A Cultural Thaali

Post the Diwali break last year, I wrote an article for the *Weekly*, (Issue No. 2476) where I highlighted India's cultural diversity and the reasons we should cherish it. This is a continuation of the same piece, but with another year of my mulling over what makes a 'truly diverse' nation.

Last year, while driving through the Nizamuddin Darga Road in Delhi during the festive season, it was the faded austerity that provided a striking contrast to the rest of the city's rather colourful enthusiasm. I criticised this, giving the example of the Mughal era, when Diwali festivities included the Muslim emperor lighting the 'akash diya' above the iconic Red Fort, for which the Sikh community donated oil and Muslims provided cotton (*Batti*). There could not be a better example of India's composite culture. Last year, seeing the primarily Muslim inhabited area of Delhi sombre, I felt that the residents should not miss out on their fair share of 'phool jhadies'! I wanted everyone to join in the festivities and, perhaps, celebrate Diwali like I did.

Now as the year has gone by, not only has the sale of 'phool jhadies' been banned across the capital, but I have also realised that I am now eminently proud of the 'striking' austerity. The beauty of Indian pluralism and syncretism has contributed to the inclusiveness of Indian culture, where you can be several things, and one thing: you can be a good Haryanvi, a good Christian and a decent Indian all at once. This is truly remarkable. Therefore, the only thing that ought be celebrated by everyone isn't 'Diwali', but an 'Indian identity'.

It is unfortunate that many Doscos—even seniors—choose to be ignorant about their country

Living in a melting pot of culture often encourages one to reflect on issues of communal differences and diversity, and how it is imperative to tread a delicate balance. Religious harmony and unity have contributed to India's economic success in the past, when India gained the popular title of 'The Golden Sparrow' (*Sonay ki Chidiya*) less than four-hundred years ago. The importance of our cultural heritages and the miracle of their co-existence within one national boundary is a matter of justifiable pride. Secularism and diversity are the cornerstone of our vibrant country and deep-rooted democracy.

Well Done!

Kings of the Ring

Strings of Success

Around the World in 80 Words

An Uzbek truck driver was accused of killing eight people in Manhattan. The Supreme Court passed a ruling that allows women to abort without the consent of their husbands. A blast in boiler pipes at NTPC killed twenty people in Raebareli. Shinzo Abe was re-elected the prime minister of Japan. Xi Jinping had his doctrine included in the Communist Party’s constitution. Indian badminton player Srikanth climbed to world number two ranking. India won its first T20 match against New Zealand.

If you have no critics, you’ll likely have no success.

Malcolm X

—

A New Arrival

The School welcomes its newest member, Mr Arun Bhatt, who shall be joining the Math Department.

We wish him a fruitful tenure at Chandbagh!

Obituary

The Weekly regrets to inform the community of the passing away of Professor Krishnamoorthy Srinivas (ex 186-T, Batch of 1949), on November 1, 2017. Professor Srinivas was a highly respected and internationally renowned Neurologist and a pioneer in Community Neurology and the founder of several philanthropic projects in Chennai.

Our sincere condolences to the bereaved family members and friends.

Kudos!

—

Step Up

Arhant Khullar, Akshat Jha and Rithik Hingorani were awarded Dance Colours for their contribution to the activity.

Congratulations!

—

Raising Awareness

Ameya Shawak
to prevent federalism to turn into sectarianism and promoting a robust educational system, which addresses perennial deficiencies in the system, will further reinforce our values.

We need to understand that Indian patriotism is not based on traditional variables. In a nation with such a multifarious population, it is not religion, language, ethnicity or race that binds the country together, since all the above are found here in different capacities; it is that of a land united by the idea of pluralist democracy, where one embraces many. It is famously said, that if the United States of America is a melting pot, then India is a thaali, where each dish may not necessarily mix with the next, but surely belongs together on the same plate.

The Chinese Dream

Less than a month ago, The Economist called Xi Jinping the world's most powerful man. His rapidly increasing political clout, owing to the meteoric rise of China in the economic sphere, has aggrandised his power. Meanwhile, the historic 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China has reinforced the same message. With the ‘Xi Jinping Thought’ being penned into the Party's constitution, the incumbent president has elevated himself to a stature few can ever hope to match. Some political commentators are even comparing him to Mao Zedong, the founding father of the People's Republic of China.

Over the past five years of his presidency, Xi Jinping has made every attempt in ensuring that the Dragon soars high over the others. Amongst his strong administrative manoeuvres, the most notable ones are his strict anti-corruption campaign (in which he expelled many of the Party's senior members), and his undeterred stance on internet censorship in China. However, a key feature that sets him apart from many of his contemporaries and predecessors alike is his assertive foreign policy. His expansionist policy in the South China Sea and his unyielding posture in dealing with Japan, a country that has always been at odds with China, serve testament to his hawkish stance. Moreover, even in the land disputes with its neighbour India, Xi Jinping has resolutely rejected taking no for an answer. Through his uncompromising stance, Xi has asserted China's position as a major nation that has the ability to control and dictate geopolitics in the world today.

Xi Jinping has also championed the idea of free trade and globalisation, an economic doctrine that China subscribed to only in the late 70s. Donald Trump's repeated apprehensions regarding a liberal international order do not seem to have hindered China's economic ambition. This comes at a time when the global economic reins are slipping away from the hands of the developed western economies and the contours of power politics are gravitating towards the developing countries in Asia. In today's multipolar world, where many players are attempting to consolidate their share of the global power, China, with Xi Jinping at its helm, could be a contender to oust the US as the apparent ‘world superpower’.

However, despite Xi's prowess as a firm leader, his aspirations paint a highly worrying picture. Admittedly, his most keen interest lies in power consolidation, a claim that can be attested by the fact that he has not named an heir apparent to the Chinese presidential throne, and has not shown any signs of doing so. Furthermore, the fact that he is the chairperson of many instrumental decision-making committees (including all the military ones) in the country reflects his unwavering will to consume all positions of authority, a practice in direct contrast to his predecessor Hu Jintao, who prided himself on being the ‘first among equals’.

Finally, Xi Jinping's route of power consolidation, among other things, hints at a pattern which has grown extremely common in the world today: the rise of one-man rule. This applies to both small and powerful nations in the world today, and has led to the erosion of democratic principles around the globe. If the pattern continues unabated, the results could be catastrophic, to say the least.
In 2003, when India bought the rights to host the 2010 Commonwealth Games, many doubted the nation’s ability to host a spectacle of such scale. Come 2010, many of these fears resurfaced. As the Commonwealth Games approached, these concerns were accentuated. Media reports highlighted loopholes in infrastructure development and hygiene standards. When the day of the competition dawned, the grandeur of the opening ceremony along with a largely successful tournament over the days to come served to silence the most vociferous critics. Unfortunately, the corruption scandal surrounding the event left an indelible stain on the country’s capability to host an international competition in the future. Thus, when India was chosen to host the FIFA Under-17 World Cup in 2017, the country saw the tournament as a second chance to dispel any uncertainty lingering from 2010.

Preparations began in earnest from 2015. Six stadiums were chosen from across the nation for the tournament. The largest of these was the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata, with the others being in Kochi, Navi Mumbai, Margao, Guwahati and New Delhi. Each stadium was overhauled. Changes ranged from new seating to improved dressing rooms and an upgraded sewage system. The tournament kicked off on October 6, with the first round of games being played that day. Notable among these was India’s match against the United States. Despite the fact that India was trounced 3-0, this was still the first football match the hosts played at a FIFA tournament! As the days progressed, spectators witnessed several stirring moments, the greatest of which was by Jeakson Thounaojam, who became the first Indian to score an international goal. While the tournament showcased the talent of many of football’s finest prospects, including Borussia Dortmund winger Jadon Sancho and Manchester City starlet Phil Foden, the final boiled down to an intense match between Spain and England, held at Salt Lake Stadium. While the Spaniards commanded an imposing lead in the beginning, England, with the help of Foden, staged an inspiring comeback to beat their opponents 5-2, being crowned World Champions and bringing the tournament to its conclusion.

While the U-17 World Cup was by no means an event matching the scale of the Commonwealth Games, it was well handled by the Indian Government. It has certainly bolstered India’s credibility to host an event of such a grand scale. Furthermore, the tournament catered to a nation with millions of football fans who do not always get an opportunity to watch the best talent in the sport. India is very capable of investing and performing in sports other than cricket. If the dedication of the government towards the U-17 team is anything to go by, then the team - and football overall - have a bright future in the India.

Rearing Culture

The Doon School Weekly interviewed Mr Babar Afzal, a McKinsey analyst turned shepherd.

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): After hearing about the death of 25,000 goats due to starvation in Kashmir, you left your job as a McKinsey analyst to become a shepherd. What motivated you to pursue this?
Babar Afzal (BBA): The only reason I can think of is that as a child I liked playing with goats. It so happens that there are many people in the region who have made millions selling pashmina, and when something like this happens, no one raises a voice. As I had worked in many parts of the world, I became sensitive towards climate change, and when such an event took place due to the same reason, I knew it was my calling. DSW: Being someone who left Kashmir at an early age, how difficult was it for you to fit into that society again?
BBA: Honestly, once I had left Kashmir, I did not have any plans of going back. However, when I read the news about the goats, I decided to go back and help the people there. So, when I entered that community, I became a part of it easily. Like everybody else, I, too, became a proper nomad, by leaving my previous life behind.

DSW: After hearing about the goats, you left Kashmir was the security threat due to the rising rate of terrorism. So, can you please comment on the state of terrorism now?
BBA: I feel that people have highly exaggerated the problem of terrorism in Kashmir. Instead, the problem that Kashmir is actually facing is climate change. Terrorism is just a miniscule issue in front of this mammoth problem of climate. Moreover, I also came to realize that I must use my previous knowledge and work experience to rectify the problem in the Valley.

DSW: A reason you cited earlier for leaving Kashmir was the security threat due to the rising rate of terrorism. So, can you please comment on the state of terrorism now?
BBA: I feel that people have highly exaggerated the problem of terrorism in Kashmir. Instead, the problem that Kashmir is actually facing is climate change. Terrorism is just a miniscule issue in front of this mammoth problem of climate.
change. I understand that we have to consider the political reality, but we have also witnessed extremely destructive floods, devastating earthquakes, cloudbursts and many other natural calamities. I think that these are the real threats, and when everyone finally identifies them, a concerted effort will be made to conduct collaborative research in this sphere, which will save countless lives in the future.

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Rap: Boon or Bane?

Disclaimer: I do not wish to offend anybody through this article. I believe that all music is different and is appreciated by different people with different tastes. This is not an attempt to put down rap as a genre or those who enjoy rap.

Rap as a genre is not something that has recently developed; it existed, according to studies, even before Hip Hop. It was first heard through the Griots of West Africa as spoken word over rhythmic beats on drums and logs. They sang - or rather, spoke - of the might of the Lord, stories of the past and controversial topics of the time.

Jazz and Blues also contained rap, terming it as ‘singspiel’ (spoken singing), which were about politics, oppression, economics and the Black slaves’ struggles in pre-abolition North America. The intention of these ‘raps’ was to share the struggle of the slaves and incite a revolution. For example, by portraying the slave as a rabbit and the master as a fox, “Bre’r Rabbit tales” spoke of stories of slaves outsmarting their masters to escape plantations, and successfully spread propaganda behind the façade of a comical adventure. Rap is used to talk about controversy, and speak the minds of the people.

The purpose of rap is to have a purpose.

In today’s day and age though, rap has lost a little of its original purpose. From politics and economics, it has gone to being about money, women and drugs. Obviously there are rappers such as Eminem who still believe in the ‘old’ rap but there has been a large shift in the focus of the genre as a whole. This drastic change is disquieting.

The rap of an era reflects the mindset of society of that time. During the Black rights movements and the fight for women rights, a lot of rap music was released and spread relating to specifically these topics. Rap had a purpose. Rap had meaning. It spoke for all those who were oppressed, all those who didn’t have a voice. It gave kids inspiration and vision. It could influence political decisions and run or ruin governments. It could change the way people thought and acted. Because of rap, there were protests and because of protests, there was more rap.

The reason why a particular piece of music is liked by the masses is because they can relate to what it speaks about. If people enjoy a piece of music about drugs, meaningless sex and disloyalty to a partner, there is clearly a serious problem in the mindset of society. The youth of today is listening to this kind of music at a very young and impressionable age. There has been a huge shift in the mindset of society for the worse and such music is largely to be blamed.

Take love for example. Cheating on the one you love, having multiple affairs on the side and paying women to ‘fall in love’ with you are some things that today’s rap songs talk about. This, I believe, has led to a decrease in the value of relationships and an increase in divorces. Although discord, cheating and divorce did exist in earlier times too, they were discreet and private affairs. Nowadays, these aren’t just apparent; they’re accepted and through some of the rap songs, even celebrated. The line between love and lust is slowly getting blurred. The value of a relationship, sharing something special with the one you love - is under attack and that is a cause for worry.

I feel that this issue needs to be urgently addressed, otherwise, the coming era will be one characterized by unfaithfulness and trust issues. This may induce an element of hollowness which could undermine the bond partners share. That is why the meaning behind rap has to be brought back.

Once there is purpose, rap will return to its original glory and the voice of those who aren’t heard will be heard again.
A Weinstein Workplace

Karan Sampath denounces sexual harassment present in workplaces across the world.

There are few criminal cases in this world which have attracted global attention and there are fewer still which have brought to light endemic problems in society, inspiring change and reform. The most recent addition to this list was the infamous arrest of Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein. This, once again, brought to light the rampant sexual harassment that women as well as men endure in the film industry—and other spheres of life—across the world.

For decades, film industries have been ruled by producers and directors, with actors often having to pander to their whims and fancies, no matter the nature of the demand. At times, men have dominated the upper echelons of the industry and this has led to the victimisation of women who found themselves in a vulnerable position. From Fox News anchors Roger Ailes and Bill O’Reilly to the President of the United States, the allegations are rampant. It is imperative to tackle this menace in our society today. The first and foremost question is why are these allegations by women so many, so sudden and so delayed? In understanding why there were so many, one only needs to look at the position these men are in. From famous comedians like Bill Cosby to most recently, House of Cards protagonist Kevin Spacey, all such people are in a position where they can wield substantial power. Moreover, when prominent actresses reveal their harrowing experience there is always a fear of being labelled as a victim. This is exactly why women like Gretchen Carlson and Ambra Battilana must be admired, for it was their initial allegations which sparked the #MeToo campaign, which sullied the reputation of moguls who thought they could act with impunity. Furthermore, to understand why they were so delayed, it is important to take into account a victim’s mental state following such horrific acts. Such an assault can disturb one’s inner sense of stability and security. It takes time, therefore, to come to terms with oneself. Finally, this is not to say that men do not suffer the same harassment, however, the scale is currently disproportionately tilted towards women.

From famous comedians like Bill Cosby to most recently, House of Cards protagonist Kevin Spacey, all such people are in a position where they can wield substantial power.

Having understood what constitutes the problem, let us look at the efforts already underway today. In the media industry, a hitherto secret document containing anonymous reports of misdemeanor titled “Shitty Media Men” was published on Reddit. On social media, there are reconciliatory movements in response to #MeToo such as #IHave and #IWill, where men pledge to contain this plague themselves. However, developments in the political realm are disquieting, to say the least. The regressive bill to ban abortion has just been tabled by Republican senators, which will dent the progress made by these social media campaigns if passed.

Finally, what steps can be undertaken to address this brewing problem more aggressively? I believe three steps need to be taken urgently. First, we need to ensure that if there is only a single victim, he/she needs to be given more credit and protection, so that victims are encouraged to speak out about what transpired. Government funded programmes which sensitize society will address this issue. Second, people like Weinstein need to be made an example of, to discourage anyone from following his path. Finally, we need to start educating our youth in a way which will foster a better understanding of the importance of gender equality. As millennials take to the workplace, they need to be told that harassment in any form is wrong. A persuasive counter-narrative needs to be created to offset the conventional discourse in the patriarchal world we live.

There have been few instances in history where we all face a greater calling and unite in the face of a greater threat. The present issue calls for such unity, for it is only if we all unite will we be able to overcome it. It is imperative that we achieve gender equality in order to preserve our social fabric and maintain our three core ideals: liberty, equality and fraternity.
Dear (self-proclaimed) socially intelligent beings,

It was perturbing to see the flagship publication of the School make a mockery of the sensitive issue of S-form second term in the controversial expose it published in Issue No. 2481. The *Weekly* published the ‘Roving Eye’ without considering the time during which it was printed and the far-reaching implications of such a piece, on not only the people involved, but also on the general atmosphere of the School. Thus, this letter is addressed to the people who were a part of the decision-making process (especially the higher authorities) that allowed for such a farce to be printed in the first place.

Prefects represent the beliefs and values of our School, making their appointment a serious affair. Having good and capable prefects is essential for any institution to function, and the fact that the Roving Eye mocks this entire process through a very subtle veil is disturbing.

The *Weekly* (again) fails to understand that it holds a great amount of power, one that it has grossly misused in this case.

S-Form second term is a sensitive phase of a Dosco’s life in School as it leads to the appointment of prefects and other captaincies. As it happens every year, people change, friendships are broken, and dreams are shattered. This is because the position of a prefect gives something that most of us desire — power, fame and glory - and to achieve this, people tend to take measures and steps they normally wouldn’t. This leads to inter-form rivalries, and in many cases a lot more than that, as we witnessed earlier this term. While as an open community, we are open to jokes and criticism, I feel that the authors, in fulfilling their purpose of “keeping the transparency of School intact”, took this too far. It was sad to see that the Editor-in-Chief of the *Weekly* used his ‘final issue’ to ‘leave his mark on the School community’, in this manner. Or was it printed this just because he was hapless due to the absence of an extraordinarily written piece?

Moreover, the *Weekly* is an institution that also acts as a newsletter to the Old Boys of the School, to inform them about the happenings in and around School. However, the day this article was published, forget Old Boys, plenty of juniors and teachers were seen asking the *Roving Wolves* to decode the terms used in the article. I can assure the *Weekly* that not even a quarter of the juniors understood who the “Kingmaker” was, and what “Berry House” stood for. How does the *Weekly* expect someone who is on the other side of the world to understand who the “Bloody Joker” is, or what “lonely zero’s email controversies” are? It is worrying to see that the *Weekly* is not being utilised for its actual purpose, and instead is being used to make a joke on the future leaders of the School and is turning itself into a “gossip column”, as most people on campus have termed it this year.

Certainly, at this point, the Editor-in-Chief is probably telling himself that we intolerant juniors cannot even take a joke. However, all jokes and gossip have their limits. People who were mentioned weren’t particularly happy, proving that these jokes did, indeed, go too far. Further, the fact that the *Weekly* assumes to know everything that surrounds the lives of these people and writes about them is condemnable. No one - even the most ‘socially intelligent’ ones - can know the circumstances of someone else. Also, considering the environment of anticipation within School at this point of time, Roving Eye shouldn’t have been printed in the manner and at the time when it was. Besides, by claiming that people have “locked up the race”, the *Weekly* commits another serious error. What if these people are not appointed? The School community bears witness to such an event annually. The effects are profound: once you increase the hopes of someone, and he does not get what you make him believe he deserves, the pain is greater. Thus, the *Weekly* (again) fails to understand that it holds a great amount of power, one that it has grossly misused in this case.

I hope I have managed to get my message across to the School community and more so to the authors of the Roving Eye. I can assure the *Weekly* that this meagre attempt at poking fun at individuals was not funny (evident through the use of euphemisms), but rather detrimental to the School community. Its purpose of trying to maintain transparency, certainly, could have been improved.

In any case, now that the tenure of our ‘socially intelligent beings’ has ended, I sincerely hope that the new Editorial Board ensures something like this does not happen in the future. The *Weekly* must understand the profound effect and power it has within School. The Board must realise that “with great power comes great responsibility”.

Warm Regards,
Kanav Agarwal

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**Letter to the Editor**

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Warm Regards,
Kanav Agarwal
The Week Gone By

Aayush Chowdhry

After the insufficient time of the ACT, simultaneous with the conclusion of the RSIC Leadership conference, the weekend was a relatively calmer one—for juniors and seniors alike. On the contrary, the week was packed with a plethora of activities; however the self-management that our ‘future leaders’ learned over the weekend did help them to find time to make plans to watch Ragnarok on their next outing. The week also saw the adoption of the new schedule with whispers of ‘winter has come’ rampant in School and invaluable fifteen minutes being added to our sleep.

Monday morning assembly provided an effective start to the week with the ‘vicious rumour’ (as the Headmaster put it) of ‘No Shave November’ being confirmed. The beard competition provided for much testosterone-filled rivalries. Speaking of rivalries, the Assembly also brought the first set of appointments—served with surprises and disappointments—as the Editors-in-Chief of the School’s Annual Photo Book were announced. Even the ‘flagship’ publication of School saw a change in administration with a new Master-in-Charge, although, the five Editors still provide for an interesting tussle.

On the sporting front, tennis, table tennis, badminton and squash inter-house matches were fought intensely throughout the week. Reports of the sighting of the ‘stud’ were also widespread—with a tennis racket in one hand, a squash racket in another and a TT bat between his knees, all while marching. This week also saw a lot of movement in an out of School (to track which some enthusiastic students have decided to make an Outing Web App) with the return of the IPSC music, cricket, boxing and athletics teams as we celebrated their achievements. Sadly, we also bid farewell—albeit for a brief while—to the ‘Big Three’, after the Academic Council meeting, who travel to interview the future of Chandbagh (out of 450 prospects, not 1000); but not before welcoming the newest addition to our family: Mr A. Bhatt. What lies ahead is an even more eventful five weeks but for now, let us all have an auspicious Guru Nanak Jayanti and a productive long weekend!

Crossword | Awareness Campaigns

Across
3. The ‘Terry Fox Run’ is an annual charity event to raise awareness and funds for _______.
5. The ‘Grand Canyon campaign’ was _____ Club’s campaign to stop the building of two dams in the Grand Canyon.
6. ‘Seize Your _______’ is a global campaign by WWF to promote clean and renewable energy.
8. ‘No Shave _______’ is a movement in which men don’t shave their facial hair for a month to raise awareness about men’s health.
9. ‘Break the _______’ is a Brazilian campaign to raise awareness about violence against women.
10. The ‘Red _______’ is a program by the US Salvation Army to feed poor people during Christmas and Thanksgiving.

Down
1. ‘If London Were _______’, a campaign video by ‘Save the Children’, showed what the life of British kids would be during a civil war.
2. This campaign, initiated by UN Women, aims for the advancement of women.
4. ‘Animals in _______’ is a campaign by ‘World Animal Protection’ to give emergency veterinary care to animals after calamities.
7. ‘Early _______ Matter’ is a campaign by UNICEF to educate people about childhood development.

Answers to This Week’s Crossword

Source: http://worksheets.theteacherscorner.net/make-your-own/crossword/

The views expressed in articles printed are their authors’ own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Weekly or its editorial policy.

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