promotions

The following have been appointed as Sports Captains for the year 2017:

- Cricket: Udaivir Jaijee
- Hockey: Keshav Maliah
- Football: Ajatshatru Singh
- Athletics: Jaideep Singh Gill
- Basketball: Arhant Khullar
- Swimming: Nehansh Saxena
- Table Tennis: Ishaan Jhawar
- Tennis: Rishank Kala
- Badminton: Jehan Jhaveri
- Boxing: Shubham Dhiman

School PT Leader: Divij Mullick

Chaitanya Gulati has been appointed as the Boy-in-Charge of the Business Club for the year 2017.

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

The poem I recited in Assembly last Wednesday was written by Gary Turk. I wish to apologise to the School community for failing to give him due credit during the course of my speech as I’d intended to.

—Raghav Kapur

Around the World in 80 Words

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley presented the nation’s 2017 Union Budget. Bangladeshi security forces arrested four Islamic militants involved in the 2016 Dhaka cafe attack. Maoists attacked a police convoy at the Odisha-Andhra Pradesh border, killing four policemen in the process. Iran confirmed on Wednesday that it had recently conducted a ballistic missile test launch. Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump appointed Federal Judge Neil Gorsuch to the country’s Supreme Court. Chelsea drew with Liverpool in a match on Wednesday.

“Each person must live their life as a model for others.” — Rosa Parks

Terracotta Artists

Mr Madan Singh of the Art and Media Department participated in the China Foshan Ceramic Arts Week Festival held in Foshan Municipality, China, from December 23rd to 29th, 2016. The week-long festival, which invites over forty artists from thirteen countries, allowed artists to showcase their works on an international platform, and engage with critics, professors and the public. Amidst this select group of venerable artists, Mr Singh was the youngest invitee, and was commended for his displayed works by the festival attendees.

Well done!

Outback Chemists

The Australian National Chemistry Quiz was conducted by the Science Department last year. Students from 24 countries participated in this quiz, including 21000 students from India. A total of eleven students participated from School. The results are as follows:

- Five students were ranked amongst the upper 25% of Indian participants at the Distinction level.
- Nikunj Bansal, Paras Gupta, Arjun Agarwal, Aarnav Chadha were ranked amongst the upper 10% of Indian participants at the Higher Distinction level.
- Anesh Agarwal was ranked amongst the top 1% of Indian participants at the Higher Distinction-Class Excellence level.

Congratulations!

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

When somebody die...

DEB, character development.

Wearing those tie...

Aayush Chowdhr, scopes.

Rosco Doodle

Rendezvous Points

Ujjwal Jain

PREFECTURAL MEET

DSMUN

MIDNIGHT STUDY
modifications that you will propose?

DVM: To clarify, we’re not going to exactly ‘modify’ the Punishments System, but will review it and see where it is flawed. I’ll use the example of lines: they don’t serve any sort of purpose in this community. It must be clear, though, that while we have agreed to review the System, it does not mean that all present punishments will be removed: some will obviously remain, yet as I said earlier, will serve as means of the last resort. With regard to your question though, I would say that although some punishments remain, the leadership style I talked about earlier ought to be included, for the greatest art when living with a punishment system is to do without it. Additionally, as part of our review process, we plan to introduce constructive punishments. To use an example, if two people are talking during assembly, giving a change in break does not make sense as there is no constructive benefit to them. Instead we could punish them with an essay regarding what they take back from the talk and how was it relevant to them. Regarding the Headmaster’s proposal, we plan to conduct this process during our tutorial meetings, where we’ve been divided into groups of seven for better discussions. Already some progress has been made with the Prefectorial Contract. Additionally, we have reviewed the duties, privileges and the principals of Prefectship. The important review of the ‘power to punish’ has not been conducted yet. In this respect, I ask the school for patience, for this is a gradual process that involves questioning long-held norms of our School. However, we will try and revise it as quickly and efficiently as possible. We hope to deliver very soon, but with a lot of concentration and dedication with eventual benefits.

DSW: Considering you are the School Captain – the most influential senior – how do you plan to serve as an inspiration for junior students?

DVM: Though it might seem clichéd, both the Prefects and I agree we should lead by example. Let’s suppose that a junior sees me rushing to avoid being late for dinner. Since he sees the Prefects running, he will develop a mindset that if even the Prefects can’t be late, then he can’t either. Furthermore, if a Prefect is not punctual, then what credibility does he have to punish someone who is late? None. This is important to know, for as a leader you have to show the way forward; you have to guide those you lead. To continue the example, if the Prefects are thus on time for meals, it will set an example for junior students and compel them to do so as well. Additionally, being inspirational doesn’t mean that one must participate in all activities. Instead, it means diligence while working. If one is to persevere, complete tasks on time, and remains committed, he serves as a role model for those around him, which fosters good qualities and hinders procrastination.

For all this, I must keep a check on myself before I can check other people, which is unfortunately what some forget when appointed to leadership positions. Furthermore, I especially plan to serve as an inspiration by helping students realise there is a lot to try in our School. We should always try different activities to find our interests and develop a passion. Everybody has a talent or purpose they may excel at, and which they enjoy. It might be writing; it might be art; it might be sports; it might be experimenting with chemicals. Whatever one’s interest, the school’s plan is to bring the best out of every Dosco by guiding them to work diligently. To sum it up, our plans to inspire will be successful if an internal dialogue is stimulated, something along the lines of “He is working hard in his own field, and he is trying to pursue his passion. He is developing a niche for himself. Shouldn’t I also pursue something that I cherish; not only in Doon, but also for my life? Indeed, I should.”

DSW: Why do you think the school elected you as its leader?

DVM: Simply put, I’m a hard worker. I will deliver in my areas of responsibility. That might have been the main reason for my election this year, and may be the attitude desired for subsequent School Captains. Also, I stick to my moral values, which is good for any candidate because it shows the firmness of character and clean record required to serve the community. It also leads to trust, because a moral person will always deliver on his promises and uphold his duties. Another thing about me is that I can’t bear to see anyone get left behind. If so, it means they aren’t working enough, which means that I have to motivate them. This is something I’ve tried to maintain within my extra-curricular activities, where I ensure everybody’s opinion is accounted for, including constructive criticism of myself. This allows me to reflect on all viewpoints and come up with the best solution I can to a problem, apart from providing the means to bounce back from failure. I have always tried to reflect these traits, which I believe has been visible in my involvement in school activities. These are some of the reasons why the community believed I was the right candidate, and I’m determined to live up to their expectations.

3. The Doon School Weekly Saturday, February 4
Tradition Endangered

CC Chengappa critiques the recent changes to the School's infrastructure.

As a former student of The Doon School, I am not supposed to be a regular visitor to the Main Building this term and I have no reason whatsoever to be hanging around on the first floor of the 100 year old heritage structure. But upon hearing that construction had been going on in the building over the holidays, I decided to take a break from my studies and pay a visit to see the state of affairs of the new classrooms. I was in for no surprise this time when I entered the corridor of the first floor and saw the disastrous results that the renovation had done to the main building. If as a school, we are expected to pride ourselves on our traditions, legacies, history, culture and the works, I am very sorry to say that we have failed miserably. I am in no position to change what has been already done, but am shocked at the state of affairs that School is in right now. We have been instrumental in destroying the very culture of austerity and being understated that defines us. Our history that has existed for the past eighty years has gone in the span of a few months. The Main Building can no more be defined as a heritage structure with austere learning spaces but greyish and technologically superfluous units- something that I would term as a ‘playschool for over aged individuals’. If you don’t believe me, please pay a visit to the first floor of the main building and have look for yourselves.

The Dehradun labour force is grateful for the regular employment that they receive from our school, not to forget the scores of architects who have visited the school. In the past few years, we have seen plenty of modern day architects visit the school to give their invalid inputs with regard to the reconstruction of old buildings. I am no degree holder in architecture, but I do have enough information to know that India is full of architects who have never set eyes on an old age British building. As a result, when it comes to changing the old, they have no choice but to destroy it and start all over again. The first thing that people talk about when they enter our school is the beauty of the campus. One of the first questions that we pose to visitors is, “How do you like our campus?” The question that we should ask ourselves is, “Why destroy our campus?” Technology is expected to bring us together. An unnecessary addition in the new classrooms is the technological advancements that we have installed. There is absolutely no need for a mike and an electronic classroom. Our teachers can project their voices perfectly well without the use of any external device and need only a white board and a marker to teach their students. The presence of an automatic curtain which brings light to our darkened lives is something that should have been avoided at all costs. A lot of teachers would agree with me on the fact that it takes more time to set up the ‘e-classroom’ than it takes to teach the students. I would like to bring a very important point to the notice of the schools management. We have grandly installed fire escape plans and extinguishers in every nook and corner of the Main Building. This is in compliance with safety norms, which is completely understandable. But has anyone realized that in the unexpected event of a fire, the only people who will be extinguished are distinguished members of our school community. And the reason behind the unfortunate event will be the fumes and not the flames that will be produced from burning carpets in the new classrooms. The carpets are always responsible for emitting poisonous fumes and unless our carpeting has some special material, I see no way for a successful escape plan. Moreover, the carpets will make an important contribution in the burning down of the building itself. The stone floors that existed previously would not have caused such a problem and as a former student who spent a majority of his school life on the first floor of the Main Building travelling to different classes, this is the first thing that crossed my mind.

The House of Gentleman on the other hand has not had a wink of sleep since last term because someone had the grand idea of planning construction of the model rooms in the run up to the board exams. So in true Indian style, chaos has ensued and there has been a lot of aimless shifting and moving about in order to make way for our grand, state of the art, refurbished, renovated model rooms. Luckily, these are just model rooms and the whole house has not changed in order to have a more ‘international outlook’. So Old Boys will not be all that disappointed when they come back one day.
The Pianist at The Piano Man Jazz Club in New Delhi is one of the capital's most vibrant venues for live performance and the showcasing of fresh talent in a variety of musical genres. The owner, Arjun, himself an accomplished jazz pianist, was keen to present a classical music performance by Anuvrat Choudhary, following his being awarded an ‘Associate in Piano Performance’ by Trinity College London, with a High Distinction grading. On a rainy, grey afternoon on Republic Day, Anuvrat, who has distinguished himself as a pianist and conductor at School concerts and inter-house competitions, had his first taste of the public platform when we arrived for a rehearsal at the Club.

The weather notwithstanding, Piano Man regulars, most of them young professional musicians, began trickling in after dark, and Anuvrat had to face his first critical audience. From the opening bars of Schubert’s haunting and melodious Impromptu in G flat, he held his audience in thrall. The adrenalin of a live performance took over after that, and Anuvrat launched into the incredibly virtuosic Beethoven piano sonata, opus 10 in C minor with the deep expressiveness that the composer demanded of this challenging composition. Fiery, meditative, light-hearted and melancholy in turn, he displayed the width and depth of his musical understanding to the full. It was a performance that was versatile and engaging, eliciting whole-hearted and spontaneous applause at the culmination of every piece – from the lively Baroque Italian Concerto by Bach and the quirky Mouvement Perpetuel by the French composer Poulenc with its intricate spiraling notes, to a dreamy, evocative Chopin Nocturne.

Anuvrat’s second concert, organized by the Delhi Music Society, at The Delhi School of Music, on the 28th, began with an introduction by the eminent musicologist Dr RP Jain. Anuvrat was well-prepared, having played preconcert snippets of his repertoire for the School’s Director, pianist John Raphael, and having won his rarely-given appreciation! Another cold evening (somewhat warmed by the tea and snacks that preceded the concert), was transformed into an hour of music that demanded intense concentration and stamina from the performer. The compositions by Bach, Beethoven (two of the three mandatory ‘Bs’ in every young pianist’s programme), and Schubert, also ventured into the 20th century with the swinging ‘Foxtrot’ Prelude by the Czech composer Bohuslav Martinu. With its changes of tempo, dissonant harmonies, powerful sense of momentum and bravura technique, it drew an enthusiastic response for the flair and confidence with which it was executed.

The finale was one of the best-known and best-loved pieces, Traumerei (Dreaming) from Schumann’s piano cycle ‘Scenes from Childhood’. The fact that this work is recognized for being the signature tune in the advertisements for ‘Raymond’s Suiting’, (despite purists frowning at such frivolity) speaks volumes for the timeless and universal nature of great music. It is also open to a range of interpretation, and Anuvrat’s was contemplative, occasionally agitated, encompassing the array of emotions and fancies that make up a child’s imagination. With a fast, percussive classical piece as the encore, the concert was then summed up aptly by Dr Jain when he said, “I thought that this would be an occasion to encourage young talent, but it turned out to be a recital by a professional pianist!”
American Idiot?

Salman Mallick critiques Donald Trump's recent restrictions on travel to the United States.

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" - Emma Lazarus, poet.

It is this inscription which is engraved at the base of the Statue of Liberty, and seems quite ironic in light of Donald Trump’s recent actions. The United States is a country almost entirely composed of immigrants (except the parts inhabited by people who are Native Americans), and was at one time a haven for all those wishing to escape any sort of persecution. The Statue of Liberty was once a symbol that immigrants would see as they reached the land of their dreams, including the President’s mother - a Scottish immigrant escaping persecution. Yet now, for the first time in history, Trump signed an Executive Order banning inhabitants of seven Middle Eastern countries - namely Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen - from travelling to the United States. Because of this, the moral stature of the United States has been denigrated due to an unfounded fear of a community, many of whose lives are blighted by the label they’ve been given: terrorist.

Another damnation of this declaration is the fact that most of ‘terrorist’ attacks that had taken place in the US after 9/11 would not have been prevented by this declaration had it been made at that time, including the San Bernardino shooting, which a government spokesperson had quoted while announcing the Executive Order. Meanwhile, the two biggest terrorist safe havens, Pakistan and Afghanistan, were not included in this ban. Maybe they were just a part of the Trump’ family’s business interests.

The final nail in the coffin of this Executive Order has pierced one of America's core values: acceptance. One of the things the nation has been known for is its openness towards other communities and secularity. However, that seems to be changing. Although the order wasn’t technically termed as anti-Muslim, it was very clear from Trump’s campaign rhetoric that the ban was aimed at Muslim refugees; a Christian refugee from these countries would find it easier to enter the United States as compared to a Muslim refugee (if at all he or she is admitted). Later, Trump even admitted that he was looking to help Christian refugees more than Muslim refugees.

What Mr Trump may not realize is that he is actually helping the ISIS by directly feeding their propaganda channels. Owing to such racism and xenophobia, young Muslims are becoming more likely to believe that “the West is against them”, and more would now wish to join the ISIS in hopes of “destroying Western civilization”. Thus, by expressing his racist views in policy, the new American President has probably given the failing ISIS another lifeline to wage terror attacks against his own country. Similarly, as refugees remain hopeless, they will start believing in the ISIS’s promises and join them. Even if they don’t directly join the ISIS, a huge anti-American sentiment will hang over the Middle East. Already, knee-jerk reactions have occurred, with Iran revoking entry visas to Americans, and Iraq planning to do the same. Meanwhile, in response to the order, the UN Human Rights Commission has declared this ban as unlawful with respect to human rights as discrimination against countries is prohibited under the Charter. Also, many of the United States’ allies have raised their eyebrows, with the French Government and the influential German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, both condemning the ban and arguing against discrimination.

However, the usual coterie of far-right leaders have gathered in support of Trump: the French National Front’s Marine Le Pen and Britain’s Nigel Farage, the most ardent supporter of Brexit, both talked about how this move was correct. Meanwhile, the Dutch far-right leader, Geert Wilders, spoke on how Muslims and freedom supposedly can’t coexist. With such reactions, a trend is visible: far-right leaders are actually supporting Trump’s efforts, and this trend of Islamophobia is spreading globally, helped by the public endorsement of the President of the United States through this Order. Sadly, even though technology is helping to break the traditional barriers, it’s the Earth’s most powerful man who is intent building them again.

In all this, Trump has forgotten one question: What about the plight of thousands of refugees stuck in transit? His signature has brought uncertainty in their lives, many of whom have no idea where to go. Those trying to escape terrorism have been branded as terrorists, while the countries trying their best to fight terrorism have been labelled as terrorist outposts and safe havens. Conclusively, it is this sad move that has imperilled the spirit and future of many, both within the US and outside, all under the ironic pretext of “Making America Great Again.”
As a shy adolescent entering the gates of Chandbagh, I was overwhelmed by the School's enduring legacy. My relatives always made it a point to remind me of the high expectations bestowed on me by saying that I was following the footsteps of Rajiv Gandhi and Abhinav Bindra among many significant others. What was taken for granted at that point was that this institution would mould me in a manner which is engineered to guarantee success. Make no mistake, I have relished my time in Doon and it has taught me a myriad set of things which I otherwise wouldn't have learnt. All I am saying is that it's time that we deliberate on a matter that has been talked about in dormitory gossip sessions but never seriously regarded as a barrier to our School's pursuit of excellence. The idea I am referring to is that of an all-round education that our School proudly professes to deliver. Initially, when we think of an 'all-round education', it does make sense. When a student enters The Doon School, he does not always know where his interests lie. But thanks to an 'all-round education' he is exposed to a plethora of extra-curricular pursuits. So, participating in a multitude of activities helps him find his passion. If this is a good thing, which indeed it is, then why – you may ask – am I questioning this system? That's because 'all-round education' is an impediment to specialisation, the latter which I believe is necessary in today's educational atmosphere. To give an example, if a C-Former wants to specialise in cricket, then in the coming years of his adolescence there simply aren't enough opportunities for him to do so beyond the cricket season. The same goes for most sports in School. Because of the lack of adequate infrastructure or simply the effectiveness of our schedule, most sports in School don't receive those extra hours of practice that allow students to develop from good player into a great one. What doesn't help is that many look up to awards in our School that signify reasonable proficiency in all spheres rather than excellence in a few. For instance, even though the idea of a General Proficiency Cup is to reward people who excel in varied interests, in many cases it compels people to pursue activities in all spheres. This is because they believe that pursuing a vast number of activities is the only way to have a successful Dosco life. Moreover, the environment of the School is such that someone who does reasonably well in all spheres (i.e. a 'stud') is more celebrated than someone who solely focuses on one field. To give some evidence of the latter, a person who devotes all his attention to academics is labelled as a 'rutt' while someone who only focuses on sports is labelled as a 'jock'. These labels almost always carry negative connotations with them and show that the School community believes there's a problem with that particular individual which needs to be resolved. Till now I have been assuming that a singular focus on a particular activity is better than average competency at multiple activities. The logic behind this assumption is that a singular and relentless focus with unbridled determination is what enables an individual to push himself beyond what is expected of him. It is this very ruthless pursuit of excellence that distinguishes a 'great person' from someone who is merely 'good'. When studying science, do students truly care about the fact that Albert Einstein did not excel at football or that Isaac Newton did not play the piano? To the history enthusiasts, does it really matter that Jawaharlal Nehru did not dance as well as Michael Jackson? The answer to all these questions is a resounding 'No'. What characterises them is their proficiency in their field. While I am sure that we have heard enough of this ‘specialisation’ debate in recent times, I want to go a step further and argue that specialisation in today's competitive world is indeed required, for we live in a world where esteemed colleges demand a 99% as an admission requirement, and professional sports teams have chances of acceptance less than 10%. I feel the need to clarify that, at times, a person might have varied interests and therefore falls outside the ambit of my article. All I oppose is the idea of pursuing activities aimlessly in the hope that it will improve an one's precious 'CV' that has seemingly become a Dosco's ultimate goal. The Doon School has been known for producing students who are well-rounded. But in today's era of cut-throat competition, do we really need this type of holistic education? Do we really need to have played a sport or an instrument in School to have made our time here worthwhile? In short, do we really need an education that prompts one to become the clichéd “jack of all trades but master of none”?

It is important to remember that our School's ethos was conceived over 80 years ago, and some of those principles have become obsolete. It is time we rethink them, so that our students are successful in the real world after they leave. As Winston Churchill would say, “To improve is to change; to perfect is to change often.”
This week served as a continuation of the handing out of responsibilities to the S-Form, while (we), the Prefects, fit ourselves into our new roles. Meanwhile, the A-Transition form continued their Pre-Board misery, with many burning the midnight oil to finish their courses, or trying to do so, if we the Prefects enforce lights out. Today most will leave for a month long hiatus to study for the real behemoth, while some may continue their Home study here in School. Speaking of academics, even the SCs have their viva's going on. Meanwhile, SC-IB is not looking like it's leaving any time soon, with classes as per schedule for them.

Last Saturday's assembly served as a platform for the new School Captain to air his vision for the School in its near future, even though many weren't listening due to the nature of addressing a standing assembly for longer than the usual two minute attention span. The 'places to be' seem to be gathering dust at all times except meals, as no one has really gone out of their way to sit on them. Considering the bitter cold, it wasn't likely that they would anyway. However, they may see better visitation during the March Final Trials, the mention of which is a reminder for some to finally start studying. Although the 'scoping' season may be over for the students, this classic Dosco phenomenon has evolved to higher levels with recent openings for teachers. Multiple reports suggesting a couple of spots for Assistant Housemastership for the next academic year have flooded the School's gossip channels. While these reports do mention the various candidates for the same, we'd prefer in this column to let them stay obscure and keep the suspense for just a little longer.

In another competition, the Inter-House Senior Cricket Matches are upon us, with frantic practices being conducted over the past fifteen days. However, it has indeed been short, so the season should be an even affair, although the School Cricket Captain's House Team is the clear favourite. We are also about to see an unseen phenomenon, with the upcoming Inter-House Quiz Competition including the outgoing SCs. Another surprise is tomorrow's Sunday brunch, which had a rather inauspicious introduction at Chambers (again, according to multiple reports). To conclude, it will be interesting to see how it goes, and how many people actually decide to sacrifice their beauty sleep.