

# The Doon School

# WEEKLY

Founders' Edition

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Cover drawn by Late Mr Rathin Mitra  
*Art Master, 1955-1981*  
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## *The Weekly*

The Doon School Weekly is the flagship student-run publication of The Doon School, Dehradun. Established on February 29th, 1936; it aims to serve as a journal of record and platform for free expression amongst members of the School's community. Publishing contemporary viewpoints, creative writing and school-related criticism – among others – on a regular basis, the publication has catalogued the spirit and history of Chandbagh throughout 81 years of existence, printing every full week since its inception.

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# The Last Editorial

Arjun Singh | Editor-in-Chief

It's two o'clock in the morning. The fan of the Publications' Room whirls with a tinkering sound only too familiar. Two are sleeping, while the others work with their heads glued to screens. I'm used to this. I see it while sitting at the back desk: a moment that for years I've cherished, and know that is coming to an end.

At this hour, everything is placid.

A rising feeling has now occurred; every particle within seems vibrating to a climax. Perhaps it's nostalgia, or maybe fear. I'm not sure. In the past week of work, over the long nights spent without sleep over-and-over again, I've not had the time to sit down and think. It's only now I feel wisps of it – the finality, the ironic mix of sadness and satisfaction as I prepare to let go of the most daunting experience of my life.

## Thirty Issues Down

When I assumed the office of Editor-in-Chief, I set out with a vision to bring the *Weekly* back to what I'd considered to be its 'gold standard' – a publication of high quality, abundant quantity and engaging readers of all strokes, stripes and colours across the Chandbagh creation. In my younger years, I'd felt that the *Weekly* had become a 'shell of itself'. Our stride had fallen to a cripple, for while we did publish quality, it wasn't of the kind that our School always looked for. There was something missing. We hadn't put our ears to the tracks, and heard the kinetic pulse that the School constantly hummed in its frenetic, fast-paced, forward momentum.

That had to change.

So, we began to publish as usual, but published freely. This year, no Dosco who could and did write would be denied a chance to express themselves across the pages of the *Weekly*. True to our name, we'd help with the quality as an 'Editorial' Board. In effect, we were now the facilitators of content and creativity, not censors. The idea of free speech would be brought back to Chandbagh as it was in the days of the 70s and 80s: not merely for boys to rant, but for boys to reveal the truth. To discuss, disagree, debate and deconstruct ideas that shaped our community at great depth – the aim of such discourse being, hopefully, to improve it. It was a bold task, and would require sacrifices. But we on the *Weekly* were determined to fulfill this yearning, this lost duty - that each student who picked up the Issue, would put it down with a newly thinking mind.

As an equal goal, we sought to give the *Weekly* more variety as the School's flagship publication. To us, each Issue would have to connect with every reader – to draw them in, and keep them reading. It occurred to us that our position, unlike the thematic releases every term, gave us the power to print – quite literally – any article of any genre; in any nature, style or form.

And we did. We printed articles across a spectrum whose ends we kept pushing. We increased the standard page-size from eight to ten (sometimes twelve!) We printed some of the most controversial, thought-provoking pieces I'd ever read. Indeed, sacrifices were made: we began to feel, amidst the praise, hatred and anger at our pieces. Readers were pleased as much as put off. Some even branded us as a "crib-column" at one point, and at times moments seemed as if everything had gone wrong, even though we worked so hard and thought it was right.

Regardless, *people were reading*.

They began to talk about the issues raised. They debated and discussed all that hit them on a never ending sweep of *Weekly* editions filled to the brim with content to choose from. From 'The Cool Gang Conundrum' to 'A Tale of Two Mafias', 'The Tragedy of Genius' and 'Conspicuous Contempt' – Issues packed something that could stir up both passion and profound thought. Often people disagreed, but that was the point. In between, we did spice up the flavour with Salman and Omar's memorable Week



Gone Bys, not to mention the flux of Roving Eyes and ‘The Doom School Cheekly’ on April Fools’. Technology was covered, poetry was published, obituaries were written, avant-garde cartoons were drawn and an endless stream of Point-Counterpoints & contemporaries flowed; even a new, modern design was implemented. Everything seemed running at full steam – each week, with all the praise and criticism, vibrant and energetic, with a Board ready and willing to work.

## An Epilogue

*All good things come to an end*, or so the proverb goes. With this Founders’ Day Issue, my time as Editor-in-Chief and member of the Board draws to a similar close. To regard these four years as ‘well spent’ would be a pitiful understatement. Needlessly, the *Weekly* has been the transformative agent in my life of adolescence. I wouldn’t possess half my intellect, or half the knowledge and experience I’ve acquired if I hadn’t been a Board member. In this, my three predecessors – from Kamdar, to Bhavanani and Kediya – have unknowingly been the some of the tallest figures in this light. Larger-than-life, each has left a space behind for the other to fill. I hope that my successor will do the same for me. As I now depart, to them and so many others, I can only be thankful.

I thank this Editorial Board for their loyal fidelity over an entire year of service under me. Supportive through tough times, forthright in duty and faithful throughout; they’ve been the *real* pillars upholding our work this year. I’ll be evermore grateful for their joining me on this long, wild and endeavoring ride. They are, without a doubt, the iron frame that holds this publication together.

I thank our outgoing Master-in-Charge, Ms Anamika Ghose, who will depart the *Weekly* with me after six dedicated years to the Board. Despite our differences, she and Ms Purnima Dutta silently defended my name and our right to free speech year-round, in the face of factors that are yet, and perhaps forever, unknown to us. Undoubtedly, they are the unsung heroes of our successes.

And finally, I’d thank you, the readers of The Doon School Weekly. You are the ones whom we work tirelessly to serve with an Issue every Saturday – to enrich and activate the areas of your mind that’ll only serve to grow you for the better. It’s been a pleasure to have served you for this long, and your readership is the most the *Weekly* can and ever will ask for.

It’s now five o’clock. The sun’s coming up soon. A new day rises; a new journey begins.



## A Note on The Issue

*Over the course of this past year, the Weekly has sought to ensure its Issues are of high quality and plentiful quantity for all classes of readers to read. The Founders’ Issue is no different. This year, we’ve increased the Issue’s size to an unprecedented sixty pages – reflecting the bulk of qualitative writing submitted to the Weekly over the course of the Issue’s production. As you flip through the Issue, you’ll notice an increased usage of visual elements – especially cartoons based on Mohit Jayal’s famous ‘Dosco Penguin’ as well as pictures, which complement articles. While the Weekly is often distinguished from other publications on the basis of high-content standards, the Board this year recognizes that engaging design demands variation, especially in the visual realm. Therefore, don’t be surprised if you see headings, by-lines and pictures in different formats – each has been selected after careful consideration: appearing different whilst including common elements to both. Speaking of imagery, this year we’ve aimed to trace the story of a ‘Dosco’ as they once enter and, again, finally exit the gates of Chandbagh. For that, stay tuned to the bottom right corners of each page (for a surprise on that spot, don’t forget to quickly flip through pages)! Opposite these, you’ll find the genre icons, which denote the largest article on a two-page spread – custom made to remain distinguishable for easy reference. Lastly, do take note of poetry and Vox Populi (in Latin, Voice of the People) on different spreads as you explore the Issue, which have been added for your visual relief. With that, it’s best to keep it succinct, with the many surprises hidden in store across these pages. As products of our long efforts, we hope these changes and nuances keep you engaged as you read the Issue over Founder’s and beyond – and (hopefully) remain enraptured as you continue to do.*



# Celebrate the Difference

Mr Matthew Raggett | Headmaster

I have just spent the best part of a week at the HMC (Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference) annual general meeting and conference in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Belfast is a place I am familiar with, having been visiting regularly for the last 20 years; my wife is from Belfast. What I am not so familiar with, after an equal number of years working around the world, is a conference that is predominantly a UK based event. Of the several hundred regular HMC members there are 54 international members and about 30 of us were in Belfast.

Over the years going to conferences and workshops overseas that were often pitched at schools offering the International Baccalaureate, I have got used to the question, "where are you from?" meaning which country and city are you from, oh, and which school is that? For the first time in years the question, "where are you from?" came with many of the classist and societal undertones that I remember feeling when I left the UK in 1998. At that time I was a young teacher educated in a government school who found his way to a private boys' school in Northern England. I was struck by how much, in 2017, this establishment of a pecking order obstructs things, including productivity, making human connection and learning.

The theme of the conference was *Celebrate the Difference* and one of the big questions was diversity. The HMC is predominantly male and an entirely white affair, so as a white male I should have felt right at home.... but no. You see, having benefited from the sorts of mind changing perspectives brought about by living and working in places where one is different, I was struck by the unconscious bias and lack of consideration that many of the people around me were exhibiting. There were a handful of people of other nationalities in the room but many of them had done the opposite of what I have done. They had been working in the UK or in a British School of for the last 20 years and were fully encultured; they were speaking the same language of power, privilege and position. What was funny to me was that when I asked people whether this was a shared experience they said that yes, they had found it to be very much like that when they joined the HMC but after a few years they got to know some people and found it better... a few years!

This made me think of Doon and the

few years that it can take some boys to find their place in the school, to find happiness. The few years it can take to make it to B and A Form having been at the junior end of the pecking order and working your way up or towards the things that you want to be doing. I can see that this is also sometimes the same for the staff who come to the school with experience and wisdom from elsewhere and learn that some see it as being of limited value because it was gained somewhere else and far too recently to have really bedded in; what an awful shame.

I think this attitude, approach and culture is worth bringing to the attention to the community so that we are mindful of the way we might be perceived by others and are aware enough not to let it get in the way of our own productivity, human connection and learning. In the world outside the gates of Chandbagh there are remarkable things happening that we can all grow from, both professionally as students and teachers and personally as incomplete human beings. Of course we always want to know that others bring something to the table and have the requisite qualification and experience to add value, but when that addition of value is just to us (what value can this person be to me) it is usually obvious and our own value addition is already coming from entirely the wrong direction. Others are not just the resources, vehicles or obstacles that they seem to become at certain times of the year or in certain situations, to be used when needed and ignored when not. If someone is in the same place and time as you then they will probably be at least equally able to contribute, and great things happen when we listen, invite and give others opportunities; this is what equality and meritocracy mean in practice.

We must avoid putting barriers in the way of our learning when the default position should be one of curiosity, enthusiasm and trust if we truly mean to be role models from an aristocracy of service. This is what I found so unattractive in some of my peers in the UK last week and I know this is what others sometimes find unattractive in DoscOs when they meet groups of them at colleges, clubs or events; I know this because people write and tell me and, just occasionally, because I see it in that way we respond to others. We all know how to be the best versions of ourselves and there is so much good work being done by DoscOs, both under the banner of the school as well as independently from it. If we come across as aloof, uninterested and, worst of



all, arrogant, then we will be doing ourselves and the school an unnecessary disservice. We should be known for being great to work with, for helping things happen around us and for taking others with us; this is how to best serve a meritocratic India.

I have just read an interview with Sundar Pichai, Google's CEO, in which he talked about the liberation of moving to America and finding that he could take for granted that, after just one day, his opinions mattered. That aspect of the contribution culture does make for some of the most exciting learning environments in the world. When I visited an old student who was working at MIT, I was struck by all of the things they do there to remove the barriers to collaboration and development, once you have actually got in! Most of the walls inside the buildings are glass, undergraduates

## A Rebel With(out) a Cause

Various editorial members before me have written about the sense of nostalgia that pervades while passing the baton; a sense of longing for the not-so-distant past. My predecessors have stressed on how Weekly was an important part of their journey and how it has helped them transform. As a junior reading these pieces, I could never understand their point. After all, one must learn to move on. It is only at this stage that I realise the necessity of these pieces, for their importance lies not so much in their emotional goodbyes but the sense of gratitude one has for an institution that has helped them grow and develop. That being said, allow me to share my story - the shaping of a rebel.

On a wet August morning, the then Editor-in-chief walked up to a shy, stuttering B-former and told him he was on the board of the Weekly. What followed was the cycle of chasing seniors for their articles, learning standardisations, finishing meals early to attend meetings among many other things. Within these mundane exercises, I found what the Weekly stood for above all else: Freedom of Speech. Clichéd as it may sound, it is this very tool that our board members use on a daily basis to shed light on negligent practices or changes that should be made. Working for all this gave me the opportunity to shape the rebel inside me; a voice that questions the necessity of every action and inaction. The luxury of voicing your thoughts without restraint is perhaps the Weekly's most enduring legacy, concurrently its failure to do so would be its biggest failure.

Given the plight of journalists in this country, the freedom to voice your thoughts without fear has been

can see what is going on and can walk into any lab and there is unplanned space built into every new building because they know that something will happen from the collaboration that will require space to grow into; that's a growth mindset built into the fabric of the institution.

It is, however, the way people treat each other that allows a growth mindset to flourish and letting go of envy, ego and entitlement is the key. Truly we mean to be an aristocracy of service and for me that means doing all that we can to make our school the most exciting and energetic place to live, learn and work, dropping all of the barriers we can identify and sharing what we do as enthusiastically and openly as we can; this is how connections get made and how magic happens.

**Aryan Chhabra** | Editor

impugned. There's a climate of fear that's prevalent and that shouldn't be the case. It is up to us to protect this freedom given to us by our constitution. It will not be easy but then again that's all the more reason to be vigilant and unyielding. As is said by my seniors repeatedly, the most important character in English is probably the question mark-for without it we would still be thinking that abhorrent practices like Sati should be legal or the caste system should be practised. It is only when one uses this question mark on a daily basis-like we endeavour to do in the Weekly- that one realizes the need for changing the status quo to keep sync with the changing times.

If there's a parting message that comes with this editorial, it is this: Let us all be rebels. Let us never hesitate to question authorities if there's a need to do so. Let us use the freedom of speech so proudly enshrined in our constitution to bring out some positive changes in our beloved institution. In modern times, the word 'rebel' has a sense of negative connotation, which shouldn't be the case. In fact, many of our freedom fighters were considered rebels in their times! Flipping back pages of my journey with this publication, I have realised that the most memorable experiences I have had have been shaped in the publication room. When I see a junior laughing, I do not see his joy but my own as it used to be in the numerous times Weekly meetings became the avenue for interesting social conversations (as it still is!).

In the interests of total honesty, I have to admit that there were times when I could have contributed far more than I did. The



number of times I have been called upon to serve but didn't are many. While it is too late to change what's happened, I wish to stress on the fact that working for this publication is a very rewarding experience. The intrinsic value of working for institutions larger

than yourself can't summarised. So, to the Masters that've put up with my 'rebellious' presence and saved me repeatedly, to my juniors who've experienced my carelessness, and to the companions whose aptitude has forced me to uplift mine, I say: Thank you.

## Learning To Catch My Own Tail

**Nehansh Saxena** | Senior Editor

I am Ouroboros, the serpent catching his own tail by his mouth; I live through sullen days and nights as much as the surreal, in a cycle of constant re-creation. I am the red sun that rises yet again in the east of the sky for another morn. As I turn around in my bed wide-eyed in my sleepless slumbers, I see how things haven't changed at all; the elements are patient, and more importantly, constant. The archaic wood-framed windows haven't budged an inch, the white-washed walls leave an impression of the whispers they've held for years, and the view across to the field seems as fresh as the dew of dawn before PT every morning. As Apollo crosses the sky with the same gait as he did on my first day in Chandbagh six years ago, I realise how I wake up every morn with the same Picassoesque innocence and curiosity as the D-former who first entered from the Hyderabad Gate. The gains (or losses) in my school life I made are but a few holistic factors that sum up vectorially. As I briefly reflect on my immersions in The Weekly, I see how they added up invariably to form the variables of my realm, both creatively and organizationally.

The past four-and-a-half years with The Weekly could be described as a part of an experiential journey to navigate, explore, and share a blizzard of ideas and thoughts borne of the minds of a few of the best thinkers of campus. Each night, standing under the "weekly tree", not sparing our share of quips here and there, our meetings would turn over from frivolities like chuckling over the unquotable quotes to churning to the depth of some issues in School or even analysing the more abstract realms of literature. The innumerable times we found ourselves mulling

over seemingly wasteful topics simultaneously while working in the Publications Room now seem all the more worthwhile. Rendering poems and stories in a Wordsworth-like pensive mood, an old habit carried on and complemented my writing and turned into a companion to feed my soul. But that wasn't all.

The countless times I have been put on probation, or even "chucked out", made me realise the sense of identity that my association with the editorial board gave me. I don't know whether sometime in future I would consider this association an everlasting one, as I leave, I am aware that it is transient, just as association with School is. As I started off with the work in my relatively early years at Doon, I was able to hone my clerical skills - delivering skins in the dead of the night, repairing printers, and hair-splitting debates on design intricacies. I did find them detestable to the very core, not realising then, how beneficial they were in moulding me. I wouldn't like to miss out mentioning on the marathon editing and proof-reading sessions I have had the privilege to taste before almost every Founders' issue. In the guise of deterrents, these experiences have, in fact, developed my organisational and editing skills from various angles.

Ouroboros has found truth in his own self. I end where I began: as a wide, starry-eyed child yearning to see and be inspired by the expanse around him. The sun is the same as every morn, and so am I. The days and nights within these reddish-brown walls are but numbered. Though I would beg my exit from this identity of both the publication and school to be unencumbered to fly in the skies waiting outside these walls, I'll still glide out with this prize - the experience and memories - blithely.

## A Tryst with the Written Word

**Omar Chishti** | Senior Editor

As the deadlines for our final Founders issue fly in from afar, I find myself, for the first time in my life, struck with an acute case of writer's block. This Editorial is at the same time a coming-of-age piece; a farewell; and a thank you - one which I've known I had to write, in one capacity or the other, for over two years. Save the illusory instantaneity of the run towards

this final deadline, there's no rational excuse for feeling ill-prepared.

My journey to the Board was supposed to begin in my C-Form with a short draft email, addressed to the Editor-in-Chief at the time, which expressed my desire to "write on anything, really" for the Weekly. Tongue-tied (finger-tied?) as I was, I never actually sent the email. Four years later it still sits in my drafts box, a



perennially nagging (1), reminding me never again to hesitate, or to fear rejection. To paraphrase Tennyson for the benefit of younger ones reading this: 'tis better to have tried and failed, than to never have tried at all.

Thankfully for my tryst with the written word, however, the Weekly gave me a second chance when I was invited to join the Board two Founders ago. Being an opinionated young individual with a sharp fear of the stage in my early teens, this black-and-white forum of thought read over breakfast every Saturday morning provided a perfect compromise between my urge to speak, and my fear of speaking. For that, I'll eternally be grateful.

Over the two and a half years I've spent here, I believe I've carved out my own distinctive niches: the go-to contributor of satirical reports, Roving Eye detective, responsible for the ideation of cartoons, fellow columnist of the humorous and popular (in most parts of the community, at least) Week Gone By, and author of the occasional introspective critiques of our school

## Censorship and Sensibility

Everyone loves a good controversy, right? Well, no, not exactly. Controversies generally arise with two sides, and having an article which is controversial in nature will obviously take sides. In our case, the articles that garner the most amount of interest are the controversial ones on School.

I know everyone loves a good controversy, but we also should remember that we cannot be placing handcuffs on our own wrists. A balance must be maintained. We must remember that the Weekly is more public than we think it is, and we cannot be having petty squabbles about whether some victory was 'an upset' or not. (I unequivocally respect the said author's intentions, but frankly speaking, the message would have come out much clearer in person rather than by putting it in a Letter to the Editor). We must also realize that we have fora like Assembly Talks, in which we can talk about things such as 'Misogyny in School', rather than exposing ourselves to very public scrutiny. Although we are the mirror that our small society is dependent on to check itself, we are not the only mirror. More than anything, it would simply be more tactful to discuss and remedy something internally rather than bring in our entire readership into the matter.

Don't get me wrong. I would be the last one to suggest the freedom of this press should be monitored. It shouldn't. Rather, as the title suggests, we should be sensible enough to censor ourselves, as a community,

system. Writing for this audience always has been, and always will be, the greatest pleasure.

I've often been asked, mostly by Masters, why I (and by extension, the Board) have chosen to contribute and publish so many articles of a critical tilt over our tenure. The simple answer, making allowance for a slight metaphor, is that Doon is a beautifully manicured garden; an oasis of near perfection. As any gardener worth his or her salt shall tell you, the prettiest flowerbeds have their share of weeds. One corrects this situation by eliminating the weeds, not by refusing to acknowledge them or by giving the flowers more water. In a similar vein, the Weekly has endeavoured to draw attention to the few weeds on our campus whilst letting the multitudinous flowers bloom unruffled.

Finally, the only wisdom I dare leave behind: Doon, just like life, is about the people you'll leave with, and not the records you'll leave behind. We've all been gifted with childhoods which would be a biographer's dream. It's only our duty to lead lives worth chronicling.

**Salman Mallick** | Senior Editor

whenever the need arises. In fact, I would say that it isn't censorship; it is self-evaluation. We should be mature enough as a community to do things which are in the interest of the entire community. I do not deny that criticising ourselves is in the interest of the community. But there are two sides to this coin. While we may criticise ourselves, it is also our duty to maintain our school's aim of attracting the very best talent from all over India, and we will not be able to do that if we go overboard with our criticism. We are within this institution, even though we may try our best to bring a perspective of that of an outsider. The Doon School Weekly by its very nature of being "The Doon School" Weekly, should know that the aim of The Doon School supersedes ours.

Controversy has its place. Sometimes, articles such as 'The Cool Gang Conundrum' are required, to remind ourselves that we are falling into things which are not correct. It is essential for us to maintain the checks and balances that we have been asked to maintain. But we also have certain responsibilities on our hands. We are responsible to our community, and we cannot be perpetrating things which cause it harm. If we want the best for our community, we must criticize ourselves, but at the same time, to bring in the best, we must temper criticism, so that we can retain the benefit, and not bear the costs.



# 'Hits n' Misses'

Malini Malaviya (58-K, Batch of 2014) recounts her experience as a female student in School.

In *kheer* one can add only so much saffron; enough to give it colour, flavour, and warmth. 'Dosco Girls', I feel serve the same purpose in School. They are there to add just the right amount of drama on campus, to break the monotony that persists.

Imagine six in the morning, the main field crowded with (almost) masculine energy, with boys running and jumping around in singlets, when suddenly you hear NTC shouting across the field "*Arrey Ladkiyon kuch karlo!*" Just for those two seconds, all that male attention is on these two girls dragging their feet, trying very hard to somehow finish a round and escape this early morning torture. Like the boys, they too are praying to God for rains every morning (the kind of collective prayer can get rid of any drought). The point is 'Dosco Girls' are the white 'n' blue among the many grey 'n' blues, the high pitched voices drowned by the basses while singing in Assembly, the ones who have seen their Uncles and Aunties turn into Sirs and Ma'ams. They are the ones who have witnessed their 70 acres of playground transform into classrooms, Music School, D & T Centre and what have you to fulfil the purpose of education. They are also the ones who compete with boys to get the female role in a play (sometimes boys are so graceful and elegant, they give the girls a run for their money!). Of course, disciplining a talkative 'Dosco Girl' can be difficult in comparison to disciplining boys, but each time we have tried to take advantage of being a master's daughter, it has backfired. These attempts have resulted in a countless number of 'lines' and sometimes even a 'change-in-break', the latter being the most humiliating.

Being born and brought up in front of my teachers, including my own father, felt like a disadvantage quite a lot of times. Each time I was pushed to get out of my comfort zone and solve a math problem on the board in BKC's class; or got publicly humiliated by PCH for not practicing the violin; and was part of the house P.T. squad because MLJ felt the striking white t-shirt will look nice among the coloured singlets, I feared these teachers for they knew 'me' very well, and could march up to my parents anytime and have a 'chat'. However,

I don't think they ever did go to my home; they took the liberty of doing the needful as I was as much their daughter as I was to my parents. It has now dawned on me

that this is what helped me fit-in. All that nagging and criticism, which comes naturally and very fluently to teachers, is what every Dosco gets. It's better to get to know one's flaws from someone who cares, rather than to be caught on the wrong foot in the world outside.

After passing out of School, it was not the things School gave me that I think about, but the things it kept from me. The one that tops the list is my ability to be ladylike. Spending six years in salwar kurta, t-shirt and shorts, and a pair of floaters did not really help me feel elegant. It is later on that I got to experiment with my so-called wardrobe and experiencing all the 'hits n misses'. Second on the list is my less than usual attraction/fascination for boys compared to other girls. Since I am on the other side of the campus walls now, I started realizing why girls dressed up for the DSMUNs, Socials, and even tuitions. Boys in general, when they are not being obnoxious or hogging food, are actually capable of being gentlemen! Thirdly, it was the confidence. 'I' was the greatest surprise outside campus. Without even realising I was someone people wanted to listen to and get my opinions that I did not



know I had. My self-confidence made me tough and no one could mess with that. I stood out. There are many more things that can be added to this list, but I'll stop before I start mentioning the more obvious ones. I'll

just say that School taught me enough to 'un-Dosco' myself whenever, and have the courage and warmth to make my home away from home.

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## Life of a Dosco Girl

*Ishita Bhardwaj pens down her challenging experience as a girl in School.*

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*"Life's not always fair. Sometimes, despite your best efforts otherwise, life will give you lemons. When that happens, you've got two choices. You can either wear a sour face or make lemonade."*

These are my favourite lines from the movie "Love Happens" and aptly encapsulate my thoughts on this topic.

Life of a girl at Doon is not easy. It has never been, and might never be. However, I can at least say that Doon has taught me how to be tough and what to expect outside the walls of Chandbagh. Living in a society dominated by men, we girls get trained to be brave and make a mark with our heads held high. It's not just the girls who suffer in Doon, though; few boys, too, are marginalised for being different or for not having the "cool choices" in life. However, the life of a Dosco Girl is something that only a few undergo and can be described best only by them.

We're a small part of this community, so we (girls) need to be there for each other and help each other get through the hard times. Despite all our differences, we've all been through the same learning experiences which bring us closer, and we tend to be more cooperative than usual. We know that if anything goes wrong, at least we have our friends' shoulders to cry on. Life in Doon is very different for us. It is challenging for us to meet the same expectations as the boys, like taking part in school activities like them. It becomes even harder because our parents are here to keep a sharp eye on us all the time. Being a Dosco Girl is significantly different from being just another girl in a co-educational school. It's different in the way we're treated, the small things we need to take extra care of, living up to expectations and most of all, making our way out of the crowd and proving ourselves.

The initial years in School seem to be the toughest. It takes a lot of time to adjust to the fact that you don't have much support. One of the major drawbacks of being a Dosco Girl is that we don't get to participate in team sports, or at least not in the way we would have in

another school. Participation by the girls in the School has increased notably over the years, but there is still a lot of potential that needs some support and a chance. Teasing has always been a problem in our School, and we're not any different when it comes down to that. Being very few in number, it affects us a little more than it should. Eventually, though, one realises that avoiding it is the best way out. It even makes you mentally strong at times and helps to get your priorities straight. Giving teasing more attention than needed leads to encouragement of such behaviour, which can then lead to it becoming more rampant than it already is.

However, when I look back at the times where I had night-outs and midterms with boys, I can say that I made some memories that I will always remember. I will remember the campfire with the boys with lots of (funny) dancing, talking about the boys' success in their "social life" and some benevolence shown by a few gentlemen in the form.

Boys always brag about going to schools like Mayo, Welham Girls', etc., and the time they had with the girls. They become such gentlemen when girls from these schools come to attend School activities, but they never give us that respect. We are also girls like them, then why are we treated differently? Is it because we have the tag "Dosco" in our names?

Few boys think that the girls always get special attention and privileges. While this is true to some extent, in most of the cases, we are deprived of many such 'privileges'. Despite the challenges, there are things we really enjoy. Though hard to confess, it feels great when you're given slightly more respect and praise than the others. Although being a Dosco girl proves to be a little tough, we consider ourselves lucky to be studying in one of the best Schools in India, where not all girls get an opportunity to study. We all need to prove ourselves in some way or the other, and that's what keeps us going.



# In Times of War

Armaan Verma gives his views on the inevitability of conflict in the Human race.

Picture Credits: iero upload

## “ A wise man in times of peace prepares for war - Horace

Historically, humans have spent a fair share of their limited time on Earth either killing one another, or preparing for the same. It is a series of errors, disasters, and tragedies that have shaped the path our race has trodden and will, in all probability, continue to do so. In the time of the hunter-gatherers, however, prehistoric man has been found to have rarely partaken in clashes, perhaps because the much larger foes of nature's elements constantly occupied a considerable portion of the attention and energy of hunter-gatherer groups. Therefore, it can hardly be considered “innate” or “built-in” for conflict to attract humans, notwithstanding that our closest genetic relatives, chimpanzees and bonobos, have been observed to have aggressive tendencies among their own groups, stemming from contention for dominance.

But this means that before beast even became man, entering conflict was embedded in him, even though we have seen that early man hardly displayed such behaviour. So, how did one great chunk of our history remain devoid of it? This can best be attributed to a moral values system that anthropologists speculate prevailed in nomadic communities at the time, probably having arisen due to the need for banding together as a means of survival. Thus, it is safe to say that conflict—or rather, the unconscious necessity for it — is not part of human nature. But, this is where civilization enters the equation. With the discovery and widespread use of agriculture, tribal farmers developed the tradition of leaving the responsibility of leadership to a chief. Time later entrusted that responsibility to kings and prime ministers.

It was observed by Polly Wiessner, an anthropologist at the University of Utah, that a surge in population can also contribute to greater aggression, as seen in the tribes of Papua New Guinea, who first warred with each other 200 years ago, following a massive food surplus. Couple with this, Stephen Pinker went ahead and suggested that tribal societies are actually prone to more infighting than the nation-states of



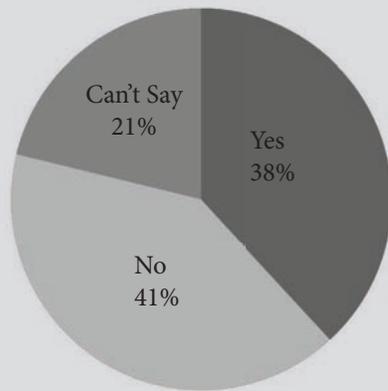
the modern era in what he called a more “chronic” fashion, compared to the intermittent conflicts fought between modern-day countries. The cause of the same can be accredited to the increasing interdependence of one community with another, economically or otherwise. Thus, we can now conclude that agriculture is also what sparked the first instances of organised conflict as populations grew and private property was conceptualised, enhancing our primal tendency to live ill-at-ease with one another and breaking down the moral value systems that existed amongst nomads.

This is where the dynamics of the 21st century come into play. Since it is now established that the more a society progresses, the less violent it gets (in terms of recurrence), it is safe to say that, at least for those of us not facing bullets in Syria and other similar exceptions, the 21st century should be a relatively safe era to live in, right? Wrong. Let us begin with the concept of inequality. Richard Wrangham at Harvard University made an interesting observation, among humans and chimpanzees alike: a given group of individuals is more likely to initiate quarrel if it feels that it possesses superiority in numbers or ability. After all, confidence of a victory will logically result in a reduced fear of the consequences of entering a conflict itself. Now, if we observe all the instances in history when inequality has been curbed, lessening the gap between the oppressors and the oppressed or the rich and the poor, it will become apparent that there is a drastic change that occurs — a critical juncture, of sorts — that allowed such a lessening of the gap. This, much to the horror of pacifists, comes in the form of wars, plagues, and revolutions. Only a great upheaval of such forms can completely reverse mankind's slow shifting of its sheep and wolves to opposite poles.

The Romans are perhaps the ideal archetype for this thesis. The Roman Empire was, from its very birth and throughout its existence, a heavy concentration of power in the few, who ruled the voiceless many. In the years leading to its downfall, with the outbreak of bubonic plagues and recurring invasions from Goths, Picts, Huns, Vandals and whatnot, population size reduced to such an extent that labour costs shot up, leaving landlords in penury. The same phenomenon spilt over into the Dark Ages and following its end, inequalities in Medieval Europe once again rose to

*Does the exemplary student-teacher relationship that Old Boys talk about still exist in School?*

The student-teacher relationship in School is eyed with various perspectives. Primarily, the tutorial meetings, where students meet with their tutors, are a great mode for counselling and guidance. Moreover, these relationships extend on to the playing field, and the Houses. However, it is believed that the relationship today doesn't go beyond the professional arena. Furthermore, the tutorial meetings are considered ineffective and unserious by some. This relationship can only build if both the sides exhibit seriousness and are willing to take an initiative.



new heights, which, of course, were later levelled by the Black Death.

Thus, having established that inequality persists in society in times of peace, and that times of war bring us out of such circumstances, can it not be said that war is required to curtail inequality? Man is an organism that is designed to retain the desire reign supreme. In the Stone Age, it may have been over other species, and with time nature itself, but currently, it is over one another. We as human beings have a tendency to create a hierarchy simply to stay (or aspire to stay) on the very top of it, the perfect example of which would be the Indian caste system. This phenomenon is described extensively by Louis Dumont in his book *Homo hierarchicus*. Therefore, bearing all this in mind, can it also not be said that man needs conflict to fulfil his own desire to remain above his peers?

The idea of inequality has changed drastically; from the deification of emperors to the taxes imposed by feudal lords, and even to the capitalists of the 20th century, who raked in profits with the help of capital investments and market exchange. Slowly, neoliberal ideologies have laid down the bedrock of most economies today, with the potential of driving the wedge between the rich and the poor even further. This makes the prospect of tensions, if not all-out conflict, despite all but inevitable, possible at least in theory. Economics, being the underlying principle that runs every aspect of life in this age, also contributes to the certainty of an outbreak of conflict in compliance with the principles of capitalism. Highly competitive, profit-

seeking corporations thrive on the killing of men, women, and children, such as suppliers in the defence industry, or even the medical world for that matter. The matter appears to be far beyond a subconscious level of human behaviour, for it feeds the flame of human greed. It also seems that, since war and woe have become such a great part of our existence as a race, a certain question must be asked: while we allow it to take away life, shall we let conflict sustain it?

## Move

Aryaman Kakkar



Move,

Like the trees sway with the wind waltzing down;

Move,

Like the rain that pounds the earth  
Knocking on its door with petrichor like an instance  
of life and love;

Move,

Like ripples across the ocean water,  
That extends arms to touch the horizon.

Move;

Let your tears carve your face of rock,  
Weathered over centuries, hear them roar and  
cascade down  
As agony is that loud.

Move;

Like the air that conducts the symphony of leaves,  
And hugs the lungs to remind it how much it likes  
To taste, to feel all that life- in an instant of time.

Move;

When a tiny bird has chipped away,  
An entire, ever growing mountain over a billion  
millennia,  
That is when one second of eternity will have passed.

We all have been here for two;  
Show the world that you are soul and emotion, before  
mind and body.  
Show the world that emotion holds you, destroys you,  
binds you, is you.

Three;

Let the world see you as what you are: an infinite  
mess of complex dreams, of thoughts, of imagination.

Four;

Then fade away into the shadows as all  
good things must, never having existed at  
all.



# In Limbo

Ishaan Seth

(304-JB, Batch of 1992). Issue No. 1610, August 25, 1990

## PART ONE

"You intrusive bastard!" she shouted behind him, as he scurried down the garden path, his door-to-door sales products swinging in either hand. No, she wouldn't see any more of him. Not that she saw much of anyone these days. Or ever.

No, Anne Benson just wasn't the type to socialise. She was 72, and reputed to be the most foul-mouthed woman west of Texas. She had lived in Mitchell Grove for 62 years, and she had no intention of moving out.

"The old bitch!" George Bernstein, the postman who delivered her mail used to call her, somewhere in the region of his third and fourth can of Budweiser. "That old bitch," he used to say, "ain't no good for nuthin," except cursing some darned nephew of her's in Florida. "That scoundrel hasn't written to me in 30 years," she tells me, and I am not surprised why!" Roars of laughter emerge from various drinking partners.

Anne Benson lived alone, and had been doing so ever since her husband's upper torso had been blown off by a Nazi grenade in 1944. Wind Commander Irving Benson's body had been buried with full military honours, (that is, whatever little of the body they could find). She had loved him deeply. That was when the amazing change in her personality took place. There was no living being that she loved, except Duncan.

Duncan had been with her for ten years now, and as far as he was concerned, her 'lovey-dovey' was the best cat in the world. He was treated like a prince and lived in luxurious comfort.

Life, for Anne Benson, was dull. But today was special. It was Christmas Eve, and she always gave herself a treat on Christmas Eve, Turkey. She would lovingly clean the turkey, cut the potatoes, prepare the stuffing, chop the parsley... and think of Irving. Every minute. Every second. Christmas had always been a happy time for them.

She glanced at her watch. Eight o'clock. The turkey usually took an hour to cook, so she made her way to the kitchen and adjusted the timer on the oven. It smelled

musty but that couldn't be helped; she only used the damn thing once a year. She placed the turkey on the tray inside, closed the door, and switched it on. She then made her way to

the dining room to prepare the other things. She laid a place for herself at the table, lit a candle and poured herself a glass of Sauvignon '64. Then she sank into her armchair, and her thoughts returning to Irving.

## PART TWO

She hadn't enjoyed doing it. Not a bit. But she had to. After all, she was of German origin. Born Anne Schmidt, her family had emigrated to the U.S.A. in the late 1890's. All her life she had lived here; had been brought up here. She had never even been to Germany, but she felt it her duty. Soon after her marriage to Irving Benson, Anne Benson decided to start work as a German agent.

Things started to go wrong on January 13, 1944. She had managed to lay her hands on a strategically important bit of information, which was to be radioed to the Germans as soon as possible. A special American patrol of 120 men was advancing secretly towards Danzig. "This is Nighthawk calling Potsdam, Nighthawk calling Potsdam.....," she spoke clearly into the mouthpiece.

"Ja've receive you," came the almost immediate reply. Within a few minutes, the information had been passed on. "Ha-ha! Ve vill take care of zere secret patrol," crackled the heavily accented German voice over the receiver. And that was that.

Little did she know, that Wing Commander Irving Benson was the leader of the secret patrol.

## PART THREE

"Damn that turkey," she said to herself. But she wasn't really thinking about the turkey at all. She was thinking of Danzig and the secret patrol and Irving and ..... Oh God, it had all been her fault, hadn't it? "You can't blame yourself for it; you didn't know," she kept reassuring herself. But that didn't work. It never had.

Since that day, she had been living in mortal fear of the truth being found out. And to hide her fear she put on a rough exterior. She was feeling very scared now. More than ever.

"Tringg!" she nearly jumped out of her skin. The doorbell. Which damned fool would this be, she wondered. She walked to the front door and opened it, slowly. There were two men outside, in dark business suits.

"C.I.A. Ma'am, may we come in please?"



“Oh good God!” she thought, “they’ve come to get me. To punish me for what I did.” Her heart was in her mouth, and her fear was extreme. Even so, she managed to snap, “Well come in then. I’ll be down in a minute.” Her pulse racing, she clambered up the stairs of her bedroom and made her way to the chest of drawers in the far corner of the room. Downstairs, the two men had settled into the sofa.

“Not very polite, is she?” said one. “No, sir,” said the other without looking up, and continued to fidget with his cufflinks. Upstairs, Anne Benson held the Smith and Wesson 33 against her temple. A gunshot reverberated through the house. Then silence.

# On Men and Manners

Shyam Bhatia

(74-T, Batch of 1967). Issue No. 866. September 10, 1966

‘Manners maketh man’ is an oft repeated saying which has a stronger hold on society than the caste system ever had on India. Manners, etiquette, polish and correct conversation are in my opinion all part of the great and bewildering world of manners. A slight deviation from the accepted code of manners may result in the offender being put into Coventry or the object of many stares and glances.

Perhaps the best illustration of my point is Bernard Shaw’s Pygmalion. In this play, Eliza Doolittle makes her debut. She appears at Ascot- where she quite naturally gives vent to her personal feelings. Instead of being praised for her forthrightedness, the poor girl is laughed at. It is a perfect example of stiff and unchangeable society. I think that a person’s character is not exposed by the manner in which he speaks, but what he speaks of. Great leaders and statesmen

have been born and bred in India and they have been praised and respected not for the way in which they spoke of the weather, but for what they did and the ideals they stood for.

Charles Dickens, however, speaks on another aspect of manners- table manners, which are all important in showing a person’s breeding and background. In ‘Great Expectations’ he tells of Abel Magwitch: ‘He ate in a ravenous way that was very disagreeable, and all his actions were uncouth, noisy and greedy, and as he turned his food in his mouth and turned his head to bring the strongest fangs to bear upon it, he looked terribly like a hungry old dog.’ Then again he describes with obvious disgust his ways ‘of lifting light glasses and cups to his lips, as if they were clumsy pannikins- of chopping wedge off his bread, and soaking up with it the last fragments of gravy round and round his as if it were to make the most of an allowance, then drying his fingers on it and swallowing it.’

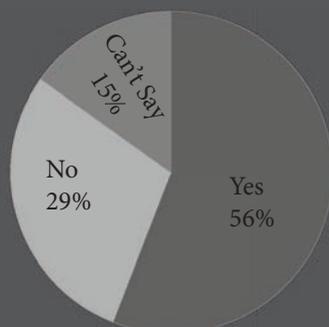
Another interesting ‘Manners for Millions’ written by Miss Sophia C Hadida, in which she speaks of the dos and don’ts of a civilised diner- out. For example, if a person is offered a second helping, it is forbidden to say “I’m full up”, or “Delightful cooking but I can’t budge.” All that the person is permitted to say is “No, thank you”. Again speaking of napkins, the same writer says that the rule of the best people is, ‘Never wipe more than the lips with the napkin. It is not for the cheeks, perspiration or the nose.’ Also, ‘Never talk to anyone with a toothpick in your mouth and never lick the fingers, no matter how sticky they might be.’

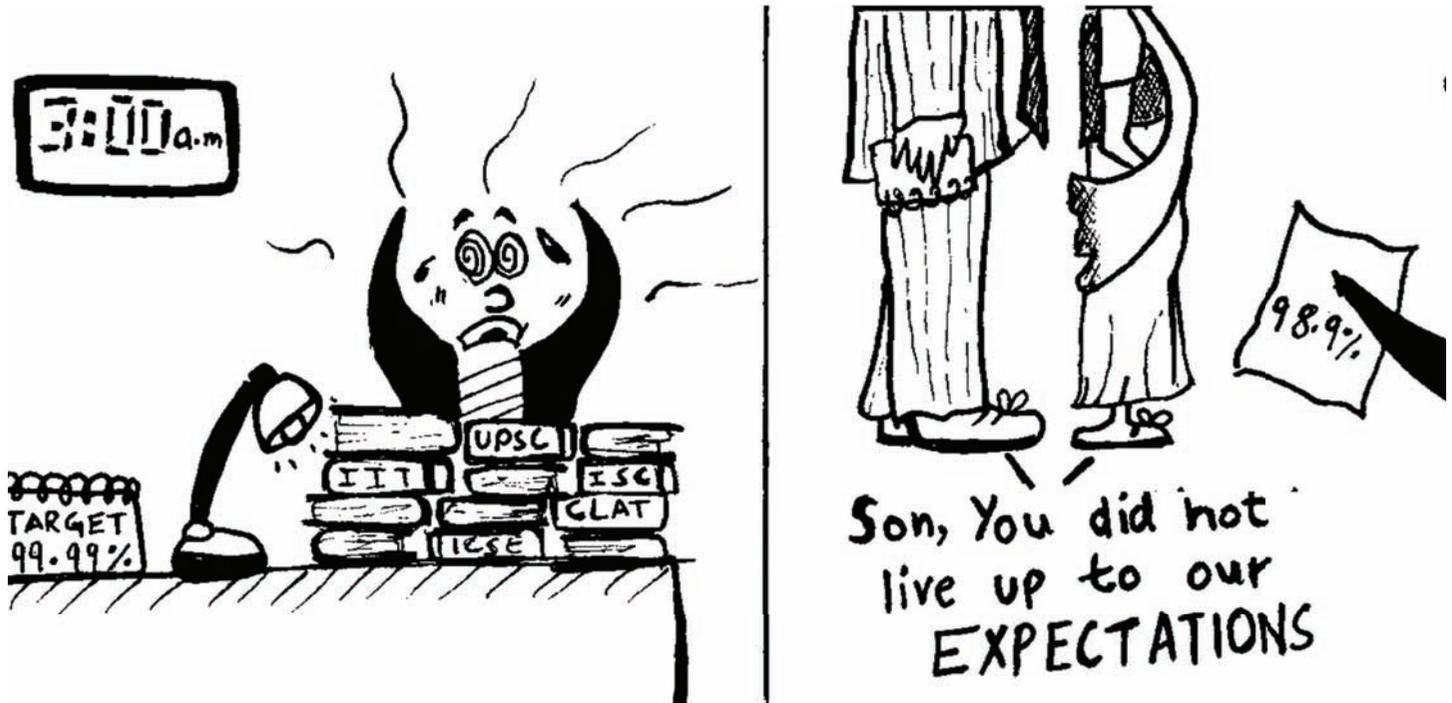
These are only some of the examples. Although I personally may lick my fingers in private and do several other objectionable things, my reaction in public would be to follow the rules.

## VOX POPULI

*Is the Weekly becoming an “elitist publication” where only the good writers get to write?*

The *Weekly* is the flagship publication of the School, and provides a platform on which Doscocs can freely express themselves. However, many feel that the *Weekly* is becoming an ‘elitist publication’, where not everyone gets an opportunity to be printed. This notion has discouraged many members of the School community from even attempting to write, as they believe that it will not meet the ‘*Weekly*’ expectations. They feel that the *Weekly* lacks inclusivity, where the only the good writers get published. On the other hand, those opposing this notion have argued that the *Weekly* is a forum open to all, and has especially increased its inclusivity in the past few years.





## The Great Indian Exam Craze

**Karan Sampath** criticizes the hypercompetitive exam culture present in modern-day India.

As holidays begin, most students across the world eagerly await going back home and enjoying with their loved ones. However, there is one exception to this group, an exception I will term as students who study. These students, as the name suggests, stay away from the frivolity usually associated with vacations and focus on their academics. It is this group of students which will be the subject of this article, a group which is becoming increasingly larger as the years go by.

Before we move on, let me first paint a picture of who these students actually are. While I do not mean to generalize, this description is, in my opinion, accurate for the vast majority of them. First of all, the Indian student who studies is, typically, one who has come under a lot of parental as well as peer pressure. This pressure comes either due to performing badly in examinations or due to the commencement of an important examination like the ICSE or the IIT-JEE. Apart from this, the student, whether or not he/she wishes to, is also forced to attend tuition classes. This student avoids meeting family or friends and instead focuses on getting that extra one percent, that extra mark to get into the top college he/she dreamt of. But

most of all, this studying has a profound effect on the other interests the student might want to pursue, be it sport or co-curricular. Academics is prioritized to such an extent that other interests soon

become a long-lost dream, only to be recollected when watching television or reading a book.

It is this mindset which damages the beauty of Indian culture and lifestyle, because, after all, this mindset has become a part of our culture, passed down from generation to generation. It has spread through friend groups where unassuming parents see the tuition-taking children of other parents performing extremely well and thus, get indoctrinated, where everyone aspires to have children like 'Sharma ji ka beta'. This spreads like a chain reaction, ultimately leading to the situation today, where coaching classes are ubiquitous and the industry itself has become extremely profitable.

What is wrong with this situation? Several things come to mind. Firstly, the very idea that getting that extra one percent is the only goal worth achieving, therefore superseding all other pursuits, is flawed. Do not get me wrong, I do not mean to say that one should not aim high and achieve well. Aim as high as possible but within a set time limit. Without a proper structuring of time and without devoting some time to one's other pursuits, the true meaning of education is lost. It does not lie only in the textbook, it is part of every activity, from the stage to the field. Not getting that one extra mark does not mean that one will not succeed in life, a fact which several Indian parents have failed to understand.



The second problem with this mindset is the lack of freedom given. Often when one is allowed to explore his/her interests he/she can find a profession of interest. For example, being part of the Video Club in School is not an academic pursuit, but it still can develop the interest of cinematography in someone. Focusing on one's academics to such an extent shuts out the vast multitude of professions students could take a fancy to, after being exposed to it. Skills which cannot be developed in tuitions also degrade due to this mindset. Skills pertaining communication and socialising, which teach one to be able to make friends and be affable. Regrettably, today the opposite is taking place, as seen in the example of Sarvesh Mehtani, the IIT-JEE Advanced 2017 topper, who shut himself off from all forms of social media for two years to prepare for the gruelling exam.

So how do we remedy this mindset? First off, being a mindset, it is important to realise that it is ingrained in one's thinking and is therefore very difficult

to remove. There needs to be the realisation that education is not all about the marks achieved, but so much more. This realisation should also be of the fact that getting into a good college does not mean one will get a lucrative job. A mindset which would be far more agreeable would be the American one, where the stress on academics is not to such an extreme. Moreover, the freedom to choose one's subjects is given until college and one is encouraged to develop his/her social skills. Such a massive change would need something akin to a revolution, and it can only begin when the hyper-competitiveness present today fades away, which sadly shows no signs of abating.

Education has always been the building block of a nation. It builds its future, and without it, a nation cannot develop or progress. A better-educated generation will take a nation to new heights, while the opposite would bring it down. Hence, it is imperative that this mindset change for the better, to ensure that India has a brighter future.

## DARK HUMOUR

*Kushagra Kar writes on the growth and acceptance of darker tones of comedy in society.*

In an ever-evolving world of humour and instant gratification, the concept of Dark Humour has risen considerably at the cost of sensitivity. Being residents of the 21st Century means we live in a world where anything may be commercialised, even hatred. This instinctive commercialization has given birth to Dark Humour; a collection of the most disturbing and insensitive jokes on the internet.

The subject matter of Dark Humour is limitless, much

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Racism, sexism and anti-Semitism were soon joined by issues that now include paedophilia, necrophilia, and a vast array of other sexually inclined subjects as the base of these jokes.

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like the internet itself – which is the reason for its rise. The internet brought with it an explosion of

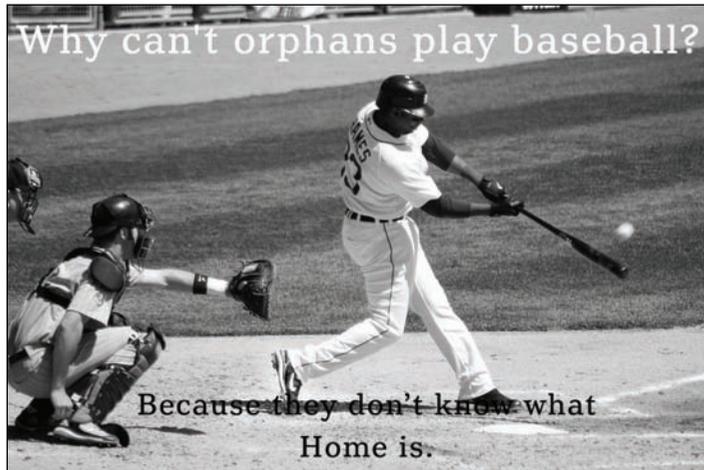
information and accessibility, including previously ignored concepts into the mainstream. Among these are new methods of exploitation and subjugation. As the world began to normalise itself to violence (through the constant reportage of conflicts around the world), the prospect of humour along these lines grew. Someone willing to crack such a joke was already desensitised enough to such situations, and the joke, therefore, wasn't a big deal. This led to the influx of Dark Humour that disregarded previous sensitivities on pertinent issues. In this, it was, helped greatly by social platforms, spread across media. Racism, sexism and anti-Semitism were soon joined by issues that now include paedophilia, necrophilia, and a vast array of other sexually inclined subjects as the base of these jokes.

As it stands, Dark Humour can be any of two types. The first is with jokes both discriminatory and racist, e.g. the difference between normal kids and Jewish kids (they don't come back from camp) or the frequency of an African woman's defecation (every nine months). Secondly

*continued overleaf*



are the sexual jokes e.g. the hardest part about walking through a field of dead babies. In the second case, the answer is too explicit for print. With these illustrations, it is clear such humour is disturbing, offensive and brings some rather horrifying realities to the forefront. It proves the existence of underlying racist and discriminatory sentiments/stereotypes,



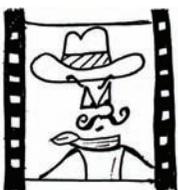
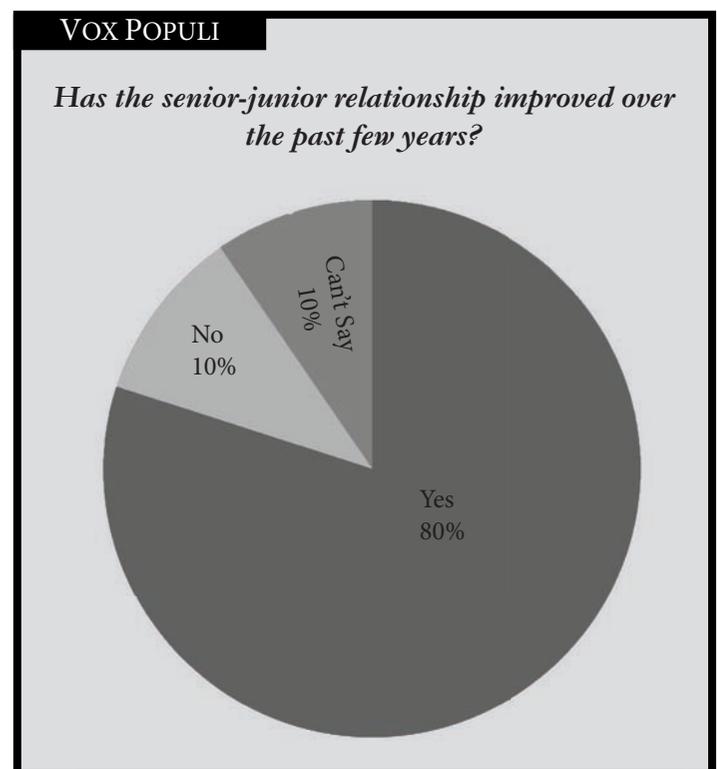
and suggests an over-dependence of society on the notion of 'sex'.

The first subject area – race and religion – is problematic on many levels. While many would argue these jokes result directly in hate crimes or the likes, I would beg to differ. It is true that such jokes may encourage the notions of discrimination and stereotypes, but there is no direct impact other than within the ideological realm. To minimize this damage, one must simply be careful of when and where they crack the joke, taking care not to offend those with 'different' sensibilities. Moreover, a clear line must be drawn, one which is easily discernible and ensures bizarre beliefs aren't legitimised. The task is difficult, because as I said, sensitivity has lost considerable ground in society, and therefore discerning what stays in its realms is tricky. I feel though, that once the issue of the second half of this type of humour is dealt with, sensibility may once again align itself with sensitivity.

Secondly, humans, of late, have had a clear and rather disconcerting obsession with the concept of 'sex' and by extension, sexuality. There are more types of recognised sexual orientations than one could care to count, but the issue arises when these distinctions (including those along gender lines) are contorted for the sake of humour. It is here that clear lines begin to blur, resulting in disgusting and unacceptable humour by any standards. Grave issues such as child molestation and STDs are reduced to 'Cyanide and

Happiness' comics, which although admittedly funny, cross the line. Though, because these jokes are not only accepted, but propagated, the breach of the line becomes irrelevant. Jokes regarding necrophilia and murder are very much a part of the mainstream, essentially trivialising them. Naturally, the concept of sensitivity alters, making issues such as death 'funny'. When allowed to sit, the loss of sensitivity carries a heavy impact on media consumers – especially younger ones – who nonchalantly accept such offensive notions as 'normal'.

"Another knife attack here, and another shoot-out there; another surprise election and another orange becomes President of the United States." The world has its share of dark realities and atrocities: realities we cannot be shrugged off and must be dealt with, simply because they directly affect everyone. It's time to stop substituting, "who comes back from camp" jokes for real introspection on issues we choose to ignore because they are real. Finding and fighting the root of insensitivity takes a lot more than superficially blaming memes and GIFs. If this article has served any purpose, it should be that of an honest disdain towards an obsession with absurd sexual and racist notions. When the most private of concepts explode into a public showcase of all potential human obscenities, what are we to expect but a degradation of societal values? When values fall short, accompanying morality is reduced to naught.



# The Doctrine of Silence

Devang Laddha and Pratinav Bagla discuss the attitude towards 'sneaking' in School.

Picture Credits: Andrew Classroom

If there is one unsaid rule among DoscOs, it is that of 'never sneaking'. Since the very infancy of their time at Chandbagh, DoscOs are drilled to never report on one another, whatever the case may be. The primary motive behind it is to maintain unity, and to be loyal to each other. Betray your fellow Dosco even once, and you become an outcast, labelled a 'sneak' and are distrusted by most of the School community. As young DoscOs tackling trivial issues, the attitude does help us learn to solve our own problems and deal with our own issues ourselves, rather than being dependent on adults. This conditioning, however, creates somewhat of a blind aversion to sneaking, which tends to be harmful in certain more-critical situations.

A young D-former, for example, tends to go to teachers for the most trivial of matters, from losing pens to being called names by his peers. As a Dosco progresses through his school life, he learns to handle such problems himself – however, through these six years, it is inevitable that a Dosco faces more critical situations. Sometimes, instances of teasing transform into abuse and bullying, and in such situations, a Dosco finds himself in a dilemma: to sneak or not to sneak. On the one hand, he could sneak and consequently face social rejection; while, on the other, he could continue to bear the mental (and possibly physical) torture he is being put through, out of the fear of being shunned. One would think that, in such cases, surely the community would sympathise with the victim's condition—however, DoscOs often fail to understand someone else's situation and his choices. DoscOs subject to unfair treatment such as bullying are more often than not reprehended by the community, in spite of them being the victim. We fail to not only act as a support system for these victims but rather attack them, promoting the culture of not sneaking. This effectively gives bullies impetus to do as they please without the fear of any consequences. As a community, our failure to sympathise legitimises bullying others. On the other hand, this culture of not sneaking has another harmful effect. Under the veil of being loyal to each other, DoscOs often let others harm themselves or do something that they shouldn't. For example, in cases of smoking or drinking, DoscOs will not sneak on each other, believing that they are being loyal to each other. However, in fact, this failure to correct harms

the person smoking and often the community too. By not sneaking, we implicitly promote the act, for people realise that they can smoke or drink without repercussions. Furthermore, since no one is correcting these people, the attitude that sets in is that such actions are acceptable and are the norm. This damages the entire community, since such vices, which last for a long time, propagate throughout School, negatively influencing the lives of all. In such matters, reporting is necessary, to not only protect the people who are committing such acts but also to protect the community at large.

It is high time DoscOs change their attitude towards sneaking. We do agree that the culture of not-sneaking, to an extent, does help inculcate a sense of loyalty as well as the principles of independence. However, sneaking is not always unacceptable. In cases where people are being abused or bullied, or are committing acts that are harmful to them and the community, sneaking is often necessary. There needs to be a change in our rigid attitude towards 'sneaking' — we should not look upon it as an act that is innately wrong, but something which is often the right thing to do. We need to learn to empathise with the people who report, and understand the reason behind their choices. Sneaking, for no one, is their first choice, for it comes with a heavy social backlash; it is only when all else fails that sneaking becomes necessary. Ideally, no one should come to the point where they have to sneak. We should be mature enough to realise when people are being harmed and intervene right then. This intervention might come in the form of talking to people but can also come by reporting the matter. Being a bystander to injustice is almost as abominable as committing the injustice yourself.

It is imperative for us to start changing. Not doing so while being aware of the problems of others is shameful on our part. While we must attempt to train boys to be tough and independent, it is equally important that we teach them to know when enough is enough and it is acceptable to sneak. Teaching them to suffer at any cost is damaging to them in the present and in the future. To prevent this abuse and make School a better place to inhabit, it is time we changed our outlook.





# Building an Empathetic Tomorrow

Ms Malvika Kala writes about the importance of empathy in our lives.

Most of us have never heard of the “Genovese Syndrome”, but google apathy “and add the omnipotent adjective” public to it, and in one of the 58,179 results, somewhere non-ubiquitously, just like what it stands for, you will read about the murder of young Kitty Genovese in 1964. This 28-year-old American Kitty Genovese was raped and stabbed right outside her apartment in New York City. None of the 38 neighbours who had heard her scream, stepped out. Nobody helped her and nobody called the police until it was too late. This disturbing incident unsettled many generations of psychologists, sociologists, lawyers and ordinary men and women, and has continued to boggle anybody who has, perchance, stumbled upon it, like this humble writer. The murder of Kitty Genovese led to the acknowledgement of a phenomenon that has become known as the “Bystander Effect”, where, contrary to expectations (which are mostly misplaced), having many onlookers or witnesses is inversely proportional to the help the victim might get. In all probability, it is highly likely that the victim does not receive any assistance when there are too many people in the vicinity.

So, it is a fallacy, if we believe that apathy is something that afflicts only the present generations or belongs in certain regions of the world. That would be being ignorant or indifferent, both of them - different faces of apathy in themselves.

Recently, an acquaintance of mine, a student pursuing PhD in Philosophy from my alma mater passed away. I was struck by the sheer impassivity that met the news of his untimely death. A university campus that prides itself on its principles of comradeship and solidarity (pun unintended and in this context to be read without the binaries of Left vs. Right) had led one of its own down. Ghanshyam Das, the gentleman I am referring to, was a Dalit scholar and definitely did not belong to the privileged class. In spite of being a student of that most hallowed of all disciplines, he was found dead in a little shack, that he called home, right outside

one of the most frequented places in the university - a place where students gathered every day to have chai and their plate of Maggi. Officially, he died of a seemingly banal “lung infection”, but he actually died due to sheer lack of concern. He was thought to be mentally unsound as he would go asking for a couple of rotis or request for something absolutely impractical. Once he asked somebody to sign his petition to the Director of UPSC exams to accept him as an administrative officer. But the way he was left to fend for himself despite his apparent mental and physical ill-health is simply appalling. We may brush this off as a one-off example but it reflects what our society has come down to. I agree life goes on, except when for some it just doesn't.

In these fast-moving times, when reactions and likes are just a mouse click away, and memory is as fleeting as the last wallpaper on your desktop, who has the time to stand and stare.

The Bystander Effect is very real, as the Kitty Genovese murder demonstrated. The sudden exposure to a traumatic event or a threat produces an adrenaline rush into the human brain that, in turn, induces a flight or flees response, like it ideally should. In the real world, however, in the face of something like that, we freeze.

Our memories or experiences, unless it has been drilled into us to generate an automated reaction against terrifying situations, do not prepare us for a response against a psychological aberration that paralyzes us into tacitly approving onlookers.

So how is this conundrum to be solved? What can be done to make the people at large more socially conscious? How can society as a whole be cajoled into developing empathy? The answer lies in deep behavioural changes, wherein we start early on with the young. Changes brought in later would just have a superficial impact and will not bring about a transformation. Radicalism has its limitations after all since it loses its shine the very moment it has achieved what it sought out to do.



Empathy is a complex concept and not an easy skill to attain. It takes time and a lot of effort to create, develop and sustain an empathetic mindset, especially in a culture that has stopped valuing it. It has been often deemed as a “soft skill”, and even likened to a kind of weakness, or mollycoddling and has sometimes also been flagged as a “gender-specific” trait. Of course, it is neither of these things. We don’t inherit it by virtue of birth or genetics. We are neither predisposed nor opposed to it. More importantly, we human beings are definitely not incapable of it.

Developing empathy, at a deeper level, means building invisible bridges between people. Lack of empathy is lack of understanding of the other, which often leads to misconceptions, generalisations and prejudices. In a culture as diverse as ours with problems as unique as they come, social values have increasingly become skewed. For the young impressionable minds, why is it that the personal morality is boldly emphasised, while social responsibility and public awareness are often overlooked? How can the moral compass create an arc that links it to social accountability? As educators shaping young minds, we get to cultivate empathy, and it only serves to further amplify what we are trying to achieve. Without empathy for our colleagues and our students, we can never hope to understand and appreciate the diverse backgrounds they come from. That, in fact, limits the scope of our interaction with them to one of professional civility and academic transference. We forget that we all are living breathing socio-emotional beings. Content knowledge and its reproduction can be measured in terms of assessment rubrics, but empathy is best left out of this equation. As adults and educators, we have usually, over the passage of time and experience, developed coping mechanisms to deal with different moral quandaries, something that our students may or may not have. We cannot expect it out of them unless we expressly teach it to them ourselves. The commitment that drives us to pour hours into creating our lessons, is only strengthened and reinforced when we dedicate the same kind of effort to creating an empathetic learning environment for our students. The classroom would then become a place where students feel comfortable to voice their opinions and don’t feel threatened. They would learn to accept themselves and others. The pressures of the curriculum and time constraints can be diffused through patience, understanding and humility. This is a conscious investment that we must make in order to overcome the vicious circle of apathy

and cynicism that we find ourselves besieged by. We cannot remain bystanders for long. The very definition of a functioning democracy depends on empathy and intervention of its citizens.

## Problems of Being a Teenager

Jai Lakhanpal



People tell you to live while you’re young;  
Sometimes, it is easier said than done.  
Growing up is when all the problems begin,  
From exam stress, to the acne ridden skin.

There are days when you’ll feel so mirthful that you  
fly  
And then there are some days when all you can do is  
cry.

At times you won’t even know what’s bothering you,  
Why you’re feeling low, you won’t have a clue.  
You’re too young for half the things you aspire,

And, too old for the other half you desire.  
At this age we fear rejection, want attention,  
Crave affection and dream of perfection.

But,  
We also, learn from our mistakes.  
From the wrong turns we take,  
From the fake friends we make,  
And from the times we almost break.

You have to go through awkward stages,  
Find yourself flying into unnecessary rages.  
Yet, being a teenager can also be fun,  
Still a few years before serious things may have to be  
done.

On the bright side, you are no longer a kid,  
And won’t be ordered around as your parents bid.  
It’s not only about rebelling and getting into a fight,  
You also get to decide what is wrong and what is  
right.

After all, these years will never come back to you,  
So make the most of it while you have the  
chance to.

Here’s to being a teen,  
Live it up, cause we’re living the dream!



# Reels in Ruins

Divyansh Nautiyal comments on the problems prevalent in Indian Hindi cinema today.

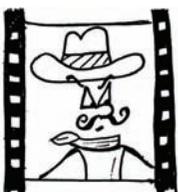


Bollywood was born on the day 'Raja Harishchandra' hit the few cinemas and the screens across the nation in 1913. Since then, the industry has evolved in different aspects and currently stands as one of the largest and most profitable film industries in the world. What began as a silent movie produced by Dadasaheb Phalke has turned into an industry that's become an icon of India. During this transformation, the industry underwent different phases and saw critically acclaimed movies like *Aan* and *Kagaz Ke Phool*. They mirrored society in depicting patriarchy and dowry while promoting nationalism. Gradually, the range of genres broadened to include action-packed dramas and romantic films. However, present-day Bollywood is in stark contrast with the Bollywood of thirty to fifty years ago, and the reasons are diverse.

As with any other industry in India, nepotism is a significant problem with the film industry. Looking at the number of actors in India, one notices that a majority have strong family ties and gained their big breaks in Bollywood through such patronage. This certainly reduces the scope for other budding actors, as the remaining prime slots are intensely and unfairly competitive. While some of these individuals are undoubtedly talented, Hrithik Roshan, Tiger Shroff, Ranbir Kapoor are just a few examples of those whose definite ties to the industry has certainly given them a head start in comparison to the ones who lacked these connections. Importantly, this reduces the quality of the overall pool of actors – with those who put in little effort gaining prime slots through personal connections. The open support of nepotism by stars like Varun Dhawan and Karan Johar at this year's IIFA demonstrates how rampant it runs in the industry.

Secondly, the Bollywood of the 1950s produced movies that mirrored Indian society; highlighted problems and showcased our achievements. Movies that convey deep messages have reduced noticeably over the years, with no more than a few good films over the last decade. Movies like *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag* or *Dangal* are mere wisps of the total number being produced, with a significant majority being full of cheap slapstick comedy and baseless storylines. Such films appeal to the base instincts of viewers, for pure profit rather than artistry. Bollywood has indeed shrunk in such artistry with the lack of new ideas. The adoption of stories from other industries – predominantly Hollywood – is extremely common, and a bunch of plagiarised ideas have dominated Indian screens. *Rang de Basanti*, *Koi Mil Gaya*, *Munnabhai MBBS*, *Agneepath*, *Mohabbatein*, *Singh is King*, *Bang Bang*, *Heyy Baby*, *Prince*, the *Dhoom* series and an endless list of others are examples of this. Lacklustre productions reveal the lack of quality and frontier-pushing creativity of present-day Bollywood movies. This has taken a toll on actors as well, with respectable figures like Jaya Bachchan claiming that Bollywood actors and filmmakers are devoid of any passion and love for cinema.

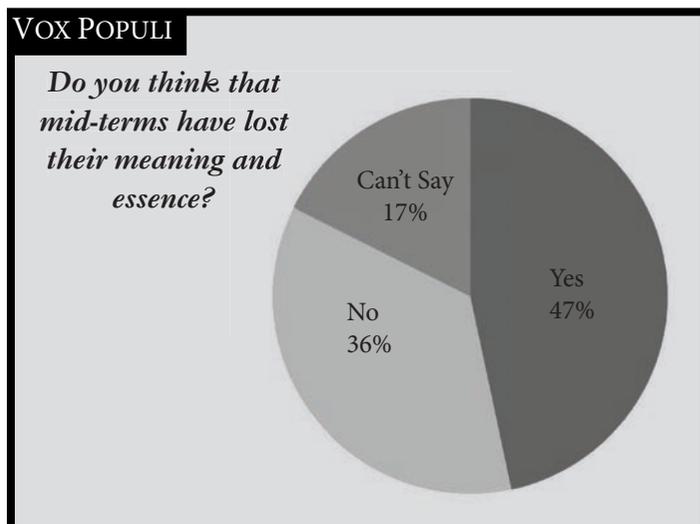
Another factor which leads to the promotion of such films in Bollywood is stardom. Fans in India display inane, hysteric fawning over actors, the result being that substandard movies with mediocre storylines at times manage to make a few hundred crores. A movie such as *Dabangg* which was heavily marked down by the critics is one of the industry's blockbuster films, and this was so because Salman Khan's fans had no problem viewing ludicrous acting as long as *Bhai* was featured. Such films, more disturbingly, reduce the



space for other good films to thrive in the market. Even worse nowadays is the way movies objectify women. They are shown as commodities which males compete and yearn for. The 'item songs' as we call them these days do the same, only to make profits (the most recent abomination being *Raees* with Shah Rukh Khan). While it may be beneficial for the producer's pockets, it releases mindlessly explicit content for impressionable youth across India. Such trends have approached a point where songs are a necessity as they guarantee revenue, all at the cost of a script. They have become a must for a film to thrive in the market.

Another factor that hampers the work of Bollywood is the censorship that the movies have to face. It happens when politicians get involved in getting movies banned for their own political interests. The movie '*Udta Punjab*' which highlighted the problems of drug abuse in Punjab was heavily censored due to the political connotations it would carry with reference to the SAD-BJP Government. While (thankfully) Pahalaj Nihalani may have been sacked as CBFC Chair, movies that depict reality constantly face the threat of censorship in addressing real and grave issues – all because of political pragmatism.

Being one of the largest industries in India and the world, Bollywood's impact is more than significant. Such a body being impeded by nepotism, star-worship and censorship stains the reputation of India internationally and reduces the efficacy of media to represent our society. Putting profits aside, we are definitely far behind film industries in our Asian neighbourhood of Japan and China, where filmmakers push the boundaries of cinematic innovation each year. Surely this is an ideal state that Bollywood should aim to reach – and with growing discontent, at the status quo, this state may be realised.



# Reviving a Tradition

**Shivendra Singh** writes about the importance of mountaineering as a tradition.

Adventure has always been embedded in the ethics of The Doon School. It has been considered our forte by Sherpa Tenzing Norgay himself. But if one pans across the years our school has existed, there is an easily noticeable declining trend in the enthusiasm students carry for mountaineering. Headmasters such as R.L. Holdsworth and Jack Gibson were known for the encouragement they gave to this art. The former could even boast of climbing the highest unclimbed mountain of his time, 'Kamet', while the latter bears the credits of charting out more than half of the present route to Everest itself. Our second headmaster is one of the first people to climb the 'Banderpoonch'- The Doon School Mountain – and he did this alongside Tenzing Norgay and Jack Gibson. In the 1950s, Gurdial Singh and Narendra Dhar Jayal rose to prominence for their unprecedented exploits in the Himalayas. Gurdial Singh led the first Indian expedition to Trishul and was the primary Indian member of the distinguished English Alpine Club.

When analysing the history of mountaineering in our school, the sheer number of successful mountaineers manages to create a sense of awe. It was not until this May that, after a long time, a privately sponsored expedition comprising two Doscos summited a peak above 6000m (chronicled in this very publication). In the past ten years, the only expedition which would be able to match its distinction would be the one which was conquered the Dhumdar Kandi Pass. This term, three private parties went for extended midterms to certain unconventional and high-altitude destinations, (namely, Roopkund & Sahastra Tal) with all of the expeditions returning after successful ascents. The Doon School Adventure Club, has resumed operations after a long hiatus and has seen immense interest, especially being shown from the Juniors. To see the flag of our school flying on the summits of the Himalayas, will be to proudly resume a tradition which has been vanishing for a long time. With this piece of writing, I encourage Doscos to hold the torches for themselves and rove into the deep Himalayas. Because, it is in us that this tradition is imbibed and it is through us that this tradition will endure.



# DOSCO HEIRARCHUS

Should the Senior-Junior Heirarchy exist within School?

POINT

Kanishkh Kanodia

We have neither been stalwart traditionalists, nor have we ever been dedicated modernists. For traditions, if held onto for too long, will act as an anchor that will prevent the progress of our School. And, traditions, if completely done away with, will lead to the relinquishing of the core values and ethos that define who we are as 'Doscors'. It is to prevent this alienation of identity that we, as an institution, have retained certain values and systems, while also modifying certain features so as to move in tandem with the times. The senior-junior hierarchy is one such system whose existence has continued to define and shape the character of a Dosco. It is for the preservation of this 'Doscness' that I support the existence of a social hierarchy in School.

The senior-junior hierarchy has been under constant scrutiny since times immemorial. It is condemned for the manner in which the juniors are treated under such a system. The past (and the present) has instances of juniors being abused and bullied by the seniors, who deem it necessary to showcase the power simply by virtue of being at the top of the ladder. However, while scrutinizing the system, what many fail to understand is that it is not the hierarchy that is flawed, but rather the ignoble actions of a few. Essentially, the purpose for which the hierarchy was instituted in the first place was not to promote maltreatment, but rather to create an environment in which children from different age groups work together as a single unit. Thus, the basis of the hierarchy has been constantly misrepresented only because a few individuals decided to misuse it. This misuse by a few does not render the inherent system of hierarchy immoral and unnecessary. In fact, at its heart, it is a system that provides the space for the flow of experience from a senior to a junior, facilitating mentorship, learning and bonding of relationships.

At Doon, we learn that an essential part of being a Dosco entails the understanding of the importance of relationships in life and thus forging them while at School. Every Dosco who walks out of the gates of Chandbagh takes with himself the fond memories of friendships forged not only with formmates, but also with seniors

and juniors. It is the hierarchy that provides the space for this interaction to take place, and thus strengthen the bond between teenagers of different age groups, who might have completely distanced themselves from each other had it not been for this system. For it is only when the juniors look up to their seniors and have a sense of reverence will they follow what the seniors have to say. While some might question this subordination and say that the interaction will exist irrespective of the hierarchy, I believe that the magnitude and the level at which it will take place will be in stark contrast to the way it is now. The hierarchy also provides for the flow of knowledge and experience from a senior to a junior. So whether it be the stage or the sports field, a senior's role becomes immense in guiding the junior and honing his skills.

However, this passage of knowledge will not be able to function, if not for discipline that is enforced in the School by the seniors. Discipline, being at the core of a Doscors life, makes the School function in the manner in which it does. This is only achieved by a balance of power that exists between masters, seniors and juniors. It is the seniors who play the bigger role in maintaining order in the house by assisting the masters. It is the seniors who make sure that boys are on time for games and learn how to kick a ball or hit a boundary. They are only able to do so because of the social hierarchy present in School.

If this hierarchy is done away with, a junior will not be compelled to listen to a senior, to be on time for Assembly, or for meals or for games. While masters may be able to substitute seniors in this regard, the other benefits of the hierarchy highlighted in this piece will never be achieved. We become who we are as Doscors by accepting the fact that in reality, outside our four walls, there will be a hierarchy, and we will have to listen to people who are more experienced and learned than us. This hierarchy is a replica of that. Moreover, it instils in us the values of discipline, respecting seniors, valuing relationships and readily learning from what our seniors teach us: all which are fundamental in defining who we are as 'Doscors'.



One of the most entrenched traditions within the four walls of Chandbagh is the hierarchy that exists between senior and junior students: which gives authority, power and near total superiority to older students. The higher a student's year group, the more power they wield within this hierarchy – one which is unfounded, exploitative and sends a wrong message to alumni as they exit Chandbagh – a blemish on their education. Clearly, it ought to be abolished.

At the outset, it's important to distinguish this hierarchy as a social one, which is different from those in the professional realm. Indeed, we witness hierarchies across this campus on sports teams, publications, societies and with the Prefectorial Body; in these fields, a Boy-in-Charge, Captain or Prefect is present to exercise authority over his peers and younger students. Such hierarchies are quite necessary for effective leadership within such systems to fulfil their objectives (e.g. Prefects maintain discipline, or a student Director coordinates the production of a play). However, while these are 'legally sanctioned' (i.e. boys exercise power delegated by School authorities), the social hierarchy operates illegally without such sanction, and contravenes the School rule that "all boys, senior and junior, are equal". Furthermore, while some may confuse the two, it must be clarified that these hierarchies operate (as they ought to) independently of each other (i.e. the social hierarchy does not aid the professional hierarchy) since boys can exercise power in areas where granted.

There are quite a few reasons why the social hierarchy ought to be abolished, with the primary reason being its unfounded nature. The School stipulates that all students have 'equal status', with no student being superior by the mere virtue of age. Indeed, with this age difference being just a few years, the claim that seniors ought to be superior is further reduced – since the difference in social maturity is marginal at best. Thus, such a hierarchy, in principle, has no grounds for existence, and goes against the tenet laid down by Arthur Foot in his memorable proverb: to not be an "aristocracy of position".

What furthers the need to abolish the hierarchy, however, aren't just principles, but its practical consequences. Deriving power by virtue of their 'supposed superiority', senior students often force juniors to perform tasks (colloquially termed 'favours')

for them – such as making Iced Tea, shining shoes, cleaning rooms, making beds and fetching things. At times, they are made to vacate seats and spots in queues for seniors (i.e. 'booting'), forcibly cheer for their Houses during sports matches and submit to any action they're ordered to complete. Furthermore, with such power, seniors have also selfishly seized food and possessions from juniors (i.e. raiding). In the past, such powers were even used by seniors to bully juniors – at times to sodomise them – for their own personal pleasure. In all these cases, there exists virtually no accountability over seniors, with juniors being subject to their seniors' whims and fancies. Anybody who refuses would be subject to great punishment (physical or otherwise) through an illicit use of Prefectorial Power. Consequentially, juniors have remained silent out of fear, leaving the hierarchy to proliferate year-after-year, as boys once affected hypocritically inflict the same on others.

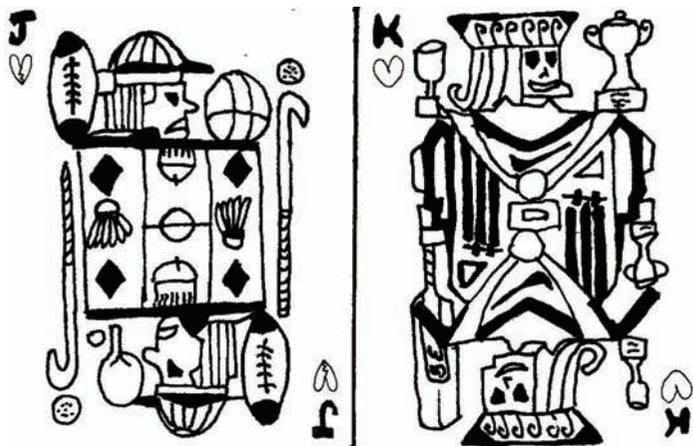
With this, it is evident the hierarchy violates juniors' freedom, unjustly seizes their property and exploits their inability to protest such treatment – all legal and moral entitlement that seniors can't violate. For a school as ours, which seeks to morally educate students, such behaviour is indeed brazen and unacceptable. While one may concede that the hierarchy has positive effects, such as fostering student leadership and internal discipline (which are anyway brought by Prefects), the present abuse of such power is too great to ignore – with the only natural course being abolishment. Even for seniors, a hierarchy leads them to grow up believing the righteousness of a stratified society allowing for unjust personal gain. As I'd written in a previous Editorial (Issue 2479), the injustice perpetrated due to such hierarchy is tantamount to extortion and forced servitude, which are recognised as crimes in the outside world. For a school like ours, this is a dangerous precedent to set.

It is thus clear that the senior-junior hierarchy must be abolished, and its counterproductive effects be removed from Chandbagh which foster a bad society and bad education for our boys. Despite its entrenchment as a tradition in our existing 'student' order, the need for change has always been clear, and we students must courageously rise to the challenge and remove it for good.



# REVERSE CALCULATIONS

Dr Vidhukesh Vimal cautions against chasing accolades over aptitude.



‘Reverse Calculation’ entails deciding the end result firsthand, and then trying to figure out the means to achieve it. This phenomenon is prevalent across the spectrum of the social nexus in today’s world. Agreed that, sometimes, it is important to know the consequences of one’s doings; however, life is not all about reverse calculation. While the practice of reverse calculation plays its own role in maintaining society’s order, we must realise that this process isn’t what man-kind ought to emulate in every instance.

Curiosity has always been the driving force of man, a proposition that holds true to this day. This is an issue that is as relevant to School as it is to the outside world, and it’s paramount that the same be addressed. Currently, on campus, a chain of choices and their consequences form the kernel of student life: made as per our aptitude and level of interest in a subject or activity. A notable example is our academic subject choices, which are chosen with reference to college courses that we’d wish to pursue in the future. Here, it’s important to note that our ‘aptitude’ plays a key role, for when choosing wisely we must consider our abilities to meet the standards our choices demand. Conversely, if a student neglected their aptitude focused excessively on the end result (i.e. that we must study at ‘Harvard’, or must become engineers) we often tend to suffer rather than benefit.

As a Master, this is an issue I’m often confronted with this phenomenon at PTMs, which have become monologues. They are all about what “must and mustn’t

be done” – what choices are necessary to achieve a specific outcome, when a student doesn’t necessarily have the ability to get there; both parents and students are responsible for this. While this may be hard to do, we need to recognise the limits of our own abilities, and not choose ‘the right subject’ for the wrong reasons, as it won’t lead anywhere. If we take a look at all the mavericks in numerous professional fields, their achievements were never the result of reverse calculation. While the primary ingredient was their intuition and passion, they recognised their limits and chose to start small: working their way to the top. For such inspiration, we can even look to some of Chandbagh’s own legends: be it eminent mountaineer Nandu Jayal, world-class sculptor Anish Kapoor, educationalist & Barefoot College founder Bunker Roy, journalists Prannoy Roy and Karan Thapar as well as authors Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth and our Chief Guest Ramachandra Guha. One conversation with any tell you that ‘reverse calculation’ is a counterproductive, potentially fatal move.

The inveterate culture and diversity at Doon is such students involve themselves in activities they’re naturally drawn to. Doon gives boys the forum to expand their horizons, provided they have will to work for it. But, as soon as one starts reverse calculating, the drive of passion fades away and is replaced by materialistic lust. In this respect, the culture of rewards - awards, colours or blazers – have dissipated from their original intention to motivate and spur personal advancement. They have now become goals that ooze out the joy and fun out of the activities, creating hyper-competitiveness. It must be noted this problem, arising from reverse calculation, has reduced our Founding Mission to a mere slogan – owing to the intentions behind people’s actions. Social service – a practice at the core of being a ‘Dosco’, as Arthur Foot repeatedly implied – is now not done for the ‘spirit of service’, but owing to reverse calculation is done to beautify one’s college CV for applications to the United States. While some may argue that “society still benefits” and this may be ignored; I would personally disagree, since ‘intent’ is what legitimizes actions – and would make social service for one’s CV an illegitimate action. CV



building and other accolades ought to come as by-products of the service that one dedicates himself to, and boys must be careful to not shift their focus from

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...it's like we want to play a fixed match, and predetermine the outcome of the game.

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the actual intent to the by-product. Indeed, Doon is a great place because of these selfless acts of service and hence, if reverse calculation gains a foothold, we might sacrifice the essence of this great institution.

To use a cricket analogy, it's like we want to play a fixed match, and predetermine the outcome of the game. We try to plan and recalculate our lives to perfection for certainty and a feeling of security. This means we play shakily; and stop enjoying our presence due to the fear of failure. To avoid this, we must have the courage to face the consequences of our own choices

and embrace reality. If a batsman focuses too much on hitting a century, the probability of him or her getting shaky then throwing his or her wicket away is really high. Once desperation to perform creeps in, getting out is difficult; rather, we should enjoy the game and play it for the love we have for it.

Any learning institute's responsibility is to equip its members with a certain skill set which is necessary for the outside world, for which a love for learning needs to be wrought. The institution must create an environment in which the love for learning grows. If one just enjoys the process, and doesn't focus too much on outcome, he will come out as a true Dosco. It is important to note that I say 'too much', as having goals is important: without ambition one can't succeed. However, we mustn't let ambition govern our life. It has been said many a times that the journey is more important than the destination and bearing that in mind, let's stop 'reverse calculating' and doing what we, as Doscos, do best!

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## You Can't Cry

Armaan Verma

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The pen is mightier than the sword,  
You said to me, didn't you?  
Before you placed it in my hand.  
I know now the truth of it:  
One is swift, the other painfully slow.  
You say 'It's all to make a living,'  
I say it's all to make a killing,  
Condemning me to death before life.  
My opinion, you ask?  
My observations? My analysis?  
Oh, how I wish such thoughts  
My mind would harbor. Of course,  
It would be much simpler  
If I had a good night's sleep,  
The kind without five cups of coffee  
And ten alarm clocks to wake me.

Would you be so kind as to pass a cigarette?  
Oh, right. I'm not allowed that either.  
Alcohol? Dope? Meth?  
I mean, if it kills me slowly,  
I'd love to lend you a hand.  
At least pornography's still legal, right?

Jack and Jill went up the hill,  
But you never told me only one of them  
Ever makes it to college.  
Ah, college.  
Where you find yourself,  
Only, of course, if you have a personality.  
So Terms and Conditions do apply,  
And so does a fee my parents cannot pay.  
Hopefully, I'm still breathing  
Under the books you buried me in,  
I'm not you. Perhaps I will be one day,  
Defeated.

At least I tried. But now I'm here,  
So, professor, have no fear;  
I will be a good little dear,  
I won't look up, let's make that clear,  
I will keep those numbers high.  
I shan't complain about it till I die.  
After all, it's not like you can cry.  
If the staring makes your tear ducts go  
dry.



# UNDERSTANDING THEISM

Devang Laddha explores the various beliefs towards God and their effect in today's world.

God and religion are concepts that have been part of all our lives and culture since birth. They govern various aspects of our lives ranging from things we eat, when we pray, who we interact with and which community we belong to. However, despite forming a critical part of our lives, as institutions they remain largely unexplored by most. We continue to look at God with a binary perspective, believing in either theism (believing in the existence of God) or atheism (believing that God does not exist). Living in this false dichotomy, we remain oblivious to the many stances that lie in between these two extremes. Considering these polar opposites to be the only acceptable stances, we all lose out on a lot of what constitutes a major part of our identity.

Before I continue, I would like to clarify three things. First: the aim of this article is not to persuade anyone to leave their religion and join another. Secondly: this article addresses the general outlook towards religion and God; exceptions, as always, might exist. Lastly, that when I use the word 'religion' in this article, I use it as an umbrella term to include all stances and religions that might exist, not just the concept of theism.

Looking at the current spectrum, let us explore what lies in the centre between theism and atheism: agnosticism. Today, theism and atheism give us two hypotheses: making claims of whether God exists or not. Both have their own evidence and proofs and can be challenged, however, one can always choose not to be sure about them, taking the middle path. Agnosticism is that path - a belief which claims that God may or may not exist until conclusively proven so. It asks for evidence to be given for both hypotheses (theism and atheism), and does not subscribe to either belief until clear evidence is given. While a simple belief, it is quite significant for it provides a path where one can express their uncertainty over God. One may not remain stuck between two binaries, and neither has to believe in God or oppose its existence. However, one can also choose to not enter the realm of theism at all, choosing to instead be agnostic. This fourth arena is for those who claim that the definition of God is too vague and therefore we ought to remain apathetic to the idea.



However, while paths such as these do exist, they are rarely taken, begging the question of why we follow the belief system we do. Most of us begin following a religion when we're very young, sometimes even at our birth. We grow up following the practices of a religion, reading particular scriptures and living by the norms of this religion. However, many of us do not choose our religions, but rather take what has been determined by our parents and surroundings. These factors are the first ones that introduce us to our religion, its practices and values. While some may welcome this, for others it means taking away our freedom to choose our own religion. This even works with atheism, as some parents often root out the possibility to even doubt the existence of God from the minds of their children. Thus, for every belief system, we see that some degree of indoctrination does apply, the only difference being the values propagated. Furthermore, the so-called



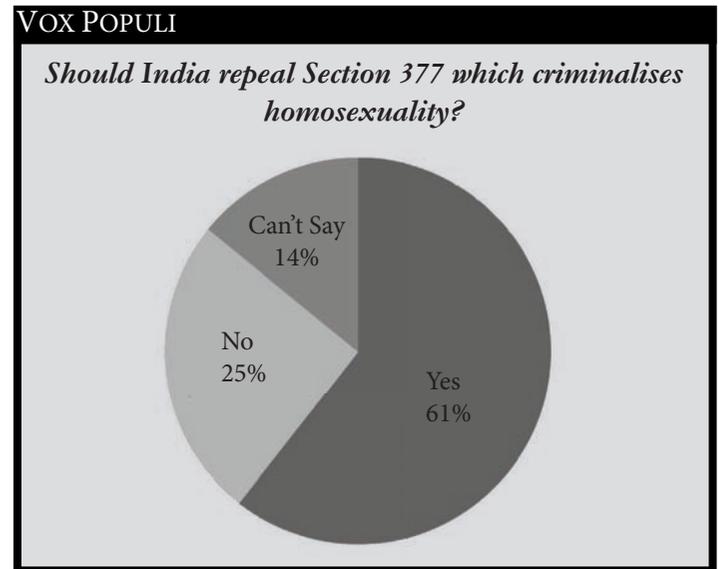
choice to change our religion later is often nullified due to such indoctrination. This makes us hold inherent biases towards certain religions which changes our outlook towards them, influencing our choices. Thus, our right to religious freedom is inherently corrupted from our birth.

Therefore, it is important to note that the stance or religion many of us follow is not ours – it is our parents'. Furthermore, even if it is ours, we must introspect deeply on our system of beliefs. How many of us have actually explored it and other religions fully? How many of us have read the entire Gita, Quran or Bible? Without knowing the fundamentals of our religion, we succumb to misunderstandings and misinterpretation, which can often be used against us: to rule us, determine what we should eat and when we should act. We give power to an institution that we do not choose and moreover, do not even know of entirely - which is, logically speaking, ridiculous.

Thus, it is our prerogative to question and explore the religion that forms part of our identity. While advice regarding religion and spiritual beliefs exists in plenty, it is important that we question it. Religion forms a core part of our life and we should scrutinize it closely. We should know what we are getting into and our other options. At a lesser magnitude, it's similar to choosing a college for ourselves; we need to know all options, what kinds there are and what they offer. One must keep in mind that our religion forms a part of our identity for it determines our actions, making it very important for us to know our religion and ensure that it represents us entirely.

Thus, religion itself should not be thrust upon children. It is something that one must be able to choose, as one chooses their career and interests. It is a large part of one's life and not something others should decide. This indoctrination from parents, relatives and society needs to stop. The right to religious freedom gives us all the chance to follow any religion we like, even to follow none; however, we can truly express this right only when we approach religion and God without any prejudice and preconceived notions. Thus, I would urge all to see their religion and what it proposes with a rational outlook and whether they still want to follow it. Furthermore, I would implore parents to raise their children conforming to the true tenets of secularism – which is the separation of religion from upbringing, and inculcating positive values along ethical (and not religious) lines. The process is one that requires a lot of thought and reflection, making it daunting. However,

with anything that determines a large part of our identity we should take our time, think long and hard, question as much as we see fit and only then take our own decision.



**D-Day**  
Abhiraj Lamba

I think he knew  
Somewhere we all did  
As much as we fought it  
As much as it hid

He had to go  
He had to die  
We can cry  
We can ask why

But we already know  
That death is inevitable  
We may love life  
But it is anything but stable

I know this seems sad  
But it is true nevertheless  
Let's not cry. Crying over  
Spilt milk doesn't clear the mess

So let us know that death is certain  
And let us not mind it anyway  
Let us be strong and  
Let us not fear D-Day



# PASSING THE BATON

The Doon School Weekly conducted an exclusive interview with the new Chairman of the Board of Governors, Mr Sunil K. Munjal. Mr Munjal is a former Joint Managing Director of the Hero Group, India's premier automotive manufacturing group that has evolved from being the world's largest bicycle-maker to the largest two-wheel vehicle maker.

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**The Doon School Weekly (DSW): As the newly appointed Chairman of the Board of Governors, what is your vision for this school?**

**Sunil Kant Munjal (SKM):** I believe that it is important for the IPSS to build consensus in the community, so that everybody works together for the benefit of the School. For the Doon School itself, it is important to not only embrace the changes, but also lead the changes going on socially, culturally and technologically around the nation. To do this, it needs to be modern and traditional at the same time. It should accept technology, and lead the change in education in India, and thus ensure that it continues to be seen as one of the leading schools in India and the world.

**DSW: Of late, there have been many changes in the School in terms of its infrastructure, curriculum, timetable and the development plan which has led to concerns being raised about it harming the School's identity. How is it possible to balance these with the subsequent apprehensions and maintain the School's identity?**

**SKM:** The prime idea of the development plan is to maintain the School's character and legacy, and also turn it into a modern institution. Although these two might seem contradictory, but those institutions that are both endearing and enduring find a way to carve the balance between the two. To bring it into contemporary times, it is important to identify and change things in curriculum as well as in infrastructure. Our infrastructure is one of the School's defining characteristics, with time however we must continue building on them. It was for all these purposes that a development plan for the School was made to begin with. Now we are moving towards the tail end of the plan where there will be considerable effort in reviewing all the work. Moreover, it is now a thought to continue forward and institute a new development plan without any breaks.

**DSW: Being someone who has graduated from the School, what do**

**you think lies as the very cornerstone of being a Dosco? Also, what does it take being a part of the Dosco fraternity, after leaving School?**

**SKM:** DoscOs, in society, are seen as quite unique individuals. Few times have people seen an institution, that produces so many leaders in such varying fields. If you were to look at politics, armed forces, authors, doctors to name a few, you would always find a few DoscOs right at the top. This however, is not because we produce millions of DoscOs; in fact, we have only 5000 or so DoscOs to begin with. What actually causes this is what we are put through as we enter School. We are taught the value of service. It is considered important by the entire community to selflessly put others before oneself. A unique thing about this School is that it allows young people to make decisions for themselves, unlike most other schools. I think that it is also important for students to enjoy themselves in this learning process.

**DSW: You talked about being well- equipped with skills. What were the most important traits and skills that were useful in your career?**

**SKM:** One is definitely that of decision making. I also learnt the value of relationships. I learnt that you can be nice and yet be aggressive to achieve your goals. Normally, in life this can be seen as a conflict as you can either be a nice person or one who gets things done, but it is quite eminently possible to do both. The School also taught me that building your network is a unique strength. However, we should focus on providing exposure to students on experimental learning.

**DSW: The School has faced a lot of criticism over the hike in tuition fees. What are your views on this matter?**

**SKM:** There are multiple dimensions to this, one being that the fees was raised to make up for the lack of any increase in fees for the past 18 years or so and also because costs are constantly going up due to inflation in the country. Also, there were operational things that were left behind to do. Since this has been achieved,





Mr Gautam Thapar (left), the former Chairman of the Board of Governors, welcomes the new Chairman, Mr Sunil Munjal (right).

the hike in fee has either been tapered off or finished. However, financial support should be available to large number of students. Our attempt will first be to attract students from a diverse range of backgrounds, regions, and income streams. To ensure that they are all able to get access, we will look to enhance our capability to provide a larger number of scholarships and bursaries. Anyway, I don't think there is any other good answer to this issue, we cannot lower fees and we should not. It will marginally increase now whenever there is an increase in cost, because any good institution has to be able to stand on its feet.

**DSW: As you may know, sons and grandsons of Old Boys get a preference in the admissions process, something which many have described as unfair and not meritocratic, contradicting the founding principles of our school. What do you have to say in response to this?**

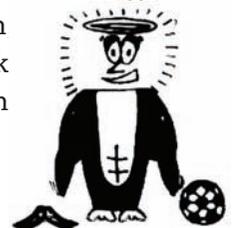
**SKM:** You have to draw a fine line between the two requirements. Firstly, the maintenance of a culture in school in which all of us can identify ourselves as DoscOs. Secondly, ensuring that the system is based on merit. So what the school has done is draw up a scheme which allows you to enjoy the best of both worlds. The process it has followed is to draw a line that allows the best to enter from both the worlds. It also gives the institution little bit of a leg-up if you can bring a part of a population which has been exposed and brought up in a similar culture. The purpose of this concept is not to compromise on the quality of students that are admitted in this school.

**DSW: Could you give us a few insights into your School experience?**

**SKM:** On joining school, I was in Foot House first for a year, and then spent the rest of my life in Jaipur House. In the first few days of my schooling in Doon, I used to be slightly lost. However, I made friends quickly. At that point of time, school was quite relaxed. I also had a physical condition with my feet, and was therefore excused games. Indeed, it was a great relief to wake up comfortably in the morning and not go for cross-country. However, this allowed me to pursue indoor games. I was, therefore, quite good at badminton, carom, table tennis and other indoor games. However, some of the best experiences I had with my friends in school were during Midterm expeditions. We went to place called Sahastra Tal which was at height of almost 16000 ft. We never really made it to Sahastra Tal since we were caught in a storm, but just that sense of adventure and thrill to explore beyond what you see every day is perhaps the most amazing learning experience which stays with you throughout your life.

**DSW: In our final question, what is your parting message for DoscOs as you begin your tenure as the new Chairman?**

**SKM:** I would like to remind DoscOs of three essential things. Firstly, they have School and a very strong alumni connection with it as a great resource at hand and they should use it wisely. Secondly, I advise them to strengthen their value system and never let it falter in the course of their lives. Thirdly, I would encourage DoscOs to be open to change. In conclusion up the Dosco spirit and constantly work towards making this amazing institution an even better place.



# A Debater's Valediction

Arjun Singh

This has been a tradition of my predecessors – started by Pulkit in 2014, and continued by Arth in 2015 – to pen a parting piece as Secretary of the Senior English Debating Society. In the past, they used it to reminisce their time as debaters, discuss the importance of debating and motivate all others to “not lose that debater inside of you”. Indeed, while along those lines, my version of this debating valediction will take a different, slightly more personal approach.

Often, by students, teachers, strangers and friends alike, I have been checked for my argumentative nature. This is, unapologetically, a stubborn one, which compels me to question all that I find unanswered, and to stand up for my beliefs: sometimes vigorously so, leading on numerous occasions to my labelling as ‘stubborn’, ‘arrogant’, and ‘uncooperative’. Most notably, I’ve heard the line ‘there is no use arguing with him; he won’t change his beliefs anyway’. While I could respond to that with the same statement, it is this line that I’ve come to regard, as Arth noted, as “the worst argument in the world”.

Although I have disagreed with many people on many matters, my debating bent-of-mind has taught me that disagreement is okay – even healthy at times. After an exchange of arguments and refutations, we don’t have to necessarily budge if we – while still listening to other perspectives – still believe our opinions to be right. In my opinion, entering a conversation does not always mean reaching a compromise or change of opinion; it can also serve merely as an opportunity to exchange ideas and understanding the depth of another person’s belief in greater detail, without necessarily agreeing with it. For as Aristotle so rightly said, “It is the mark of an educated mind to entertain a thought without necessarily accepting it.” Such is the spirit that, I feel, we must adopt in our daily discourse, and accord each other – even with divergent opinions – a degree of mutual respect.

It is this spirit that compelled me as a junior to involve myself in debating, a decision that defined my intellect and character as a whole. Some misconstrue it, but debating is not a mere exercise of rhetoric or pursuit for the silver-tongued. It is an intellectual art that teaches one, above all else, to think critically with ever-

increasing depth – building intellectual rigour and an inquisitive sense. With such skills, I’ve been prompted to continuously investigate my surroundings; seeking the truth all the time, and remaining relentless until a verified logical answer is found. Furthermore, it taught me how to articulate and defend my opinions, often before authorities and entrenched systems seemingly unbreakable and threatening. The School community has indeed seen this with my Editorials and verbal activism over the years: including a stubborn advocacy for free speech, Assembly talk against school sycophancy and unwavering willingness to defend my ideals, ignoring the cries of personal pragmatism to do otherwise. For this, I’m ever grateful to debating, and despite all the ‘obnoxious’ labels, alienation and dislike I’ve earned; I don’t regret a single second of it.

For this, I’ve further come to believe that debating is greater than just an academic activity. Rather, it is ‘education for democracy’ – which is far more valuable than mere classroom learning. For debating fosters the skills of dialogue necessary to exercise free speech – the drive to seek answers and hold power accountable when things seem unjust, and to never relent to intolerance. These memorable ideals compelled America’s Founding Fathers to the draft the U.S. Constitution’s First Amendment: a precedent for free speech in the world’s democracies that’s improved citizens’ lives. Yet, we now live in a world where such free speech is under attack, while indoctrination and State suppression threaten the freedoms we hold dear. For a moment like this, the need to be educated about free speech and dialogue – accomplished through debate – is more important than ever.

For that, I’d ask all of you to keep ‘debating’ on your own. Even if you never deliver a formal speech, it’s the spirit of debating that extends far beyond podiums and should be practised. Assume nothing, and keep questioning things around you; don’t accept things ‘just the way they are’ because someone elderly (or otherwise) tells you that it’s true – find out for yourself. By striving to seek the truth and grasping answers independently, you will truly begin to understand the world around you – a feeling of enlightened gratification that marks true intellect and freedom.

On my journey, I know these skills have served me well



and will do so in the future too. Because of debating, I will always continue to question, weigh arguments both for and against a decision, and seek the truth since for me; everything boils down to a debate. My love for debating will certainly continue at college. But

in these few months, as I step up at Chuckerbutty to give my final set of school-level speeches, I'll give them with the intensity of passion that comes with finality – knowing that the decision to debate was one of the best I've ever made.

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## EVERYBODY'S STOPPED SMILING

Armaan Verma

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My tummy isn't feeling too well. I feel like crying. Should I cry? Well, Mama already is, so I don't think it would help. Papa wasn't loud before; now, he's making my ears hurt. Does that mean we're in trouble? The big man says that we're going on a picnic. I tell Mama I'm hungry and that she should also eat. I haven't seen her eat since they closed down the shop. Hush, girl, she tells me. She's trying to hold back tears. I want to explain to her that I'm not so stupid, that I know when she cries. I'm smart for a girl my age. All the others in my class are *Dummkopfs*.

Why are we moving? Oh, it's because we're in a car. *Nein*, a truck. Well, at least the picnic will be nice. Picnics usually are, except on days when the big men come and tell people to go inside. I don't like those days; these funny red things keep making noise. The

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I stick my head out from the side of the truck and smile. Why aren't Mama and Papa smiling? They should smile more often.

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truck is moving really fast. I can barely see anything, it's so fast. All the people are staring at us. They must be jealous we're going on a picnic. I stick my head out from the side of the truck and smile. Why aren't Mama and Papa smiling? They should smile more often. There are so many reasons I have to smile, even now. *Ja!* There's the French bakery I go to on weekends. There's something to smile at. The owner, Jacques, used to give me free croissants. I think it's shut though. That's strange; it's always open. I hope the big men didn't shut him down as well. My brother went to join them a year back and Papa told me he went to 'serve'. I wonder why they argued before he left. Anyway, I wrote him letters when I could. Once, I remember, I sent him part of a cookie I had bought from the bakery. He stopped

replying a few weeks ago, though. Mama keeps saying he'll be back when "it's all over". Papa doesn't.

We've left the city. Oh, the trees smell nice. It really is a picnic. *Gottsei Dank!* I'm still hungry. Something tells me I shouldn't tell Mama and Papa. Maybe then they might smile. The big men are talking amongst themselves at the front of the truck. Why are they always so serious? Everybody's stopped smiling, even the girls at school. Some of them went to 'serve' too. I didn't like them very much. Their Mamas and Papas used to look at me funny.

Why are we going into a city again? *Nein*, this isn't like our city. There are fences everywhere. I get off the truck. It's like everybody's in a hurry. It's all so strange. There's no grass here. Where are the picnic baskets, the cream rolls? I'm so hungry that my tummy hurts. There's lots of big men everywhere. They used to scare me but I think that now that my brother is like them I don't need to be afraid, even though they keep yelling all the time. There's one yelling right now. He yells at Papa. Papa is going further away with many other men. He's screaming now. Why is he screaming? I try to tell him I'm coming but he can't hear me. Everybody's screaming. It's so loud. Someone's calling Mama and me, '*Judenfrau! Judenfrau!*' Mama won't talk to me. At least she's not crying anymore. Oh! The big men are telling us we're going for a shower. I guess that's alright. We should shower before having a picnic. I take off all my clothes but there's so many people around. It's embarrassing. Oh well, at least everyone is doing the same. Mama is holding me tightly. It's too tight, I tell her. Are those the showers? They are so... square. Ow! *Nein, Nein*, there's too many people in here. And they're squishing me. Mama tells me to shut my eyes. That sounds like a good idea. If I shut my eyes, the shower will end quicker. After all, we must get on with the picnic.





# We're All Privy to Murder

*Salman Mallick writes about the growing insensitivity amongst people around the globe.*

Picture Credits: Kasapa Online

“I will make half of you disabled and let the other half push the wheelchairs,” ominously said an Israeli police chief, when bragging about ‘kneecapping’, his policy of shooting the Palestinian male youth on their lower limbs. Incidentally, one of his ancestors may have been in Auschwitz. “We remain tacitly unwanted on both sides,” said the former Mayor of Srebrenica (home to the infamous Srebrenica massacre) and a survivor of the March of Death, Camil Durakovic. Our world today is so empathetic and understanding that Myanmar’s Head of Government, Aung San Suu Kyi (incidentally a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate) took two years to ‘realise’ that the situation with the Rohingyas in her country was ‘bad’.

Genocide is the ultimate form of racial abuse within a country. It germinates from simple racial abuse at first, then moves to apartheid and segregation, and finally culminates into hatred enough to seek the extermination of the ‘other’.

But genocide isn’t always a movement that comes from within the people. Sometimes, genocide is imposed upon the people from above, as a method of consolidating power. For example, Hitler would probably not have gained much if he didn’t exterminate the Jews. But by establishing a link between Jews and Germany’s downfall, Hitler incited the majority against the minority, hence unifying it. In many ways, racial abuse is seen as a way to unify the majority against the minority, thus consolidating those in power. For example, even if you look at our very own India,

you will see that not much has been said against the several Muslim lynchings that took place. This, again, is so as to consolidate the majority (vote bank politics) by uniting it against the minority, albeit to a smaller extent.

But this isn’t just about genocide. It is about the growing insensitivity amongst us about anything and everything. As the supply of ‘bad news’ in our news channels has peaked, our sensitivity towards it has diminished, to the extent of just seeing the rolling headlines at the bottom of the screen and moving on. Our increasingly mercantile lifestyles are also party to the creation of this insensitivity. Our routine, and in general, life, is organized in such a way that minding your own business is the best way forward. Why should you go and protest to a police officer if someone you don’t know is getting molested by someone else you don’t know? Why would you even care? You like to think that you care, and you would applaud someone who did do something, but it is highly likely that you would just put your head down and get on with what you have to do. It’s hard to believe, but it’s true.

Increasingly, the same is happening on the global stage. After all, our leaders are a reflection of us, aren’t they? Why would the Prime Minister of India care if Israel was carrying out atrocities on Palestinians if it was to his (and therefore his country’s) benefit to see it and close his eyes?

We have seen a diminishing of the power of the moral mental checks that existed in society in the centuries past. For example, religion was a powerful



check on behaviour and prevented people from doing things that were considered 'wrong' by society at that time. With the advancement of knowledge, however, religion is being viewed with more and more scepticism, which may just be translating into lower moral accountability. Also, the societal pressure has seen a downfall in recent years due to the increasing independence of the individual from society. Now, people do not think much of what 'everyone would say'. It is a part of the thought process, but by no means is it the all-pervading source of fear that it used to be in older times. Also, society itself seems to be caring less about what you are doing, with everyone more concerned about themselves.

But how does all of this relate to things as bad as genocide? The fact is, when we are willing to overlook things such as sexual abuse in our society for our own gain and comfort, the same translates into the international community. While there has been much

criticism of the government of Myanmar in recent times, none of this has actually translated into any material action. Although the EU has a long-standing sanction against the export of arms to Myanmar, nothing else has been done to really *hurt* the Myanmar government for what it is doing.

With this increase in insensitivity in society, whether it is the international society or our own local ones, we are bound to see more. More of this sense of power over another, just because you constitute a majority, and they constitute a minority. More people will be emboldened to take steps to further establish that superiority if more people keep ignoring their advances. We are at a crucial stage, the same stage at which Hitler was when he cautiously marched into the Rhineland. If we allow this to happen, then very soon, all hell will break loose. But if we stop it at this juncture, then perhaps it may not rear its head again.

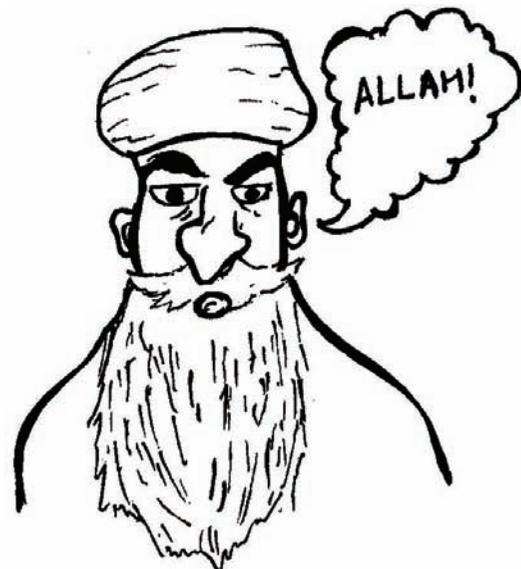
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## Deus Vult

**Aviral Kumar** *comments on the unjust prejudice faced by the Muslim Community.*

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'Jihad'. I'm sure most of us are well acquainted with the term's colloquial usage: the war waged by Islamic extremists against the rest of the world. The term today is synonymous with terrorism, but in truth, *Jihad* means 'Holy War'. While it is widely agreed that organisations such as the Taliban and ISIS essentially use Islam as a tool to further their own goals and to rally Muslims to their cause – which in no way can be justified - we must remember that the roots of modern Islamic extremism, in fact, lies in the Crusades. These were a series of holy wars fought between the Islamic Caliphates and all of Catholic Europe, apparently due to a difference of faith, with each aiming to annihilate the 'others'. It is, in my opinion, that the legacy of that medieval enmity between these two Abrahamic religions adds further fuel to the present conflict.

Over the past year, tensions between the Muslim community and the Western world have once again surged, and with recent attacks taking place in Manchester and London, many are re-evaluating President Donald Trump's words for their credibility.



Having completed nearly ten months in office, Trump has spared no expense in seeing his immigration policies put into place, even if they must take on a watered down, politically correct form. The message he is sending, indirect though it may be, is clear - Muslims and Islamic extremism are the greatest threats to world peace today. I have no intention of defending extremist actions, but I do believe that the global majority of *Jihadi* fighters involve themselves in such extremism under the pretext of blind obedience to their faith: pawns in the scheme of the various terrorist outfits whose upper echelons are



the only ones who know the truth.

In 1099 during the First Crusade, Tancred of Taranto, one of the four commanders of the Crusader armies, was encamped outside Jerusalem while preparing to lay siege to it. Tancred promised protection to everyone residing within the walls of Jerusalem in exchange for the City Governor's immediate surrender. The governor was eventually forced to yield, but Tancred broke his oath and slaughtered hundreds of men, women and children in his infamous entrance into the city. Most of the Crusaders who engaged in this manslaughter didn't even know of the agreement, believing that they were slaying heathens in the name of God. A more recent example is the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq. American forces may have caused massive casualties to the Ba'athist forces, but among the losses were over 100,000 civilians, all classified 'war-time casualties' and therefore justified deaths by the American authorities.

I'm not criticising anyone for such actions during wartime, but wish to reiterate that any nation or movement which desires to rally its populace for any task (especially conflict) must first convince their people that their actions are just. Such a trend has existed since time immemorial, most notably in Ancient Greece when Aristotle in *Rhetoric* postulated his famed modes of persuasion: *ethos, pathos and logos* (or empathy, sympathy and logic). The use of these three modes to coalesce people around ideas exists within the *Jihadi* recruitment strategies as well: the foot soldiers are all radicalised into believing that their religion is under siege, that Western countries are the evil perpetrators of this, and that God has called upon them to serve. This is why most of them think that they are fighting a '*Jihad*' in its truest sense, and is the core strategy of the *Jihadi* propaganda machine.

Additionally, this is precisely the reason why faith becomes an even larger factor in the conflict. Because *Jihadists* use the defence of Islam as the cause behind their actions, they inadvertently - or possibly even intentionally - cause the entire Muslim community to be dragged in as being involved. This causes a terrorist versus the-rest-of-the-world scenario to seem like a "Muslims versus all" situation, leading to hostility and flawed political victimisation (e.g. Trumpism). It is here where we make our biggest mistake. If many people hold a prejudiced view of all Muslims irrespective of their stance and actions - we will alienate them near-entirely from our communities. Innocent Muslims will have

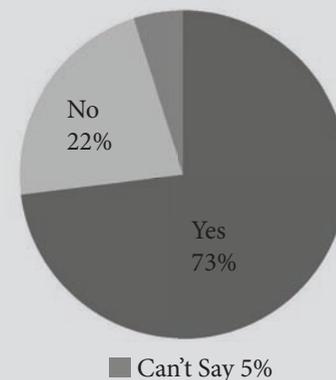


Innocent Muslims will have

to seek refuge with someone who still trusts them: a situation in which the *Jihadis* will step in and capitalise on the alienation they face. This accomplishes nothing except creating a vicious, self-perpetuating cycle pumping new blood through the arteries of extremism. The cycle is evident in our own home turf, India, (with the greatest number of Muslims worldwide) where Muslims are strip-searched due to long beards or for having Islamic surnames and we are led to believe that Muslims must be treated with caution. This, of course, pushes the victims of such actions into the arms of extremists. Flinging flawed accusations is, therefore, no solution, but the beginning of problems. As mentioned before, *Jihadists* will only use this way of thinking to their advantage. And while they are on the defensive right now, the possible support of the entire Muslim population would make them a force to be reckoned with. Expelling Muslim immigrants won't make anything better; we must earn the trust of the Muslim elements in our own communities. If we have their complete support, the entire argument of the Jihadists becomes invalid. I'll conclude with a cheeky phrase from a former Prefect's poster in my house, a phrase which speaks truly of prejudices faced by many innocent Muslims today - 'A plane safely landed after a violent storm. A woman got up and said "Praise the Lord", everyone clapped. I got up and said "Allahu Akbar", I was arrested.'

#### VOX POPULI

*Should prefects be elected by their respective houses?*



The Prefect's position is one which many DoscOs aspire to obtain. A majority of DoscOs today wish to participate in this decision-making process of choosing the prefects, claiming that they are the ones whom this decision directly affects, and thus deserve a voice in the same. Many believe that the Housemasters' opinion on a candidate may not be wholly correct. As opposed to this, a small group also defends the status quo, arguing that we are not mature enough to take these decisions.

# Societies in Crisis

Senior Correspondents

Issue No. 1915, March 4, 2000

At the weekly meeting of the Editorial Board of the DSW we make every endeavour to fulfil one of our most important responsibilities: pushing creative writing by members of the Doon School community. At almost every one of these meetings we are unable to run any creative pieces simply because none are submitted. Our investigation into the reason for this sad dearth of creative material indicates that creative writing is rapidly on the wane. The woeful lack of participants in the various creative writing competitions held by the Department of English would only substantiate this argument. For instance, only five boys participated in the Bakhle Literature test in 1999 and a first prize was not awarded due to lack of quality. Furthermore, even the trickle of writing that we do receive at the DSW has to be almost entirely rewritten because of shocking inability of the authors to construct even

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...it is time for us to re-examine the schedule and content of society meetings to make them a more attractive proposition...

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a grammatically correct sentence. But the picture is even darker than we could possibly have imagined before we began our investigation into the health of the various societies that exist on paper.

A quick glance at the societies on offer would indicate that the school provides for a diverse field of interests, ranging from Liberal Arts to Astronomy, Debating and History. We're free to enlist the member of any society of our choosing, but are these societies really active?

SEDS, Senior English Debating Society, which once enjoyed a huge gathering at its meetings, is currently reduced to an eight-member society. Of this meagre membership, not all are present at every meeting and the claim that this society wishes to aspire to its former glory, producing a set of outstanding debaters, seems unattainable. JEDS, Junior English Debating Society, if this could be believed, fares worse than SEDS. With less than 50% attendance and almost no experience to inter-school debates, this society attracts little or no talent.

The Quiz Club, despite an impressive string of success in 1999, really consisted of a very select set of senior boys who were fielded time and again to win the school laurels. This club functions, if at all, more as a spare time activity, with most members acting as spectators at various local quizzes the school participates in. The general knowledge of the average Doscors let alone his skills at quizzing leaves much to be desired.

Then there is the Scientific Society, once hugely popular, which is now in rapid decline with the Master-in-charge admitting that most members are far too involved with other societies to attend meetings regularly. Which 'other societies' are these which attract such commitment? The Philatelic Society claims no success in attracting new members despite being associated with the International Club of Stamp Collectors; the Beyond War Society and Human Rights Society having been merged with The Historic Circle, have only 14 members none of whom can provide us with any positive feedback, although the Master-in-charge claims that the society is in no danger of extinction. The Astronomical Society believes that despite the viewing of various important astronomical events, the meetings of the society are not always appealing to the boys who lose interest quickly, the society itself succumbing to a growing interference. The Nature Club, described by one of its members as a 'largely inactive society' meets infrequently and all that really happens is the screening of the odd documentary.

Little wonder then that despite two schools being set aside every alternate Saturday for society meetings, most boys prefer to retire to their beds. And yet, those boys who do express an interest in more than one society are incapable of attending the various meetings as they are all held on the same day at the same time.

The only society that has gained a substantial following of recent times is the Information Technology Society, and that too because obligatory to become a member to use the Internet Facilities on campus. A laudable attempt to teach HTML and Web Designing has fallen flat on its face.

Perhaps it is time for us to re-examine the schedule and content of society meetings to make them a more attractive proposition for all concerned.



# Birds in Dehradun at this Time of the Year

**Ramachandra Guha**  
(7-HA, Batch of 1973)

The Doon is famed for its variety of flora and fauna including many varieties of birds. Joseph George, a noted ornithologist, recorded over 400 species of birds in a stay of decade in Dehradun.

In summer migratory visitors are much less than in winter but some intriguing specimens are to be found. This time of the year, of course, is the time of the cuckoos. The Brain fever Bird or the Common Hawk Cuckoo is the first of the migratory cuckoos to arrive in Dehra Dun. Its loud screaming call "Brain fever" is heard day and night. It is seldom seen as it confines itself to the upper reaches of tall trees like the eucalyptus. It is a fairly large brown bird.

The Koel is the next of the cuckoos to arrive. Its call "ku-oo" is well known. It is a slim bird, the male being glistening black and the female spotted. Jungle Crows commonly rear up young Koels.

The cuckoo, famous in England, is also a summer visitor. It is a slim ashy grey bird with white underparts. It is known for the call "Cuckoooo" of its male. It is often seen flying from tree to tree.

The fourth cuckoo is the Indian Cuckoo, with its call "kyphal-pakka", which is similar to the cuckoo in appearance but that is not as slim and it has a broad black band on its tail. It is also to be seen flying from tree to tree.

Perhaps two of the most dazzling summer visitors to the Doon Valley are the Paradise Fly Catcher and the Golden Oriole. The Paradise Fly Catcher has a black crested head. In the male the rest of the body is of pure white, while the female is rufous. The male has two very long ribbons for its tail. When the male is seen flying you see a flash of white, with its long beautiful tail. It is fairly common.

The Golden Oriole is a beautiful Golden yellow bird of the size of a myna. The female is duller and greener. Under the green background of the leaves its plumage looks truly magnificent.

bird the size of a sparrow.

Bird very commonly found on the telephone or telegraph wires in the summer is the Wire tailed swallow. It is a lovely dark blue swallow with a chestnut cap. It has two long, fine wire like tail feathers.

Apart from these birds, the common species such as the several Mynas, the Jungle Babbler, the Jungle crow and the tree pia are also seen, as these birds are resident. The Grey Hornbill is also a resident, but is very rare in winter. In its breeding season, summer, it is often seen flying in flocks of six or seven from tree to tree. It is a slim, long grey bird with a large beak.

## Ink Will Be Shed

Aryaman Kakkar

If the pen is mightier than the sword, then I have lost  
For I have no more ink to write with.

My words are tortured and twisted to the highest degree, and the paper that holds my voice is shredded. The sword, everywhere with blatant disregard, as drops of ink decorates its doubly edged frame. My penned thoughts are begging for the end;

But,

The blunt edge- that cuts and mutilates their form- is persistent on pooling and feeding on their lifeblood.

If the pen is mightier than the sword,  
Then the written word is at stake.

As spilt ink blots out the truth, and chokes the speech of those who dare say it. A horrible game of Chinese Whispers is being played as each new voice adds something foul to drown that speck of grey in their sea of shadows.

I think the pen is mightier than the sword;  
I've used the few drops of ink that I'd left to write my truth. But,  
Who is to say that these words will be shown to the world, if at all?



In early May, the Baya Weaver Bird starts arriving. Its curious oval shaded nests with a narrow, long opening at the bottom are commonly found on palm trees. It is a tawny

# Editorial

Deepanshu Bagchee

(151-JB, Batch of 1996), Issue No. 1777, October 14, 1995

Graffiti has been the bane of many societies and neighbourhoods. In this School also graffiti is widespread and very common. On almost every table, wall, panel or for that matter doodling space that boys can find, is some insignificant comment like 'I wuz here'. We are so used to the constant battering graffiti on our aesthetic sense that we have become extremely complacent about it and have almost accepted it as the norm. Almost every time an ex-Dosco visits School he passes comments like, "It is getting shabbier and shabbier." But now with the historic 'maintenance drive' of the School in progress as a run-up to the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, we need to examine the problem and try to ensure that the same does not happen over the layers of the new paint.

Most people might find graffiti harmless- but not in The Doon School. A lot of the graffiti is obscene, rude and potentially harmful to the image of the School as guests or visitors do notice and even comment on it.

There is some extremely vulgar graffiti in classrooms in the Main Building. Most other graffiti in School is the work of boys trying to leave an indelible mark on some table or wall that will make them immortal in School. Even though it might work in the short run, the School does occasionally paint over the graffiti. There are more concrete ways of gaining recognition. Getting one's name on one of the boards is probably the most sure way of being remembered. A captancy of some House Team brings you more credit than proof of your being at a table, in some class, in some year. "384 wuz here198..." means nothing to a D former today. Also there are extensive school records which reflect a boy's performance in School.

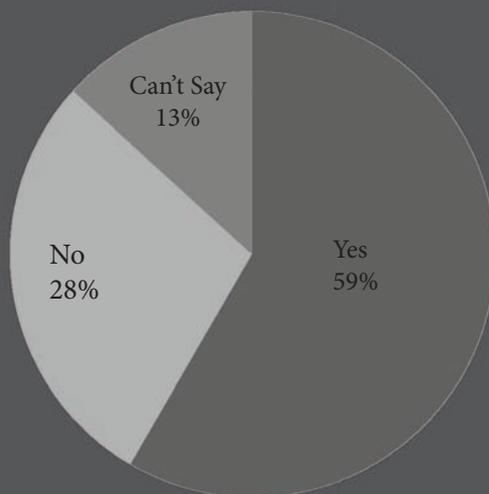
In fact graffiti is just one of the symptoms of the widespread disease of civic disregard that has afflicted our School. Numerous attempts to instil in boys a sense of collective living and responsibility through activities such as House Squads, Estate Care and Recycling have been reduced to mockery by the boys themselves. It is always convenient to work for the School with School Colours or D.E.A.S. badges in mind but the real test comes when there is no judge except your own conscience. Boys who attend tuckshop, regularly litter the area in the most obnoxious way. Despite the colour coding on bins for recycling purposes, most boys just don't have the will or the sense of responsibility to throw trash in the right bin.

A great portion of the blame for this does lie in the erosion of the esprit de corps of School. When a boy actually feels part of the community he will not litter or write graffiti. Furthermore, the failure to punish boys who have actually defaced School property has only encouraged offenders. Though it is a Blue Card offence, how many boys have actually been given one for damaging School property?

Finally, I can only urge boys that, at least now with a new coat of paint and with the campus really looking nice, they should abstain from writing graffiti. Sadly, some has already appeared on top of the new paint. This School is as much yours as anyone else's. By keeping it clean you don't have to impress anyone except yourself...

## VOX POPULI

*Do you think the School Council is an effective body?*



The School Council is the apex Students' Legislative Body that has representation from Masters and Boys. The School Council's members are selected through a democratic process and said to be the voice of the School. Having representation from all parts of the School, the School Council becomes a medium where matters pertaining to School are discussed and decided upon. However, it is believed that the School Council is run by the will of the seniors and the juniors still don't find adequate representation.



# Journeys: Here, There and Everyone in Between

Gunvir Paintal

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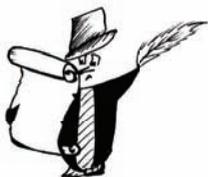
After nourishment, shelter and companionship, stories are the most important thing we need most in this world.

- PHILIP PULLMAN

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Travelling has always been my passion. Over the years I've come to realise that for me, the journey is as important as the destination. Now, I not only look forward to arriving at my destination, but also the wait at the airports or stations and stops along the way. It is not that I like sitting at the railway station in the heat of the summer, waiting for the *Shatabdi* to come to a screeching halt at the platform (late as expected) any more than the next person. Being an extrovert, I always try to engage in a conversation with people who have the misfortune of sitting next to me. A few generic lines of dialogue allow both the newly identified person and me to determine the value - or its lack - of entering into further discourse. During my travels, I've heard a lot of stories. Some stories are mundane and forgettable while others are quite inconceivable. This piece is a precise narration of two such incredible stories. They are accounts of sacrifice and compassion that I believe deserve to be shared.

I was comfortably seated in the aircraft at Zurich, the last stopover, before flying home. On my right, sitting by the window was an Indian exchange student on his way back from Germany. On my left was a lanky man in his late-30s, whom I inferred after observing his luggage and clothing, to be a trekker or a mountaineer. This being one of my first trips without my family, I was slightly apprehensive about conversing with this stranger. The exchange student was more relatable, and we began to converse over the eight-hour flight. But



slowly my curiosity peaked, and gathering courage, I turned and asked the other man his reason for visiting India. He looked at me awkwardly, then smiled and told me that he was a teacher. Since this didn't exactly answer my question, I asked again: "Are you coming to India to teach?"

To which his Cheshire cat smile only grew wider and he said, "It's better if I explain from the beginning. But I must warn you it is a long story."

Naively, I responded that we still had four hours before the flight landed; not knowing that the tale he would tell would end up stirring my core beliefs.

He said that he was a teacher of differently-abled children, especially those with learning disabilities. Five years ago, he decided that he wanted to build a school for disabled orphans, and so began a project. To collect money for the school, he sold his house and most of his belongings. He stated that the rest were kept at a few friends' houses. Still unable to raise the required amount, he competed in cycling tours and marathons and even raised funds by creating cycling challenges and mountaineering expeditions. When he would be away on these ventures, he would video call his students and try to teach them whenever possible. But during his last expedition, he had contracted a disease that was extremely difficult to cure according to doctors, but had been successfully treated in an ayurvedic ashram. So, here he was flying to India on his last few bucks, hoping to be cured to continue his project for the orphans back in Germany. Lastly, he mentioned that not a euro of the money he'd raised had been used to buy this ticket to India and back.

Looking at the man who might not live more than three years but still worried for the lives of children,

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All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveler is unaware.

- MARTIN BUBER

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who weren't even his own, I felt an immense sense of awe and respect. He was a qualified teacher who could easily be well paid; but forsook all that, put himself at risk and raised and taught children that society had rejected.

Recently, I was flying back from Mumbai to Amritsar after spending a few weeks with my cousins. While sitting in the airport lounge, not really being a morning person, I was drowsily sipping my coffee, re-orienting myself with the bustle of bodies and bags around me. A voice suddenly pulled me out of the reverie, and I swivelled to find a young *sardar* in his mid-20s. He looked at me and repeated, "Excuse me, is the seat next to you taken?" I replied, "No, it is not."

After settling down he asked me whether I was feeling okay. Not wanting to engage in conversation this early in the morning I hastily replied that I was; but the concern shown by the man seemed to linger, drawing my interest towards him. He was about six feet tall, well built, an angular face with high cheekbones softened by a free-flowing beard, moustache and a dark blue turban. Feeling the need to continue after my premature and rather rude response, I turned to him and asked, "Are you going to visit the Golden Temple?"

To which he replied, "Well, I am actually from a city near Amritsar called Jalandhar and am returning home after a few years."

Finding a common tangent, my curiosity doubled. I told him that I too was from Jalandhar and asked him the reason for his extended stay in Bombay. He looked

at me, slightly interested, and replied that he worked in a company in Bombay till yesterday. In turn, he asked me, "Have you heard of an NGO called *Pehal*?" As a matter of fact, I had. It was one which organised blood donation camps.

I replied in affirmative. "We also handle cases of domestic abuse," he said.

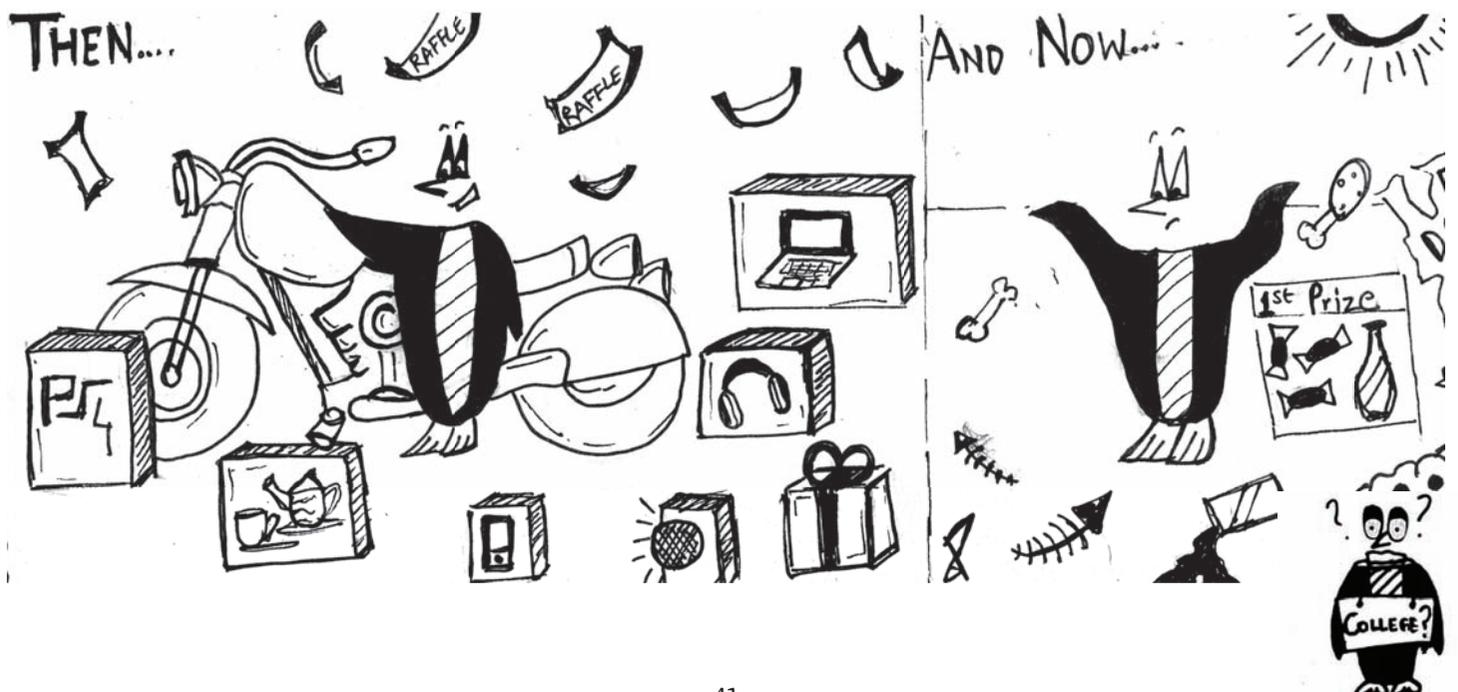
He continued "The person who started this NGO was my father and he still runs it", he stated.

"Yes, the reason I'm returning is due to his ailment."

"What happened to him?"

He looked at me and said, "It all started a decade ago when he was diagnosed with bone marrow cancer. According to the doctors, he had only six months to live, but since then he has undergone multiple treatments – fighting to live. Even while battling cancer he hadn't stopped working for others. He still organised the camps and assisted in cases of domestic violence. It is also the reason I quit my job. I felt that I could do much more for people while helping them rather than sitting behind a desk, working a nine-to-five job. I hope that I'm doing something right now."

Looking into his eyes, I saw resolve and conviction. While I was still finding words to respond with my admiration for the man and his father, the Boarding Time was announced. Picking up his bags, he gave me a meaningful nod and disappeared into the crowd: a departure as sudden as his arrival. Yet, it left me wondering about life and what was more important. It made me see how our choices affect those around us, and the avenues by which we seek inspiration.



## ...और सुबह हो कर रही नन्द सिंह दाहिया

आज मैं आपके सब के सामने एक अनोखे विषय पर विचार करने के लिए आया हूँ। विषय इस लिए अनोखा नहीं है कि उसे किसी दूसरे ग्रह से लाया गया है, बल्कि इसलिए अनोखा है कि वह लगभग हमेशा ही हमारी आँखों के सामने रहता है लेकिन फिर भी हमारा ध्यान पाने से बचता रहता है।

आज मैं जिस विषय पर अपने विचार प्रकट करने का प्रयत्न करूँगा वह है - “क्या ताला असली ताला है?” सुनने में अजीब लगता है, ना! आपके मन में तुरंत यह उत्तर भी आया होगा कि हाँ भई हाँ, एक ताला तो ताला ही होता है। मैं आपकी सोच से एक दम सहमत हूँ, लेकिन मैं किसी धातु के ताले की बात नहीं कर रहा जिसके पीछे धन-सम्पत्ति या दूसरी मूल्यवान वस्तुओं को छुपाकर रखा जाता है। मैं तो उस ताले की बात कर रहा हूँ जिसके पीछे कई बार हम जिन्दगी के सच्चे अर्थों को ही छिपा कर रख देते हैं। मैं यहाँ ताले के प्रतीकात्मक अर्थ और ताले के प्रतीकात्मक प्रयोग की बात करने के लिए आपके सामने हाजिर हुआ हूँ। मैं चर्चा करूँगा कि ये ताले जो हमारे जीवन को बाँध कर रख देते हैं किस धातु के बने होते हैं। मैं इस बात पर भी विचार करने की कोशिश करूँगा कि इन तालों के पीछे छिपी खूबसूरती को किस प्रकार आजाद कराया जा सकता है। संक्षेप में कहूँ तो तो दुराव छिपाव और बंधनों में बंधी जिन्दगी की पुकार मैं आपके सामने रखने की कोशिश करूँगा।

मेरी दादी ने मुझे कहानी सुनाई थी। हुआ यह की एक विवाहित जोड़ा मरने के बाद भगवान के पहुंचा। ईश्वर के दर्शन पाकर उनकी खुशी का ठिकाना न था। ईश्वर ने पूछा, “कहो, धरती पर जीवन कैसा बीता?” दोनों ने कहा, “प्रभु, आपकी कृपा से जीवन बहुत ही अच्छा बीता।” ईश्वर ने फिर प्रश्न किया, “अच्छा ये बताओ कि तुमने अपनी मानव जाति के लिए क्या किया?” पति ने कहा, “मैंने घर चलाया, बच्चे पाले, पैसे कमाए, पूरे परिवार को सुखी रखा।” भगवान ने फिर से अपना प्रश्न दोहराया, “यह तो तुमने अपने लिए किया,

तुमने अपनी मानव जाति के लिए क्या किया?” दोनों चुप खड़े रहे। कुछ समय के लिए सन्नाटा छा गया। प्रभु ने कहा,



“चिड़िया, कुत्ते, बिल्ली भी यही सब करते हैं। तुम्हारे पास तो एक और गुण था जिसे ज्ञान कहते हैं। बुद्धि या प्रज्ञा भी कहते हैं। तुम्हारे पास ज्ञान को पाने की योग्यता भी थी और ज्ञान को फैलाने का गुण भी था जिसका तुमने कोई प्रयोग नहीं किया। पति-पत्नी को बात समझ में ना गयी। वे दुनिया को कुछ भी नया नहीं दे पाए थे क्योंकि वे रोजमर्रा की जिन्दगी में फंसे रहे। नयेपन को आजाद ही नहीं कर पाए। अपने लगाए तालों की चाबी ही उन से कहीं गुम गयी थी।

तालों को खोलने में अगर कोई सफल नहीं हो पाता तो समाज के रूप में हमारा कर्तव्य बनाता है कि हम आगे आएँ और खुद को आजाद करने में दूसरों की मदद करें। हमारे परिचित परिवार में एक लड़की थी। गोपनीयता का ध्यान रखते हुए उसका सच्चा परिचय तो आपको नहीं बता पाऊँगा लेकिन यह समझ लीजिये कि बचपन से ही उसे विज्ञान में रुचि थी। जैसे जैसे उम्र बढ़ती गयी विज्ञान के प्रति उसका जुड़ाव बढ़ता गया। उसकी प्रतिभा की महक फैलती गयी। उसे किसी विज्ञान की स्पर्धा में भाग लेने के लिए ग्रीस बुलाया गया। बस, घर परिवार और रिश्तेदारों को यह बात जंची नहीं। कहा गया कि लड़की के पंख निकल आये हैं। सब ने मिल कर उसके पंख कतर ही तो डाले। आज वह एक गृहणी है जिसका काम बच्चों का पालन-पोषण और पति की देखभाल ही रह गया है। यह घटना अलग अलग रूपों में अलग अलग जगहों पर घटती रहती है। स्थान, लोग, सन्दर्भ बदल जाते हैं लेकिन उन घटनाओं से निकलने वाला निष्कर्ष यही रहता है कि समाज की अनैतिक मान्यताएं लोगों की प्रगति में बाधक बन जाति हैं। काबिलियत को दुनिया के सामने आकर खिलने नहीं देती। कभी यह लिंग के आधार पर होता है तो कभी जाति, धर्म, रंग, वर्ग, स्थान, भाषा या किसी और आधार पर। सोच का छोटापन ताला नहीं तो और क्या है।

रियो ओलंपिक में महिला एथलीट की शानदार सफलता पर प्रसून जोशी ने उन सभी लोगों को जो लड़कियों के पैदा होने पर अफसोस जताते हैं करारा जवाब देते हुए एक दिल को छू जाने वाली कविता लिखी। उन्होंने लड़कियों को कमतर आंकने वाले समाज के उन लोगों से सवाल पूछा है कि क्या अब उन्हें शर्म आ रही है? प्रसून की इस कविता में समाज के हर उस शख्स से सवाल किया गया है जो लड़की पैदा होने पर पछताता है और शर्म महसूस करता है। उन्हें आगे बढ़ने से रोकता है। उन्होंने लिखा -

‘क्योंकि जब मुट्टी में सूरज लिए नन्ही सी बिटिया सामने खड़ी थी,  
तब हम उसकी उंगलियों से छलकती रोशनी नहीं, उसका लड़की होना देख रहे थे’  
‘उसकी मुट्टी में था आने वाला कल और सब देख रहे थे मटमैला आज.’  
‘पर सूरज को तो धूप खिलाना था, बेटी को तो सवेरा लाना था...’ .  
‘..और सुबह हो कर रही.’

## वापसी शुभम धीमान

अगर मैं न रहूँ तो एक रहम मुझ पर करना -  
मेरी गलियों में मेरे जाने की खबर करना।  
कुछ दोस्त बैठे होंगे नुक्कड़ की दूकान पर  
हार्थों में मेरा खत लिए मेरी राह देखते होंगे।  
सोहम ने कहा था चाय की प्याली तैयार रखेगा,  
उससे कहना मेरे नाम की आखरी प्याली पी ले  
आगे बढ़ो तो नज़र उठाकर देखना तीसरे मकान पर  
छत पर खड़े होंगे काका नज़रे लगाए आस्मां पर,  
कहना - मुझे उनकी कहानियाँ बहुत याद आती थीं।  
दो कदम ही दूर होगा स्वर्ग सा सुन्दर घर मेरा,  
मुन्नी आँगन में बैठी होगी शायद मेरे इंतज़ार में  
उसके रेशमी बालों को उसके कंधे पर फैला देना।  
मेरा ज़िक्र करे तो कहानी सुनाकर बहला देना,  
कहना चाचू माँ बाबा के पास चले गए  
अब वापस नहीं आएँगे।  
रसोई में मेरी बूढ़ी माँ खाना बनाती होगी,  
उसके पैर छूकर मेरी हिस्से की दुआएँ लेना।  
शाम ढले थक चुकी होगी उसे आराम से बैठाना,  
मेरे लिए ज़रा उसके पैर दबा देना।  
मेरे जाने की खबर से उसे दुःख तो होगा लेकिन  
उसके दर्द को सहारा दे उसे गले से लगा लेना।  
कहना -  
मुझे माफ़ कर दे, मैं समय पर लौट नहीं पाया,  
बहुत रुलाया है उसे मैंने बताना कि मैं शर्मिन्दा हूँ।  
उसे बताना मैं बुरा नहीं  
मैं बस भटका था कुछ पल को,  
होश आते ही उसका दामन  
थामने आ रहा था घर को,  
सोचा था उसके सीने लग कर सब दुःख मिटा दूँगा,

उसके सारे आँसुओं के बदले खुशियाँ भर दूँगा।  
उसकी सेवा में ही सारी ज़िन्दगी बिता दूँगा।  
क्या टूटा सपना मेरा क्या किस्मत ने मुझे गिराया  
उसे मुस्कुराता हुआ आखरी बार भी न देख पाया।  
बस मेरे जाने पर एक काम तुम मेरा करना,  
मेरी गलियों में मेरे जाने की खबर करना।

## मिशन मार्स-एक सफलता या आत्महत्या शंकर मुटनेजा

आज हम मानवों ने पृथ्वी पर इस तरह तहलका मचाया हुआ है कि लगता है वह दिन दूर नहीं जब हमें अपनी धरती माँ को ही छोड़ना पड़ेगा। रहने को जगह नहीं, साँस लेने को हवा नहीं, पीने को पानी नहीं और खाने को रोटी नहीं है। भयानक हालात बने हुए हैं। बात साफ़ है कि ऐसा बढ़ती आबादी और प्रदूषण के कारण हुआ है। आज मानव जाति मंगल ग्रह पर जाने की सोच रही है। अगर आपने 'द मार्शियन', जो कि एक अंग्रेज़ी चलचित्र है, देखा है तो आपको हमारी धरती के इतिहास के बारे में पता होगा। यह चलचित्र वास्तविक मंगल यात्रा पर आधारित है। अब प्रश्न यह है कि यह यात्रा एक सफलता होगी या फिर जिस मिशन पर इतने साधनों का प्रयोग किया जा रहा है, वह निरर्थक होगा। मेरा मानना यह है कि जो धन सरकार इस योजना पर खर्च रही है, उसे कई दूसरे लाभदायक कार्यों में लगाया जा सकता है जैसे पानी की समस्या का हल निकालना, साफ़-सफाई के लिए कदम उठाना आदि। इस साल के अंत तक हमारी आबादी लगभग ७.७ बिलियन हो जाएगी और वैज्ञानिकों का कहना है कि धरती केवल तीन बिलियन लोगों को सहारा देने के काबिल है। इसी कारण मैं इस मिशन को एक भयानक खेल कहूँगा जिस दाँव पर बहुत अधिक लगा हुआ है। जो लोग इन मामलों में निर्णय लेते हैं मैं उनसे बस यही पूछना चाहूँगा कि आखिर हमारी इस स्थिति का ज़िम्मेदार कौन है? हाँ, यह स्थिति हमारे ही कुकर्मों के कारण आई है। अगर हम शुरू से ही अपनी धरती के प्रति संवेदनशील होते, तो आज हमें ऐसे दिन न देखने पड़ते। मंगल ग्रह अभी भी एक सपना है जो सच्चाई को लगातार और भी अधिक कड़वा बनाता जा रहा है। सारी दुनिया उम्मीद लगाए बैठी है कि मंगल पर जाने की महत्त्वाकांक्षा को छोड़ कर ज़िन्दगी की



खतरनाक सच्चाई से दो-दो हाथ करने का फैसला भी किसी दिन लिया ही जाएगा।  
किसी ने सही ही कहा है -  
“धरती पर मानव की ज़रूरतें पूरी करने के लिए पर्याप्त साधन हैं, पर उसका लालच पूरा करने के लिए नहीं”

## एक डरावनी रात शिवम गुप्ता

हर व्यक्ति को किसी न किसी चीज़ से डर लगता है। मेरा भी एक डर है। मुझे सबसे ज़्यादा डर रात में, घर पर अकेला रहने से लगता है। एक दिन मेरे माता-पिता, रात में, किसी रिश्तेदार के यहाँ गमी में शामिल होने के लिए गए थे। मैं घर पर अकेला था। हिम्मत जुटा कर मैंने अपने माता-पिता को भरोसा तो दिला दिया था कि मैं घर की रखवाली कर लूँगा, किन्तु अंदर ही अंदर मुझे काफी डर लग रहा था। उनके जाते ही मैं दूरदर्शन देखने लगा। दुर्भाग्य से बिजली चली गई। डर तो बहुत लगा लेकिन चूँकि वादा किया हुआ था इसलिए उस डर का सामना करने के अलावा कोई चारा भी न था। कुछ देर इंतज़ार करने के बाद मैंने सोने का निर्णय लिया।

उनींदी अवस्था में किसी के छत पर चलने की आवाज़ आई। एक बार को तो मुझे लगा कि यह मेरा भ्रम है। मैंने जैसे तैसे उस आवाज़ से ध्यान हटाया ही था कि मेरी नजर परदों पर पड़ी। वे हिलने लगे थे। उसी क्षण मुझे छत ही से एक भीषण चीख सुनाई दी। मेरे दिल की धड़कन मानो रुक गई। मैं काँपने लगा और कम्बल में लिपट गया। मेरी कम्बल से निकलकर यह तक देखने की हिम्मत नहीं हो रही थी कि वास्तव में बिजली क्यों गयी, छत पर कौन है, परदे कौन हिला रहा है या यह चीखने की आवाज़ किसकी है। घर के अंदर अँधेरा छाया हुआ था। तभी फोन की घंटी बजी और वह चिल्लाने की आवाज़ और कर्कश हो गई। मैं भी चीख पड़ा और रोने लगा। इतना ही नहीं इसी बीच

ढोल-ताशे बजने की आवाज़ भी आने लगी। वातावरण और भी भयानक हो गया था। बीच बीच में एक मधुर सी ध्वनि आनी भी शुरू हो गयी थी।

अचानक मेरी आँख खुल गयी और मुझे भान हुआ कि टीवी तेज आवाज़ में चल रहा था और मेरी मेरे माता-पिता घर के दरवाजे पर खड़े हुए घंटी बजा रहे थे।



## बचपन आदित्य सराफ

कितना सुन्दर होता है बचपन!  
कितना सुहाना होता है बचपन!  
दुनियादारी से मुक्त,  
प्यार से भरा,  
कितना अच्छा होता है बचपन!  
दुनिया से बेखबर,  
रेत सा फिसलता हुआ,  
मासूमियत से भरा होता है बचपन!  
फिर क्यों? आखिर क्यों  
इतनी जल्दी बीत  
जाता है यह बचपन?  
कब छोटे से बड़ा होकर  
सारी मासूमियत खो बैठता है बच्चा!  
कब अंधकार में डूब जाता है बचपन!  
कब वक्त की लहरों के तले,  
डूब जाता है यह बचपन।  
खो जाता है यह बचपन।

## हैण्डरिटन लवलेटर्स अरविन्दनाभ शुक्ल

बच्चों के कमरे की दीवार पर चिपके हुए कागज़ के ऊपर हाथ से अंग्रेजी में एक उद्धरण लिखा हुआ है। आजकल के बच्चे हिन्दी को पिछड़ा और हिन्दी पढ़ने वालों को और भी अधिक पिछड़ा मानते हैं। उन्हें लगता है, सारी अच्छी बातें अंग्रेजी में ही लिखी जा सकती हैं। अंग्रेजी में लिखी बातों का प्रभाव भी ज्यादा पड़ता है। मैं बच्चों के इस विचार से सौ टके सहमत हूँ। बच्चों के मन में परमात्मा का वास होता है। अगर वे ऐसा मानते हैं तो भई, ठीक ही होगा।

देखा नहीं, बर्गर बेचने वाला जब फर्माटेदार अंग्रेजी में ऑर्डर लेता है और ग्राहक के दिए नोटों को करीने से बक्से में सजा देता है, आत्मा तृप्त हो जाती है। पिज्जा बेचने वाला ग्राहक की टूटी-फूटी अंग्रेजी पर द्रवित नहीं होता। ग्राहक का अपमान न हो जाए इसलिए भाषा की पटरी नहीं बदलता। वह धाराप्रवाह अंग्रेजी में बात करता है जिसके परिणाम-स्वरूप ग्राहक का आत्मविश्वास आसमान छूने लगता है। टेलीकॉम कंपनी की आपरेटर मधुर स्वर में फोन करती है और फिसलती हुई अंग्रेजी

जबान में 'बिल' की जानकारी देती है। सारी बात होने के बाद अंत में सधी हुई आवाज में स्थानीय भाषा में किसी अन्य सेवा के लिए पूछती है। हमारा विश्वास टूट हो जाता है कि अंगरेजी कमाऊ-पूतों की भाषा है और अन्य देसी भाषाएँ सेवादारों की।

अंग्रेजी के महत्त्व को इसी बात से समझा जा सकता है कि हमारे मौहल्ले का तेलू पंसारी जिसके बाप-दादों ने भी कभी न तो अंग्रेजी का मुँह देखा होगा और न ही अंग्रेजों का, आजकल 'साबुन की बट्टी' को 'सोप-केक' बताता है और हिसाब में कोई गलती हो जाने पर नाक में उंगली घुमाते हुए जोर से कहता है 'सिट' और उसके बाद देसी तरीके से दाँतों में जीभ दबा लेता है।

पुरानी बात है, हमारे बचपन के साथी बब्बन के दूर के रिश्ते के मामा एक बार कहीं विदेश गए थे। भगवान जाने किस देश में गए लेकिन बब्बन का कहना था कि उन्होंने इंगलैंड की यात्रा की थी। यूँ तो उस जमाने में विदेश का मतलब इंगलैंड ही था वैसे ही जैसे सभी गोरे अंग्रेज और चपटी नाक और बंद आँखों वाले चीनी कहलाते थे। खैर, बब्बन ने बहुत चकित होते हुए बताया था कि मामा के अनुसार इंगलैंड बड़े कमाल का देश है। वहाँ के रिक्शे-ठेले वाले भी अंग्रेजी बोलते हैं। सच कहूँ, इस सूचना ने एक बार को तो हमारा आत्मविश्वास जैसे हिला ही दिया था। अपने देश की शिक्षा प्रणाली से नफ़रत सी हो गयी थी। अपने मास्टर्स के प्रति खुंदक बढ़ गयी थी। खास तौर पर अंग्रेजी के मास्टर का तो मुँह नोच लेने का मन होने लगा था जो और कुछ तो छोड़िये चार ढंग की गालियाँ भी अंग्रेजी में न सिखा सका था। ये वो ही मास्टर था जिसके अनुसार 'साइंस' पढ़ने वाले लड़के 'जहीन' होते थे, 'कॉमर्स' पढ़ने वाले 'मेहनती' और 'आर्ट साइड' वाले 'लफंगे, निकम्मे और नाकारा'। ये तो भला हो नयी शब्दावली बनाने वाले विद्वानों का जो 'आर्ट साइड' को 'मानव-विज्ञान' या 'मानविकी' कहने लगे और इतिहास, भूगोल, नागरिक-शास्त्र पढ़ने वालों को जाहिली के कलंक से मुक्त किया।

अंग्रेजी का प्रभाव देखना है तो रेलवे के रिजर्वेशन की लाइन में 'एक्सक्यूज़ मी' कहकर देखिये, तुरंत आगे बढ़ने का मौका मिलता है। कोई सभ्यता का व्यवहार कर रहा हो तो देहाती जबान से एकदम निकलता है, "ज्यादा अंग्रेज न बन, जमीन पर आ जा।" इसका अर्थ यही है कि सभ्यता का ठेका अंग्रेजीदां साहेबान ने ही ले रखा है। हमारे पड़ोसी सरदार जी का पुत्र रूस में काम करने चला

गया था। वहाँ उसने काम के साथ-साथ एक रूसी औरत से शादी भी कर ली। गोरी बीवी तो मिली ही और साथ में दो गोरी बेटियाँ भी रंगे में मिल गईं। कुछ साल विदेश में रहकर सरदार जी के लखतेजिगर वापस लौटे। बस स्टैंड पर आगवानी के लिए आधा शहर हाजिर था। चिकने सफाचट प्रवासी को बस से उतरते देखा तो सब चौंक गए। उन देसी साहब ने दाढी और केश को तिलांजलि दे दी थी। उनके पीछे-पीछे उतरे तीन दमकते हुए चेहरे। शहर में हल्ला पड़ गया। एक रिक्शे पर साहब अपनी पत्नी के साथ स्थापित हुए, दूसरे पर गोरी-गोरी दूध सी काया वाली दो बच्चियाँ। पीछे के दो रिक्शों पर सामान लादा गया। उससे पीछे के तीन रिक्शों पर स्वागत के लिए पहुँचे हुए डेढ़ दर्जन बंधु-बंधव विराजमान हुए। रिक्शों की कतार के पीछे असंख्य साइकिलें और पैदल चलने वाले लोग थे। छोटे-छोटे बच्चे पूरे उत्साह से दौड़-दौड़ कर रिक्शे वालों को रास्ता दिखाते थे। बात रिक्शे वालों से करते थे, लेकिन उनकी नजर गोरी सवारियों पर ही रहती थी। बीच-बीच में यस, ओके, थैंक-यू की अंगरेजी भी सुनाई देती थी। कोई-कोई बच्चा तो ए से लेकर ज़ेड तक पूरी अंग्रेजी की वर्णमाला सुना देता था। विडम्बना यह थी कि उन बेचारों को कोई यह बताने वाला नहीं था कि तीनों विशिष्ट अतिथियों में से अंग्रेजी किसी को भी नहीं आती थी। आगे चलकर घर में क्या हुआ यह लम्बी कहानी है, लेकिन इतना जरूर समझ में आ गया था कि अंग्रेजी का विशिष्टता के साथ निकटता का नाता होता है। आजकल मॉल संस्कृति सिर चढ़कर बोल रही है। चमचमाते मॉल में मातृभाषा में बोलकर इज्जत का कचरा कराने से बचने के लिए क्या बच्चे और क्या बूढ़े, सभी अंग्रेजी सिखाने वाले संस्थानों की ओर रुख कर रहे हैं। व्यक्तित्व को संवारने के लिए अंग्रेजी सीखना अपरिहार्य है, आचार-विचार-व्यहार की चिंता गयी भाड़-चूल्हे में। हमारे बचपन में जो काम दस रुपये की 'रेपिडेक्स इंग्लिश स्पीकिंग कोर्स' की पोथी से हो जाता था उसमें हजारों खर्च किये जा रहे हैं, आखिर कुछ तो होगा इस भाषा में।

अंग्रेजी प्रगतिवाद का प्रतीक है। अंग्रेजी बौद्धिकतावाद का चिह्न है। वैश्विकता की चमक-दमक उसी चेहरे पर दिखाई देती है जिसकी जिहवा से सार्वजनिक-विमर्श के लगातार जुगाली किये जाते हुए जुमले अनवरत बहते हैं। आज के चिन्तक-विचारक वे ही हैं जो जमी-जमाई तथा समय द्वारा परीक्षित



एवं समर्थित मान्यताओं-परम्पराओं की लानत-मलामत करने को फैशन मानते हैं। आज के मानवतावाद की वकालत का जिम्मा उन्हीं के हवाले है जो व्यक्तिवादी-चिंतन को सामाजिक सरोकारों से ऊपर या जरूरत के अनुसार नीचे मानने की सुविधा का भोग करते हैं और अपने मुँह से बेरोक-टोक कुछ नारेनुमा शब्द झाड़ते रहते हैं। यह सब अंग्रेजी में ही होता है; कभी सोच में तो कभी भाषा में। इसके अलावा बाकी सब फिरका-परस्ती और गवॉरपन के अंतर्गत आता है।

अंग्रेजी कुलीनों की भाषा है। कुलीन हमेशा संख्या में कम ही हुआ करते हैं। वैसे इसका अर्थ यह भी नहीं है कि जो संख्या में कम होते हैं वे हमेशा कुलीन ही होते हैं। तो, कहने का मतलब सिर्फ इतना है कि अल्पसंख्यकता जो है वह 'आभिजात्य' या 'कुलीनता' का विशेष तत्व होती है। संख्या के आधार पर ताकत का अनुमान लगाने की गलती मत कीजियेगा क्योंकि उनकी ताकत बाकी सब से कहीं अधिक बढ़कर हुआ करती है। तभी तो पाँच प्रतिशत अंग्रेजीदां उच्च-कुल-जन्माओं का छोटा सा लश्कर एक अरब से ज़्यादा को चला रहा है। मुझे तो परेशानी इस बात को लेकर है कि अरे यार, पैजामा, चाय, योगा, गुरु जैसे दूसरे दर्जे के शब्द अंग्रेजी के शब्दकोश में क्यों शामिल कर लिए गए। प्योरिटी भी कोई चीज होती है! मैं दिल से अंग्रेज, अंग्रेजी और अंग्रेजियत का प्रशंसक हूँ। अंग्रेजी की नफासत मुझे प्रभावित करती है। देखिये, अंग्रेजी ऐसी है जैसे साफ़ सुथरे कागज़ पर शानदार तरीके से टाइप किया हुआ लेख जिसमें मन-भावन कृत्रिमता साकार होती है। दूसरी तरफ, देसी भाषाएँ ऐसी, जैसे कागज़ पर हाथ से सजा-सजाकर उकेरने की कोशिश करते हुए भदेसपन के साथ लिखा हुआ कोई लेख। बताइये, कहाँ मशीन का शानदार उत्पाद और कहाँ हाथ का अरुचिकर काम! कोई समानता हो सकती है क्या? तो यह तय हुआ कि महान विचार अंग्रेजी में ही व्यक्त किये जा सकते हैं। इसीलिए बच्चों के कमरे की दीवार पर चिपके हुए कागज़ पर लिखा उद्धरण अंग्रेजी में था - 'हैण्डरिटन लवलैटर्स विल नेवर गो आउट ऑफ़ स्टाइल' यानी 'हस्तलिखित प्रेमपत्र कभी प्रचलन से बाहर नहीं होंगे।'



## मेरे दिल में ख्याल आता है.... सचिन गौतम

कभी-कभी मेरे दिल में ख्याल आता है कि अगर इस दुनिया में मनुष्य न होते तो कौन होता? ऐसे में मनुष्य के द्वारा बनाए गए नैतिक नियम किस रूप में होते? जीवन के सिद्धांत होते या न होते? कुछ लोगों को लगता है कि उन हालात में सत्यनिष्ठा, ईमानदारी और अद्वितीयता जैसे शब्दों के अर्थ भी कठिनता से ही समझाये जा पाते।

हम मनुष्यों की आदत होती है कि हम जब अपनी पर आ जाते हैं तो न दायें देखते हैं और न बाएं, बस सीधे अपने कर्म के क्षेत्र में उतर पड़ते हैं। अपने लक्ष्य को पाने के लिए जी जान से जुट जाते हैं, चाहे वह टीवी के रिमोट को पाना हो या आसमान की गहराइयों को नापने के लिए अंतरिक्ष यान भेजना हो। किसी ने कितना सच कहा है - "जीवन पथ के शूलों पर जो नर आगे चलता है वही पुरुष जीवन-रस पाता, भाग्य उसी का फलता है।" दोस्तों, आज मैं आपके सामने मानव की शूलों पर चलने की क्षमता के बारे में बात करने नहीं आया हूँ बल्कि मैं मनुष्यों के अनोखे विकास-क्रम के विषय में अपने विचार आपके सामने प्रस्तुत करने के लिए उपस्थित हुआ हूँ जो लोग विकास-क्रम का अर्थ नहीं समझ पाते उनकी सुविधा के लिए बताता हूँ कि इस शब्द से मेरा मतलब एवेल्यूशन से है।

आदि-मानव कहाँ और कब पैदा हुआ? इस बारे में वैज्ञानिकों का मानना है कि एशिया और अफ्रीका उन जगहों में से है जहाँ मानव का विकास सबसे पहले हुआ। शुरू में वह 'केनियोपिथेकस' के रूप में था, जो लाखों साल पहले पृथ्वी पर रहते थे। एशिया में पाये जाने वाले 'रेमापिथेकस' नामक आदि मानव अफ्रीका से होते हुए भारत पहुँचे।

वैज्ञानिक लुईस एच मार्गन ने बताया कि किस तरह मनुष्य वन और गुफा में जीवन बिताते हुए आज के सभी युग में पहुँचा है।

मनुष्य ने अपने लाखों वर्षों के विकास के बाद ही अपने आज के लचीले और उत्तम शरीर को पाया है जिसपर उसे गर्व है। शरीर के अंगों और दिमाग के तालमेल से ही आज का विकसित दिमाग और शारीरिक हमें मिला है। मनुष्य अपने अनुभवों को आगे वाली पीढ़ी को देता था और इस तरह आगे आने वाली पीढ़ियां उन अनुभवों

में अपने अनुभवों को जोड़कर और भी अधिक तेजी से विकसित होती रही।

हज़ारों वर्ष पहले मनुष्य ने अपना वर्तमान रूप पाया। उस समय घरों के नाम पर गुफाएं और पेड़ की मीठी छाया हुआ करती थी। कपड़ों के नाम पर पत्ते और काम के नाम पर शिकार हुआ करता था। मनुष्य की सारी जानकारी पेट भरने को लेकर ही होती थी। उस समय भाग-दौड़ आज की तरह चेंज-इन-ब्रेक करने के लिए या प्रतियोगिता में स्वर्ण पदक जीतने के लिए नहीं होती थी। उस समय जीवन की सबसे मूल जरूरत भोजन को पाने के लिए ही दौड़ने, उछलने, कूदने और झपटने जैसी शारीरिक क्रियाएं की जाती थीं। आदि-मानव ने समय के साथ शारीरिक तालमेल का विकास किया जिसने आज तरह-तरह के खेलों या पीटी का रूप धारण कर लिया है। कुछ विद्वानों का मानना है कि पुराने मानव शरीर से विशाल और ताकतवर थे, पर दिमाग के नजरिये से आज के मानव के तुलना में वे मंदबुद्धि थे। बुद्धि का उपयोग अधिक हुआ तो वह बढ़ती गई और शरीर से श्रम कम किया तो वह छोटा और कमजोर होता गया। जिसे प्रयोग में अधिक लाया जाएगा वह बढ़ेगा, मजबूत होगा। इसीलिये पुराने ज्ञान, कौशल, उपकरण और साधनों में विकास हुआ है। एक ओर घटने का तो दूसरी ओर बढ़ने का अपना क्रम चलता रहता है। भविष्य में मनुष्य कैसा बनेगा? इसका उत्तर उसकी इच्छा और जरूरतों को देखते हुए ही दिया जा सकता है। मनुष्य अक्सर दो दिशाओं में सोचता है - पहली भौतिकवादी और दूसरी अध्यात्मवादी।

अगर मनुष्य की सोच आज की तरह भौतिकवादी ही बनी रही तो मनुष्य का विकास इस तरह होगा जिससे वह जरूरत पड़ने पर दूसरे ग्रहों पर जीवित रह सके। उसकी शारीरिक और मानसिक स्थिति भी इसी प्रकार बदलती चली जायेगी जिससे वह आने वाले हालत के साथ तालमेल बिठा सके। अन्न, वस्त्र, निवास आदि की कमी का ध्यान रखते हुए आज के मनुष्य के स्थान पर नयी जाति के नयी नस्ल के 'मिनी' मनुष्य भी बन सकते हैं जो कम जगह घेरें और जिनका कम से कम खुराक में काम चल सके। उनका शरीर भले ही छोटा होगा लेकिन बुद्धि और प्रतिभा के नजरिये से वे बढ़े चढ़े होंगे।

दूसरी तरफ अगर मनुष्य अध्यात्म की दिशा में आगे बढ़ता है तब मनुष्य 'छोटा' नहीं 'महान' बनेगा। तेजी से होने वाला बदलाव उसे महामानव, देवमानव या अतिमानव

भी बना सकता है। महर्षि अरविन्द ने अपनी पुस्तक "द ह्यूमन साइकिल" में कहा है कि मनुष्य अपने विकास क्रम में अर्ध-देवता बन चुका है और अब पूर्ण-देवता बनाने की ओर बढ़ रहा है। भविष्य के मनुष्य में महानता का विकास होने की बहुत उम्मीद है।

अब यह हम पर ही है कि हमें खाने की खोज में भटकने वाला मनुष्य बनना है या दिमाग, भावना और चेतना में विकसित मनुष्य के रूप में अपने को ढालना है। बदलाव होना तो पक्का है, उसमें हम कुछ नहीं कर सकते लेकिन सही निर्णय लेकर हम अपनी आने वाली नस्लों को अच्छा जीवन जरूर दे सकते हैं।

## शायद !

### अमृतांश सराफ

शायद जिस रोमांच के साथ  
उसने यह सफर शुरू किया था  
वह खो गया है!  
शायद अब हर ख्वाहिश ने भी  
मुकरने का फैसला ले लिया है!  
शायद खुद से जो वादे किए थे  
उनमें दृढ़ता का हर निशाँ अदृश्य बन गया है!  
शायद किस्मत ने भी भृकुटी तान कर  
बदला लेने का निश्चय कर लिया है!  
शायद उस तक पहुँचने वाले हर रास्ते पर  
काटों का जाल बिछा दिया गया है!  
शायद मुस्कराहट ने संन्यास  
ही ले लिया है!  
नकारात्मकता के बादलों से घिर जाना  
शायद अब आकाश ने भी स्वीकार लिया है!  
शायद अब कागज़ों को उसके  
इतिहास खुद के अक्षरों में  
लिखने की इच्छा से गिला है!  
वास्तव में 'अपनों' का कपट  
अनजानों की धूर्तता से ज़्यादा खटका है,  
हाँ, उसका अस्तित्व  
उसके मरे हुए सपनों के खून से रंग गया है।



# The House and Me

**The House Captains** for the year 2017 pen their views on how their House shaped who they are.

## Jaipur

The House of Eagles

Keshav Maliah

I have grown up listening to stories about School from my family and friends. In fact, I was registered to be a part of 'The' Doon School a few days after I was born. Indeed, I always wondered why my dewy eyed father ever mentioned his School twenty-five years after leaving it, lest regard it with such riveting fascination. Moving to Jaipur House in my C-Form helped me find the answer to that question. Indeed, after a five year saga, I now have an answer for myself.

I entered a place with people of varied interests: dance, music, art, basketball, science and so on. This is testament to what has become tradition in Jaipur, where we everyone can pursue their passions regardless of what's 'best for the House'. I too have led in this view. Never in my five years have I seen anyone from Jaipur discouraged from doing what they wish, including myself. For that, I thank Jaipur, since a large part of who I am is because of my time on the sports field. For others this may be the gym, library or the podium. If ever in need, all Eagles have the rest of the House behind them, for we're united by the one thing we all share in common: love for the place in which we live.

The previous Headmaster, Dr Peter McLaughlin, said that he will always remember Jaipur House for its grace. Whatever the stakes may be, it is the senior forms have always encouraged juniors to "act like Jaipur House" to yield results. With this, Jaipur House taught us to remain in good character at all times, especially when the situation may tempt us to slip out of it. To use a sporting analogy, it's taught me to "value the game more than the result".

On being initiated into this fraternity, I realised that I was a part of something bigger. This year, I was more dewy-eyed than my father when we didn't win football. But hell, as Captain, I can say with certainty that every Eagle on that field, even those cheering on the sidelines, acted as if their life depended on our victory. As House Captain, I wanted nothing more. For this success, people at Jaipur feel responsible to give their

best for the house. Even more so, its because we also accept those who don't feel the same way, even those who feel 'house spirit' is gibberish and overrated. Regardless, they're the ones who cry the hardest at their last House Feast, and finally, to the tunes of Auld Lang Syne. Threatening batches with social boycott if they don't pledge "total allegiance" is NOT the Jaipur House way. We don't stand for a bunch of seniors injecting house spirit, but constantly aim to instil that across our great family - in the true sense of that term. No matter what, Jaipur House is always the nest that Eagles can call home.

## Oberoi

The House of Honour

Salman Mallick

Discipline, punctuality, good behaviour, fitness, loyalty... these are some of the things that all of you probably know about boys from Oberoi House, and are part of the clichéd image we have around school. Most of it is also the reason behind our branding as 'O-School' (that was the best of the nicknames, there were many worse). But we are much more than that.

Our identity has been shaped by our late arrival to the School premises. Because of we started off with people from other houses, our vision and direction has been an amalgam of the visions and directions of all the four original houses, culminating in a unique situation where we combined the best of every house.

We have managed to put together things that seem irreconcilable, such as the gentlemanliness and ease of Kashmir and Jaipur Houses and the raw zeal and steel-will that Hyderabad and Tata Houses bring to the field. Adding on to that was the social stigma amongst others that we were the 'new kid on the block', and the belief that 'anything should be done to beat Oberoi'.

This gave us our attitude that we must give our best in every field possible. One instance coming to mind is a match between Oberoi and Hyderabad House in the Inter-House Basketball Competition in 2015, where the the entire School had come out to support Hyderabad House: all in vain.

This mentality also encourages individuals in the House to improve their own skills. Because we



collectively have a great desire to do well in general, the individuals in the House benefit from the skills that the seniors impart. Our hard work as a collective has defined us for so long, and will continue to in the foreseeable future. The best part is that victory is not valued as much as hard work in our community. We realise that getting people who excel is, at best, luck; but we strive to be the ones who have worked the hardest, even if we don't win.

This hard work is also what brings us closer together as a community. The symbiotic relationship between the seniors and juniors is such that we are always helping each other get better at whatever we do. Ultimately, that is what defines the Oberoi boy: how he helps his seniors and juniors alike, and places more value in hard work than in victory.

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## Tata

The House of Warriors

Shikhar Trivedi

It was my father who wanted me to get into Tata House. We were going through the boarding houses section on the School's website, and waiting for the allocation of my School Number and House. He had said, "I want you to get Tata House. Looks like a tough place." I was never too keen on getting this House. I wanted an easier life, and when he had said that he wanted me to get Tata House, I naturally hoped that his wish wouldn't come true. However, it did, and I thank God for that.

Some members of the Dosco community believe that School is a place where one should be happy and live the life one wants to. To justify this, the argument of freedom of choice is always put forward. The one thing about Tata House that I am proud of is the fact that it does away with this notion. Here, you are taught how to survive in any condition, and not demand comforts and luxuries. Life has not been easy in School, especially not in Tata House. But as I reach the last few months of my School life, I realise that it was this tough ride that has made me who I am. The excruciating Extra PTs, the never-ending lines, the innumerable nights spent in SCs' studies, watching movies, or talking about our female counterparts who we liked, the countless casseroles of Maggi. Life has definitely been tough, but also blissfully satisfying.

I have begun to appreciate the hardships faced in life, as only when one faces such obstacles does one know how to overcome and avoid them. There have been

times when I was punished because of somebody else, and vice versa. Yet, after all those times, the one thing that grew from strength to strength was our mental preparedness to face any-thing. I am not in favour of excessive hardships, but I am in support of making boys tough, both mentally and physically. Warriors are not meant to enjoy the privileges that civilians enjoy all the time, they are meant to fight, and fight for glory. Fight till you either win, or till you perish trying, for at the end of the day, it is the fight that matters.

As the saying goes, "If you do not go to the Doon School, then you go to Tata House."

Thank God, I came to Tata House.

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## Kashmir

The House of Gentlemen

Karthik Mohan

In a school like Doon, expectations develop at a very early stage. The value of the process, however, is often lost in the frantic fight to the finish line. A typical case would be a student in D-Form. For most of us, studying at boarding school was an unfamiliar experience and this was the only year we got to live in the Holding House with our batch-mates from other main houses. Looking back, all eighty or so of us were originally quite similar in our behaviour. We came from different backgrounds, it's true, but there was nothing which set the Gentlemen apart from the Warriors and Nizams or the Eagles from the Swans. It's only now I realise how we have changed over the years at our Main Houses.

By the time a Dosco enters his middle years in school, he realises the true worth of his Main House. One imbibes certain attributes from their House, and later as a senior, propagates these among juniors. Being part of Kashmir House, there are a few qualities and realisations that I've acquired during my time here. As a narrow-minded D-Former, I always took victory for granted, and it's only after joining Kashmir that I realised the true value of victory. Kashmir House has taught me that one doesn't get what he wants unless he's emotionally driven to achieve it.

Calmness is an attribute that I have imbibed from the House of Gentlemen. This calmness, though, is not the same as silence (another blessing at Kashmir): it is the approach taken to solve problems. As a junior, I noticed the way problems were handled by seniors in the House. Of the two approaches taken, one was to punish and the other to sit down and make the



junior understand what he did was wrong. In Kashmir, the latter usually prevails. This method didn't always work, but encouraged improvement and independent thought over blind, fearful obedience. Further, Kashmir taught me the true meaning of perseverance. No matter how many losses came our way, we always came back stronger, with every individual nurturing a thirst for victory.

In my D-Form, like everyone else, I too followed the herd mentality of our School: an excellent sportsman deserves immense respect, whereas an academic doesn't deserve as much. This changed when I joined Kashmir, and I got a chance to live with some of the best minds on campus. I saw entire forms striving for academic excellence, highlighting its importance in a Dosco's life. I saw the amount of hard work and grit required to achieve intellectual brilliance and how much it helps a person. It didn't matter if you played amazing cricket or scored a consistent 90 in every exam; anyone who was ready to give everything got what they wanted: the House's respect.

Kashmir has certainly moulded my perspective over the years I've lived here. More than that, it has shaped my identity and fashioned me into a true Gentleman, with all that the word implies in this context.

## Hyderabad

The House of Nizams

Vatsal Bora

Like every other young D-Former, I had entered Doon with mixed feelings, having no clue as to what was in store for me. Although I joined School in D-Form, my journey didn't really begin till C-Form, when I joined my Main House. Every House has its own characteristics which play a major role in moulding a fragile C-Former to what he will become for the rest of his life, and so does Hyderabad House.

I still remember it was my C-Form when H-House had come close to winning the Grand Slam. Having seen our seniors do so well, our batch was determined to keep up the good work and do something great for the House. However, it was not because of the goal, but through determination and the desire to win, through this journey of ups and downs, through the numerous successes and failures that we learnt the value of friendship and cemented the bonds that continue to hold us together. Talking about relationships, one of the



unique characteristics of Hyderabad House is the relationship and degree of understanding that the seniors and juniors of the House share. As a C-Former moving into the Main House, the only things that used to worry me were thoughts of how I will be treated by my seniors, my ability to adjust and about getting too many punishments. Hyderabad House did a great deal in dispelling these myths for me in my first year itself. Sure, we did get our fair share of punishments, but the seniors were more like elder brothers to us, however, brothers with short tempers and huge egos. Trivial as it may seem, but sometimes the late-night counselling sessions that we have had with our seniors, or the ones that we have with our juniors today play a significant role in strengthening the bond that we share with each other.

This relationship, I believe, is a direct result of another distinctive feature visible in every member of H-House: the amount of pride we hold with regard to being Nizams. This pride and House spirit is something that has developed over a long period of time. Participating in the Inter-House Competitions, whether playing for the House or cheering from outside, played a major role in bringing us together. Yes, even we as juniors weren't very keen on shouting our lungs out for almost an hour and even we didn't like our seniors for making us do so, but as we grew older, we understood the importance of this activity. It was one of the very few times when the whole House actually got together for the same purpose: to somehow contribute to its victory. Not very long ago, a very close friend and senior of mine remarked that H-House stands for 'Happy House', and I tend to agree with him on this. Liveliness and chirpiness are attributes exclusive to this House. The late-night jam and Maggi sessions, even though it might not seem so, are memories that we all hold extremely dear to us.

To conclude, I would like to say that a House is nothing but the people in it, and it is these small things that we do together that make us who we are and the House what it is. The company we keep in these adolescent years shape us and the way we look at things. I'm glad that I had the opportunity to be a member of Hyderabad House and it has certainly changed my perspective about things - inside and outside School.



# Game Over

Sriman Goel writes on the evolution of sports.

This year, in January, controversy and protests were aflame in Chennai due to the ban on *Jallikattu*, a bull-taming sport native to Tamil Nadu, which was banned due to the mistreatment of the bulls in the sport. Students of Chennai protested for the ban to be lifted and for the sport to be continued legally. The *Jallikattu* protests proved successful, ultimately leading to the state legislation lifting the ban on the sport. The sport has slowly been losing popularity and would have easily become obsolete if not for the protests turning the tables and causing it to become a national issue through the media.

This begs the question of 'What is a sport?' Furthermore, where do sports come from? In history, it was an important (if not the only) form of entertainment, and were physical and mostly violent. Now, in the 21st century, a sport is just one amongst the many forms of entertainment which exist, and the world only views a select few of the many sports which existed earlier. As a result of this, quite a few sports, like *Jallikattu*, have been reduced to the culture of their native countries. The rules and procedures of these sports are indeed obscure, with sports not even having a fixed set of rules! Such sports are now deemed 'extinct', and are linked to the cultures of ancient civilisations - giving clues to historians about the evolution of modern sports (modern-day football and basketball have their origins in these types). For this, extinct sports are a huge field of study in history due to their popularity and influence in the past.

Extinct sports can be broadly divided into two categories. One category of extinct sports is 'blood sports', where most of the sports involved the use of animals for fights and sport. Often gruesome, these included sports such as live pigeon shooting (played just as the name suggests), bullfighting, and goose pulling (played by hanging a goose between two rods across a road, while a man on horseback would attempt to pull it by the neck to snap its head off). They originated in Greek, Roman and Medieval times, when blood was considered necessary for rites of passage into manhood.

The second category of extinct sports were those which

resembled and led to the evolution of modern-day sports. *Cuju*, a 2,000 year old Chinese sport, may be the first recorded form of football, but with a completely different system of winning - with a point system based on how well you pass between your team, the number of fouls you commit and the goals scored. The player with the highest points would win the game, somewhat akin to a 'Man of the Match'. Another was *Jeu de Paume* (literally 'palm game'), a French sport which was premiered in the 1908 Olympic Games. It is played with the same rules as tennis, but uses hands instead of racquets, and is considered a precursor of lawn tennis.

Looking at the sports which have led to modern-day games, another set of queries come to mind - why have such sports been replaced by the likes of football or tennis or hockey? Why did they lose popularity and vanish? Historians seem to agree on two areas: the danger to participants and the lack of skill needed to compete. Some sports were just not respected because they were dubbed 'too easy' to participate in. A clear example is 'tug-of-war', which was discontinued at the Olympic Games. Since the strength and skill required would not be of relatively great effort, such games were written off in favour of reportedly 'real' sports, like swimming and athletics.

But even more so, the global spread of many sports remains limited. Basketball and baseball have largely been limited to the United States, and *kabaddi* is played primarily in India. It is certain sports popular in particular regions will seldom die out, as the pro-*Jallikattu* protests have shown us. But on average, culture and tradition will hold sport high in any community in maintaining sports from the annals of history. Spanish Bullfighting, like *Jallikattu*, is another global parallel.

However, while some sports are extinct for good reasons, those that survive are linked to deep history and tradition. Be it club football games, professional tennis, the Tour de France or any other, it is all due, inextricably, to the games of the past.



# Excerpt from 'The Condemnation'

Kanishkh Kanodia, Winner of the Bakhle Literature Writing Competition, 2016.

The following excerpt is taken from the play 'The Condemnation'. The play is based on the life and the works of the German author, Franz Kafka. The plot of the play is driven by the protagonist, Georg Bendemann, whose choices rendered his existence meaningless. The excerpt showcases the climax of the play.

## Scene 10

FATHER: Ah, Georg!

GEORG: It is unbearably dark in here. Look outside the window at the beautiful balmy Sunday morning. Draw the curtains please. You have closed the window too?

FATHER: I prefer it that way.

GEORG: Actually I wanted to tell you that I have announced my engagement to St Petersburg after all. [Pulls out the letter and shows it to him]

FATHER: To St Petersburg?

GEORG: Yes, to my friend there. You know father, don't you, that at first I wanted to keep my engagement from him? Out of consideration and not for any other reason. You know he is a difficult person and even though he leads a solitary life, he might get to know about it from somewhere.

FATHER: And now you have second thought about it? [Takes off his half-moon spectacles and puts it on the newspaper that he had been reading all this while]

GEORG: Yes, I have had second thought about it. If he is my good friend, I told myself, then my happy engagement is a happiness for him too. But I just wanted to tell you before I posted the letter.

FATHER: Georg, listen to me! You've come to me about this business, to talk it over with me. No doubt that does you honor. But it's nothing, it's worse than nothing, if you don't tell me the whole truth. Since the death of your dear mother certain things have been done that aren't right. Maybe the time will come for mentioning them, and maybe sooner than we think.

There's many a thing in the business I'm not aware of, I'm not going to say that it's done behind my back - I'm not equal to things any longer, my memory's failing, I haven't an eye for so many things any longer. That's the course of nature in the first place, and in the second place the death of your dear

mother hit me harder than it did you. - But since we're talking about it, about this letter, I beg you, Georg, don't deceive me. It's a trivial affair, it's hardly worth mentioning, so don't deceive me. Do you really have this friend in St. Petersburg?

GEORG: Let's leave my friend be. A thousand friends wouldn't replace my father. Do you know what I believe, you aren't looking after yourself enough. Here you are, sitting in the dark, and in the living room you'd have lovely light. No, father! Ill fetch the doctor and well follow his orders. We'll exchange room, you shall move into the front room and I'll move in here. It would be a great change for you. But for now, lie down in the bed for a little. Come I'll help you undress or if you want you can go to my room and lie there.

[The music gets faster and louder]

FATHER: (Speaking softly) Georg...You have no friend in St Petersburg. You've always been a joker, and you've always gone too far, even with me. How could you have a friend there of all places! I can't believe that at all.

GEORG: I understand your dislike of him very well, my friends has his oddities. But then you got on with him perfectly well after he visited us a few years ago. [While talking to his father, Georg managed to make his father sit and started to uncliothe him] You remember him now, don't you? [Georg started putting his father to bed and drew the bedspread over him]

FATHER: [Pretending to look at his feet] Am I well covered now?

GEORG: You like it in bed then?

FATHER: Am I well covered over?

GEORG: You are well covered over.

[The piano increases the tempo]

FATHER: [Jolting from the bed] No! You wanted to cover me up, I know, my young sprig, but I'm far from being covered up yet. And even if this is the last strength I have, it's enough for you, too much for you. Of course I know your friend. He would have been a son after my own heart. That's why you've been playing him false all these years. Why else? Do you think I haven't been



sorry for him? But thank goodness a father doesn't need to be taught how to see through his son. And now that you thought you'd got him down, then my fine son makes up his mind to get married! [Sprang up and stood in front of him, mimicking] Because Frieda lifted up her skirts, because she lifted her skirts like this, you fell for her, and in order to make free with her undisturbed you have disgraced your mother's memory, betrayed your friend, and stuck your father into bed so that he can't move. But he can move, or can't he? But your friend hasn't been betrayed after all. I've been representing him here on the spot.

GEORG: You comedian! So all this was just a play, a farce you were playing with me.

““

Death by drowning is the thing you deserve. To die and not let any sign of your birth remain on this holy planet. You may only and only die!

[The music gets faster and louder, signaling the incoming of the climax]

FATHER: Yes, of course I've been playing a comedy! A comedy! That's a good expression! What other comfort was left to a poor old widower? Tell me - and while you're answering me be you still my living son - what else was left to me, in my back room, plagued by a disloyal staff, old to the marrow of my bones? And my son strutting through the world, finishing off deals that I had prepared for him, bursting with triumphant glee, and stalking away from his father with the closed face of a respectable businessman! Do you think I didn't love you, I, from whom you are sprung? And how you amused me today, coming to ask me if you should tell your friend about your engagement. He knows it already, you stupid boy, he knows it all! I've been writing to him, for you forgot to take my writing things away from me. That's why he hasn't been here for years, he knows everything a hundred times better than you do yourself, in his left hand he crumples your letters unopened while in his right hand he holds up my letters to read through!

GEORG: So, you've been lying in wait for me!

FATHER: I suppose you wanted to say that sooner.

But now it doesn't matter. So now you know what else there was in the world besides yourself, till now you've known only about yourself! An innocent child, yes, that you were, truly, but still more truly have you been a devilish human being! - And therefore take note: [A brief pause, in which music finally stops] I sentence you now to death by drowning!

[Fade out on the center stage. A spot follows Georg and another spot with a pink tint is on Conscience]

### Scene 11

(Running on the path towards a bridge)

[There is only foliage around]

GEORG: [Panting for breath and crying] What wrong have I done?

CONSCIENCE: Everything! When have you not sinned? While you were rejoicing at the thought of an engagement when your mother had just died, while you were thinking twice before talking to your friend, while you kept your father under the shadows, in that dark dingy room, away from your life, while you planned to keep him away from you after marriage, leave him alone, let him be on his own, while you betrayed your friends, your mother, and your father just for a stupid little girl, it was all these times that you have sinned. And now that you realize that all this while you weren't the only one devising a plan, your puerile, clotted brain wants to live, for what? For betraying everything that you ever stood for: your writing, mother, father, friends, and your inner-self. Someone who has betrayed his own self, why should he even deserve to live? Why should that person even think about drawing an iota of air into his lungs?

[Georg now stands at the railing of the bridge overlooking a turbulent river]

The condemnation given by your father serves you right! The condemnation serves you right! Death by drowning is the only thing you deserve. To die and not let any sign of your birth remain on this holy planet. You may only and only die!

[Georg jumps into the river and kills himself]

[FADE OUT]





# There and Back again

*Ranvijay Singh and Stanzin Namgyal write about their expedition to Island Peak, Nepal.*

Just after the dark cloud of Boards had passed, the two of us set off on our Expedition to summit Island Peak, a mountain that had last been summited by School nearly 20 years ago. What lay ahead of us was nearly a month in the Himalayas which involved 160 kilometres of trekking, an altitude gain of nearly 13,500 feet and experiencing temperatures that dipped well below -15 centigrade. It was, in every sense, an adventure of a lifetime.

We began our journey when our plane landed at the infamous Tenzing-Hillary Airport at Lukla. The airport is perched on the side of a hill and has a 500 meter runway which makes the landing quite a daunting experience! We began our trek from here and slowly made our way up through the scenic Dudh Kosi Valley. On the second day of our trek we started getting close to the famous Namche Bazaar. We crossed the famous Hillary Bridge after which it was a steep climb to Namche. It was here that we got our first view of Lhotse (8,500 meters), Nuptse (7,800 meters) and the fabled Mt. Everest (8,848 meters). We soon reached Namche afterwards, which is the capital of the Khumbu Region and the hub of Mountaineering Activity in the Everest Region. We stayed in Namche for three days as we needed a day for acclimatisation and we also taught at Shree Himalayan School, a school setup by Sir Edmund Hillary.

We left Namche and continued onwards and upwards. As we gained altitude, we

left the tree line behind us and entered a landscape with scanty tundra vegetation. We soon reached the village of Dingboche where we got to see Island Peak. But before we could move towards Island Peak, we had planned to trek to Everest Base Camp and climb Kala Pathar (5,500 meters), a small peak right next to Everest. This would help us acclimatise and enable us to climb Island Peak with greater ease. So instead of going into the Imja Valley and towards Island Peak, we started making our way through the Khumbu Valley towards Everest Base Camp (EBC).

We first made our way to GorakShep from where we would climb Kala Pathar. The climb to Kala Pathar was quite strenuous, but we were rewarded with a great view of Everest and Lhotse. After climbing Kala Pathar, we resumed our trek towards EBC which was only a few hours away from GorakShep. The weather conditions had started to deteriorate and by the time we reached EBC it had started snowing heavily. We took a couple of pictures after which we took a closer look at the Khumbu Ice Fall. With the weather conditions getting worse, we decided that we should start moving down and made our way down back to Dingboche.

It was now, that we finally began our final push towards Island Peak. We trekked to Chukung where we met our climbing Sherpas and got all of our mountaineering equipment. We then moved forward to Island Peak Base Camp where we prepared for the climb.

We began our climb to the summit from Base Camp at



2:15 am. The sky was clear and it was a full moon, so visibility was great. The snow reflected the moonlight well and that was a boon for us and made our job of walking dead in the night much easier. For the first hour or so we trekked around to the back of the mountain from where we started climbing up. We trekked along a very steep trail all the way to the 'Crampon Point'. It was here that the actual glacier began and that we had to wear our crampons, which are small metal spikes that give you grip on ice while climbing. We then started to traverse the glacier. We encountered a number of crevasses on the way which had been tackled by the use of ladders. We soon reached the final barrier between us and the summit. It was a near vertical face of the mountain of a height of about 150 meters. We attached ourselves to the fixed rope and began ascending slowly. This was quite a difficult task and it took us nearly an hour and a half to reach all the

way to summit ridge. We then walked about 10 meters along the narrow ridge to the summit. We had finally made it. 6,189 meters. We then raised our School flag and tri-color on the summit. We sat there for about 10 minutes just admiring the view and thinking about our journey. The feeling that we had 'conquered' anything did not seep into us. Rather, a sense of deep satisfaction entered the both of us, a feeling not of success- the great mountaineer George Mallory rightly said, "Have we gained success? That word means nothing here." Rather the feeling of solidarity took over. We then began our descent through heavy snow and eventually, reached Base Camp safely. Our expedition to Island Peak was one of the fullest and best experiences of our lives and it is something we both will surely keep close to our hearts for the rest of our lives.

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## *Pachchees Saal Baad*

**Roopak Kapoor** (301-JA, 1992) recounts his experiences in School on the occasion of their Batch's Silver Jubilee.

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The Batch of 1992 has its Silver Jubilee this year. For the uninitiated, *Bees Saal Baad* (twenty years later) is a horror film (albeit much before our time). However, *Twenty-Five Years Later*, I'm certain will not be in the same genre. Rather, the reunion will be more in the comedy zone, if our batch's WhatsApp Group is anything to go by. There will be reminiscing, and there'll be backslapping (I hope we can stick to just the back!). Having been asked to write a piece on my experiences at School for the *Weekly*, I've taken the liberty to reflect on some of our (dare I say) more profound learnings at Schools, rather than recount stories of busting bounds and jamming midterms, I've taken the liberty to reflect on some of our (dare I say) more profound learnings in School. Most of these continue to hold relevance, especially today.

### **Khan, Khanna and Khana!**

Bi-fi (pronounced bee-fee) is a German brand of jerky-like salami, which contains both pork and beef. I used to live in Germany during my years at School, and Bi-fi formed a standard part of my tuck that came to School. It was shared with anyone who wanted it, regardless of their religion. However, we were not unaware of, or

insensitive to, anyone's beliefs and if someone chose not to eat Bi-fi for reasons of faith, we never pressed the issue. They probably got more chips. Nor did anyone object to any particular meat being consumed. As far as we were concerned, the only community we recognised was DoscOs. Tuck was treasure, and tucking into it with friends is a memory I will treasure forever. We shared values and food irrespective of name, caste, or socio-economic background. We genuinely believed we were all the same. That was our code. And united we ate!

### **The Jaipur House Redemption**

I was one of the few boys sent to the main house in D-Form. And like in all prison movies, I encountered some really bad dudes. A couple of mean seniors chose to bully me. It was pretty intense, but I never thought of reporting them to the Housemaster, for that just was 'just not done'. Dalzu, the House Prefect had seen his batch mates torment me on occasion and had warned them not to. One day when he saw them cross the line, he jumped in, held them by their collar and said that if they'd ever pick on me again, he'd deal with



them! He must have meant business because they never troubled me after that day. Dalzu took on his own batch mates. He was a good guy looking out for a helpless kid. (Cheers Dalzu!) I guess there are bullies everywhere. What Doon teaches you is how to stand up to them, and fight for what's right.

There are many more things I (we) have learned from School, and I'm glad to have revisited, connected with batch-mates whom I have lost touch with, and amongst the celebration and laughter, silently acknowledge how much School has helped shape us into what we are today.

## The Truth...

**Devang Laddha** discusses the attitude towards truth in society.

Historically, honesty has always been seen as a virtue. Those who speak the truth or seek it are perceived to be the ones who do good and are worth emulating. Today, though, we live in a world where truth and happiness do not always go together; honesty is not often rewarded but considered rude and insulting, with people choosing to believe in convenient lies over the sometimes bitter truth. Facing the truth or dealing with it are experiences that are a source of great pain and suffering for many, with some choosing to avoid the truth altogether. The reason for this is because it is convenient to believe in these lies, as they make us feel good about ourselves. They do not challenge our worldview, point flaws in ourselves and thus, give us a rosy world to live in with no worries. The truth, on the other hand, makes us face the problems that exist within life. Seeking and knowing the truth has caused pain to a lot of people across history, with the mythic story of Oedipus being a famous example. Thus, we face a dilemma of either choosing to live in bitter reality or a sweet make-believe. Moreover, this decision gets often further compounded when we talk about propagating the truth. "Should one tell others a truth that will cause harm?" is a popular and pertinent existential question.

I believe that despite all the pain and suffering, one must chase the truth. The primary reason is that when anything is wrapped in a lie, no matter how good it is, it may not last. When we constantly live in lies we are wrapping ourselves in fabricated cotton-wool with things that are not real, while continuing to live in reality. This fundamental dichotomy causes the world that we imagine and reality to become different things. However, when the truth comes in front of us, we are not able to deal with it for it challenges our own views, making it inevitable for our imaginary world to come crashing down. For example, when we believe in a friendship that is not grounded in reality, what we expect from our friends and what happens are

divergent ideas. This inherently makes us question the friendship and can bring about its demise. As realisation dawns that the friendship is not based on the truth, we see the entire friendship disappearing. We only compound the problems when we keep on lying to ourselves and to others that relationships and connections exist when they are indeed fake. On the other hand, only when we tell the truth and actively seek it, can we really be happy, for we are living in a world that cannot come crashing down.

In contrast to this, we live in a world where telling the truth is looked upon with hostility and often courts the displeasure and anger of others; as George Orwell once observed: "*The further a society drifts from the truth, the more it will detest those who speak it.*" Whistle-blowers like Edward Snowden were and still are effectively banished from their countries for revealing the misdeeds of the State. On a more local level, those who openly reveal toxic elements in School are often received with hostility. This dissuades people from telling the truth, since their lives will become difficult with little to no appreciation of their efforts. In contrast, when we listen to people and try and accept the truth, we might encourage a world to be formed which is predicated on the truth – reducing the ignorance and thus inaction on many of humanity's issues. This is no easy task, accepting the truth is a long process which causes a lot of pain and suffering. However, we must treat those who tell the truth not with hostility, but rather give them a voice – and disagree only respectfully. Only then can we move away from a world of lies to one of truth.

Telling the truth and promoting its propagation, in the end, are matters of choice; people need to decide what kind of world we want to live in. Do we want to live in a world that is pleasant but ignorant, with problems festering beneath the surface? Or do we want one that is bitter but genuine, and invites real action? The dichotomy is huge, but the rights decision is clear, and despite its consequences must be made.



# THE VERY BEST OF UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

*Shut down the door.*

**PVD**, keeps it closed.

*You're shortest than me.*

**Zayan Zakariah**, tall words.

*To err is to human.*

**Salman Mallick**, proving his statement.

*He has broken many chastities.*

**Vedant Mehra**, broken heart.

*Put the bed on the bag.*

**Kanishkh Kanodia**, upside down.

*The marine life got extincted.*

**AKM**, chemical imbalance.

*He spokes in written English.*

**Yuvan Jaidka**, please do neither.

*Is your mom an architecture?*

**Kanishkh Kanodia**,

*I'll not marrying her!*

**Aviral Kumar**, noble stallion.

*I beg for you for your cello tape.*

**Shantam Gilra**, tape yourself up.

*One hundred and three sixty one.*

**Aryaman Saluja**, losing count.

*I have a sister who is a girl.*

**Raihan Vadra**, 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao.'

*My accent was brown.*

**Devang Laddha**, full of darkness.

*B House K Form.*

**Aviral Kumar**, the next target.

*Dubai is the capital of Abu Dhabi.*

**Jai Lakhanpal**, unites the Emirates.

*You are dafter than him.*

**Kushagra Kar**, self reflection.

*I am need to go to the mental asylum.*

**Yash Sareen**, certainly.

*He got accidented.*

**Sriman Goel**, an accident.

*I didn't did him anything.*

**Chitranshu Purohit**, found guilty.

*I know I am should be punched for this.*

**Prakarsh Gupta**, yes you should.

*I took 5 balls in 5 wickets.*

**Suryansh Kainthola**, you're out!

*Whoever had their IOP tomorrow.*

**Ranvijay Singh**, failed his.

*It get breaked off.*

**RHS**, cracked.

*I no talk in English.*

**PKN**, evidently.

*Earth is dying and men will wipe.*

**Ansh Raj**, out.

*I learnt a new Dad from my abuse.*

**Aryaman Saluja**, a new discovery.

*Your knowledge is badder than mine.*

**JKA**, speak for yourself.

*I am a hypocritical.*

**Mitul Aggarwal**, introspective.

*AGS is on his way.*

**Arjun Singh**, off the Board.

*Doubluplicity in S-Form!*

**Arjun Singh**, judging his successors.

*Around the World is a Reference to Gulliver's Travels.*

**Arjun Singh**, gets a hat-trick.

*He have braken my friendship.*

**Aarnav Bahl**, heartbroken.

*He is a sporty.*

**ADN**, laying the groundwork.

*I am so happy I didn't took IB.*

**Aryan Chhabra**, ISC English.

*Did France ever holded a world cup?*

**Paras Gupta**, football enthusiast.

*Did they ever won?*

**Aryan Bhattacharjee**, ask Paras.

*It is coincidental that you are stupider.*

**Rajveer Kochar**, coincidental indeed.

*The people were very nice and hostile.*

**Anay Krishnan**, oxy 'moron'.

*Why did you hitted me then.*

**Ishaan 'Aditya' Singhee**, deserving.

*You should wear two sockses.*

**NTC**, being particular.

*I growed up with them.*

**Rana Sunjog Singh**, without education.

*He only knows how to write mountains.*

**Aarnav Sethy**, penmanship at its best.

*Oh no, I slipped on my tongue!*

**Ayushmaan Narayan**, clumsy.

*The Pope lives in Jerusalem.*

**Aryan Chhabra**, a man of all faiths.

*Question number third.*

**MKS**, teaches Math

*People make mistake.*

**Aryaman Agarwal**, shows us how.





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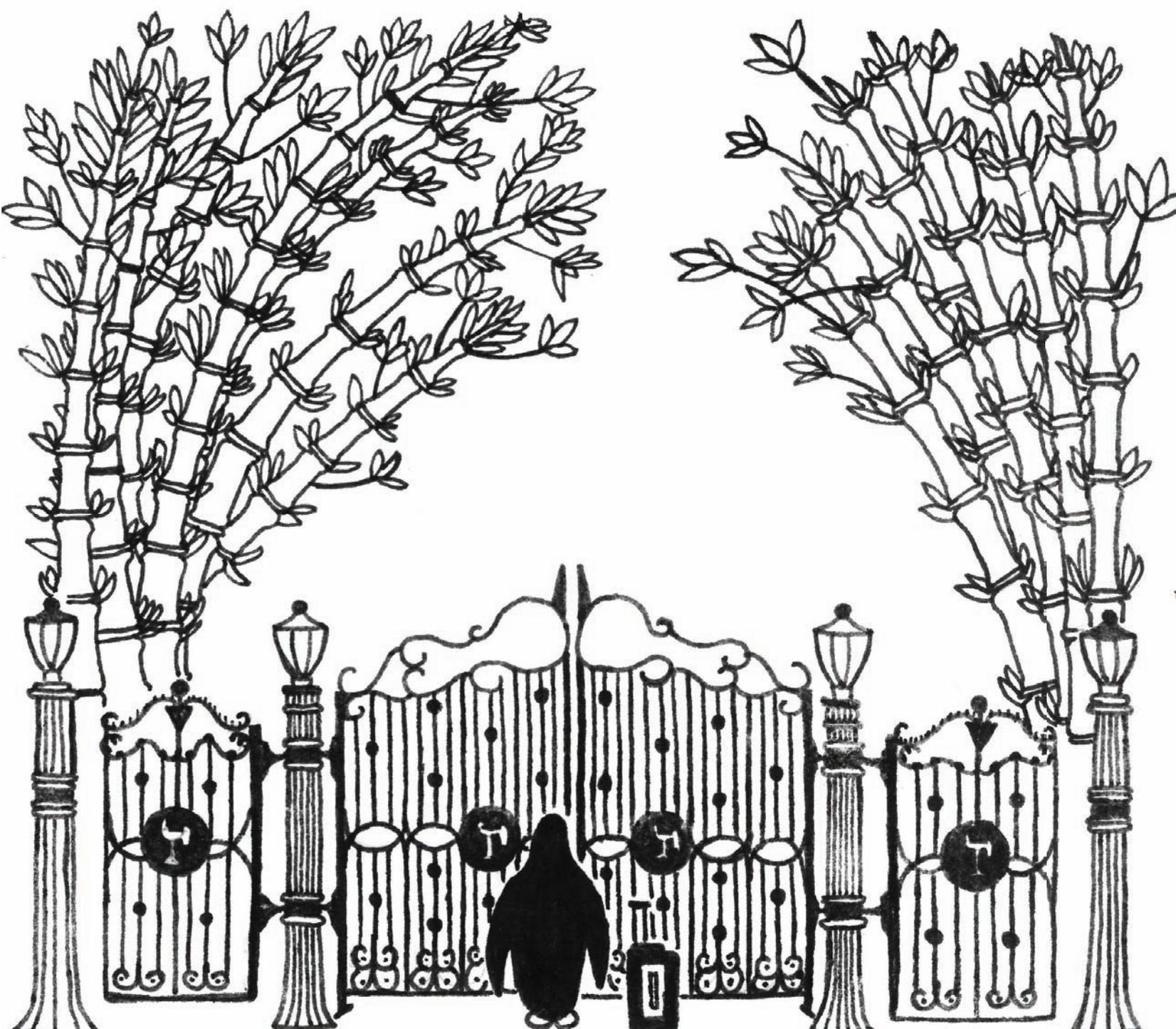
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