

The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot
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CLARIFIED: TURKEY FIRES

Severe wildfires in Southern Turkey explained.

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The Price of Pressure

Vihan Ranka writes about the declining mental health of professional athletes and sports players.

From gymnastics phenomenon Simone Biles to the new face of women's tennis, Naomi Osaka, athletes are choosing not to play in certain tournaments or sporting events so that they can focus on themselves and their mental health. The ongoing Olympics saw Biles opt out of her event to deal with her mental health issues. Osaka too, chose to withdraw from the French Open held in May. In a heartfelt essay she penned, not as an athlete, but as a human, she stated, "It's okay not to be okay." This unveiled the darker side of the lavish and seemingly luxurious life athletes lead. One thing that several people understood from this was that whether you live in a mansion or a one-bedroom apartment, mental health can affect you either way. The notion that being rich equates to happiness was thoroughly debunked.

Data has shown that almost 35% of the more well-known athletes suffer from anxiety, depression, stress, burnout or eating disorders. However, the very issue of athletes choosing to focus on their mental health over participating in competitive events has elicited conflicting responses from the sporting world. Some believe that this is all a ruse to gain attention and belittle it by labelling it as a mere phase. The other side of this debate has paved the way

for mental health awareness, and swathes of people have come out to show not only solidarity, but even support. Several athletes came to Osaka's defence when she claimed her social anxiety made her apprehensive from making media appearances. Unfortunately, this isn't always the case because when NBA superstar Kyrie Irving took a sabbatical from his matches on account of his mental health, he was heavily criticized for choosing not to play games due to personal reasons. This went on to the extent that Irving teared up during a Zoom call with reporters and apologised to his fans.

Several reasons cause athletes to feel pressured by the world around them. We never hold an athlete to the same standards as those for an everyday person, which, to an extent, makes sense. They are paid mountains of money, exponentially more than several other high paying professions. Furthermore, they represent our countries and cities whenever they play, which is a good reason for them to be held accountable. However, there is quite obviously a limit to which athletes can bear the burden of being perfect human beings and role models with no blemishes in their personalities. We, as viewers, expect fellow human beings to put up facades every time they

step outside their houses.

For instance, Sha'Carri Richardson, a promising prospect in the track and field event, was recently barred from participating in the Olympics for testing positive for marijuana. She was met with scathing criticism for indulging in such illicit activities, despite her apology, in which she said that the death of her mother traumatised her and marijuana seemed to offer a viable escape for her. While this may not have been the most well-thought out decision, it was only a human response to her circumstance. It is extremely cruel to athletes and their loved ones to judge them for not meeting our irrational expectations. Furthermore, they are always under pressure to perform. One bad game and the hard work they put in for years might become obsolete. The Euro 2020 Finals saw England lose to Italy in the penalties, all of which were missed by players of colour. Their social media accounts were filled with racist abuse. Social media has become another reason for athletes' mental health to worsen and there seems to be no end to it. Scrutiny, pressure and living the supposed perfect life consumes several athletes to such an extent that they are forced to opt-out of participating in sporting events in order to survive.

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We, as viewers and supporters, have quite a simple role to play here. When athletes muster up the courage to come out in the open about their mental health, rather than dismissing their decisions as “publicity stunts”, we should offer our support. These are the same athletes who sacrifice their entire lives to provide us with the special moments which we cherish as fans of sports. Rather than telling them to “shake it off” or to “get a grip”, we should remember that at the end of the day, they are just as, if not more, vulnerable to anxiety, depression and various other mental illnesses as any of us.

CLARIFIED



Turkey Wildfires

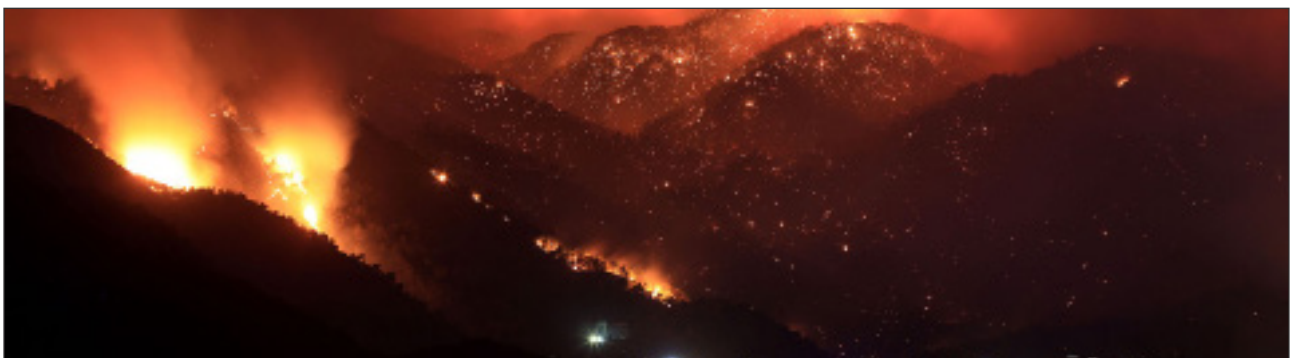
On July 27, raging wildfires broke out in Southern Turkey. As time went by, they grew in intensity and turned into some of the worst wildfires the world has ever seen. Now, they are burning Turkey’s entire southern coastline, causing extensive damage.

The fires originated in Manavgat, Antalya, and now, over 132 fires have been identified, which have killed eight people, burning at least 118,789 hectares of land, according to the European Forest Fire Information System. The blazes seem to have begun due to climate change and severe droughts, namely, a southern European heatwave fed by hot air from North Africa. However, some investigators are trying to establish whether some of the fires were started deliberately. While the region usually measures about mid-30s degree Celsius this time of year, this year, temperatures reached the 40s, with Turkey even seeing its hottest ever temperature at 49 degrees Celsius in the southeast.

While seasonal fires are normal and even healthy for the local ecosystem, fires of this scale are devastating. The landscape is getting parched, and strong winds have made it even more difficult for authorities to control the fires. Several coastal resorts and villages have been evacuated due to their proximity to the fires. Water bombers have been mobilised from Ukraine, Russia, Azerbaijan and Iran to help.

As the climate worsens, the frequency and severity of wildfires will only increase. In particular, the Mediterranean has become a breeding ground for wildfires, and data from Turkey and southern Italy shows that the emissions and intensity of wildfires are rapidly increasing. Other neighbouring countries have also been affected by these disasters. Heatwaves in the area provide the perfect conditions for fires to start up.

These changes in the climate are not only a reflection of Turkey’s predicament, but that of the world. In 2020, for example, Europe received the largest sunshine hours since satellite records began in 1983, a worrying sign of the rapidly changing climate. What is more is that the wildfires themselves are severely damaging the environment. They are emitting large amounts of smoke, adding to the pollution of the atmosphere. Many meteorologists have warned that in a hotter, drier world, these extreme weather events would become more and more common. The only way to solve this problem for good is to address climate change on a priority basis.



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UNSTOPPABLE ASCENT

A team of 10 students participated in the **International Space Settlement Contest**. The School Team was represented by Mayank Agarwal, Soham Agarwal, Arnav Pratap Chaudhry, Harshvardhan Maskara, Shrivar Kanudia, Yuvraj Sarada, Sparsh Gandh, Rohan Taneja, Keshav Bagrodia, and Svanik Garg. The team was awarded **first place**.

Kudos!

DEDICATED DIPLOMATS

The following are the results of the **Doon School Model United Nations, 2021**:

Iman Chatterjee and Pranav Lohia were awarded a **'Verbal mention'** in **United Nations Environment Program** and **United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs** respectively. Shaurya Pratap was awarded an **'Honourable Mention'** in the **Darbar of Bengal**.

APPOINTMENTS

The following are the appointments for the year **2021-22**.

Technology Council Secretary: Arnav Pratap Chaudhry

Study Council Secretary: Archit Oberai

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The longer and more carefully we look at a funny story, the sadder it becomes.

—
Nikolai Gogol

This Week in History

322 B.C.E: The Battle of Crannon between Athens and Macedon starts.

1492 C.E: Columbus's first transatlantic voyage begins.

1583 C.E: Humphrey Gilbert claims Newfoundland for the British crown, the first English colony in North America, beginning of the British Empire.

1834 C.E: The Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 abolishes slavery throughout the British Empire.

1858 C.E: The Government of India is transferred from the East India Company to the British Crown.

1914 C.E: Germany invades Belgium and declares war on France, beginning World War I.

1933 C.E: The Iraqi Government slaughters over 3,000 Assyrians in the village of Sumail, and the day becomes known as Assyrian Martyrs Day.

1945 C.E: Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima by the US B-29 Superfortress "Enola Gay".

Around the World in 80 Words

Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack on Afghan defense minister's house in Kabul. The WHO called for a moratorium on booster shots of Covid-19 vaccines till September of this year to allow 10 percent of the population of each country to get vaccinated. Law enforcement agencies arrested an Indian national in New Jersey on charges of fraudulently obtaining \$2.3 million from elderly victims. The Indian hockey teams lost to Belgium and Argentina in the semi final of the Olympics.

Dosco Doodle

One Sided Love

Rohan Taneja



Of Probes and Privacy

Gurmehar Bedi *comments on the Indian governments use of the Israeli spyware pegasus.*

Recently, a highly sophisticated spyware called Pegasus caused turmoil in the political landscape of our nation, as if we didn't have enough to deal with already. The Israeli-made spyware was allegedly used to infiltrate the mobile phones of roughly 300 Indians including scientists, government officials, a constitutional authority, two cabinet ministers, 40 journalists, and three opposition leaders. The fact that

Maintaining the confidentiality of your personal information is already an arduous task. With the looming threat of Pegasus, concerns about individual privacy are only going to escalate

members of the opposition were targeted was reason enough for the rumour mills to begin churning allegations against the Indian government, which has naturally dealt with the matter in a manner of its choosing.

Instead of examining the validity of the claims, in this article, I will be delving into the implications these allegations have not only on the politics of our nation, but also on the privacy of each individual. However, before I move any further, it is imperative to understand what Pegasus is. The spyware is a targeted surveillance tool and can be downloaded without the target device owner's knowledge, making it an optimal tool to gain access to the private information of specific individuals, primarily terrorists. Although it can intercept messages, trace calls, log passwords and track locations, the aspect which differentiates it from all other spyware is its ability to evade detection. Essentially, there is no way to identify whether or not you are a victim of Pegasus.

The dangers of this software are evident. Maintaining the confidentiality of your personal information is already an arduous task. With the looming threat of Pegasus, concerns about individual privacy are only going to escalate. In fact, the problem is exacerbated by the fact that countless aspects of our lives, such as our professions, financial details and all social interactions have moved online due to the pandemic. This makes the spyware even more menacing since it now has access to the increased online activity on

account of its ability to record your speech through the microphone and monitor your actions through your device's camera.

But its threats are not limited to one individual. In fact, they extend to the entire nation. The fact that India's 'united opposition' is currently holding meetings to take on the government because of the Pegasus row hints at the gravity of the situation. Even those leaders who seldom attend the opposition meetings have made their attendance at the meetings a priority. A total of 14 opposition parties have met to deliberate upon their actions regarding the ongoing controversy. Meanwhile, the government has repeatedly stated that no 'unauthorized surveillance' took place and has remained rather cagey on the whole matter. Various members of the ruling party and its prominent supporters have, in fact, stated that the list which contained the potential targets of the software is 'fake'. With the political parties moving further away from each other, collaboration between them becomes a distant dream. More importantly, however, the mere existence of the controversy takes away from the time and effort which is required on more pressing matters relating to the pandemic and the economy.

If I cannot express myself freely out of fear of being recorded, my freedom of speech is being curtailed. If I cannot travel freely out of fear of being tracked, my freedom of movement is being infringed upon

Even if these claims by the government hold water, the onus of protecting the citizens of a nation lies with the government. If I cannot express myself freely out of fear of being recorded, my freedom of speech is being curtailed. If I cannot travel freely out of fear of being tracked, my freedom of movement is being infringed upon. And if I cannot safeguard my private information, my right to privacy is being violated. The Pegasus scandal is not only a case of snooping. It is an invasion of every aspect of our lives and infringes upon our claims to freedom. It poses some of the most urgent questions of our time, and the government must step in to answer them.

Will Curiosity Kill The Cat?

Arjun Prakash *presents an insight into the reasoning behind curiosity and questions.*

In our lifetime, everything we have ever known has been sculpted by the influence of passing generations and their discoveries on Earth, which have paved the way for modern society to flourish in a world that lacks any sort of speed-limit. This 'world', thought up by countless imagined realities, is simply a dot of ink in a river, flowing through a complex and inestimable rainforest, the universe. However, staying away from any existential shower thoughts, there is one question I have in mind: why do we feel the need to know everything?

In most cases, this curiosity is driven by our individual desire to reach goals and targets set by none other than ourselves. This trait has helped mankind discover, invent and question for over 200,000 years.

A simple answer to this question could be pure curiosity. In most cases, this curiosity is driven by our individual desire to reach goals and targets set by none other than ourselves. This trait has helped mankind discover, invent and question for over 200,000 years. It has enhanced our learning and the ability to retain information. Countless scientific breakthroughs have helped improve the quality of our lives and our lifespans. The idea of space exploration is fuelled by our curiosity, which is coincidentally the name given to the rover currently roaming the Martian surface. The thought of interacting with extra-terrestrial life has been a part of our DNA from the very beginning of our species' cognitive existence. This seemingly endless pursuit of knowledge has helped humanity achieve incredible feats and make amazing inventions.

If it wasn't for our curiosity and our desire to know everything, our world would come to a standstill, but as with most things, excess can also have fatal consequences. Pushing the boundaries of science can also be used for the wrong reasons. The invention of the atomic bomb and its consequences for Hiroshima-Nagasaki are chilling examples of government-directed research for the wrong reasons.

There are new products being developed everyday to fill the material gaps in our lives. Although this could lead to blatant consumerism, it is an inevitable

by-product of our ceaseless desire to know more and do more. As pointed out earlier, this desire is innate and cannot be changed and if we do, it will not be natural for us.

On a lighter note, 'why do we feel the need to know everything?' could apply to gossip in a community. Why does Mrs. X want to know what his neighbour Mr. Y is eating for dinner when it does not affect her own life in any way? Why do I feel the need to know the reason behind a junior getting four change-in-breaks in the same week? This is something we involuntarily think about since it is natural for us humans to feel the need to know it all. But in reality, each of our 'worlds' revolve around ourselves, and although cognitive empathy is a much-needed skill today, I cannot exactly replicate what my friend is feeling or thinking about at any given time. To me, I am the protagonist of my own story and everyone else is an onlooker; to me, my reality only exists the way I see it. This applies to every individual as each of us have our own perspectives, motives, dreams and goals.

The discoveries and inventions are, on a materialistic level, the products of this deeper line of curiosity, stemming from the search for eternal satisfaction within ourselves. As Aristotle said: "The more you know, the more you know you don't know." Since we

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will practically never be able to know 'everything', our line of questioning will only stretch and deepen with each answer.

We are so obsessed with discovery and invention that sometimes we end up with more questions than answers. Did curiosity really kill the cat? Not yet, because I'm still here writing this. We still need to seek the answers, but only the right questions will keep the cat alive.

Problem of the Week

If

$$1+2+3 = 6$$

$$1+2+3+4 = 10$$

How is:

$$1+2+3+4+\dots\infty = -1/12$$

What Have You Been Reading During The Lockdown



The New Girl
Author: Daniel Silva

The chief of Israeli Intelligence, Gabriel Allon, is tasked with finding the daughter of Khalid Bin Mohamed, crown prince of Saudi Arabia, who has been kidnapped. With the life of a child on the line, this book immerses you in Gabriel Allon's journey to find her. It takes you through the many different settings in the story, which really gives you a sense of what the book is about. The themes in this book revolve around deception and vengeance, and the story takes you down many untraveled roads and stays away from the generic "thriller" novel, thereby entertaining the reader and adding to the depth of the characters in the story.

-Neel Sahai

What Have You Been Watching During The Lockdown



Space Jam: A New Legacy
Director: Joe Pytko

Recently, *Space Jam: A New Legacy*, a sequel to the 1996 movie *Space Jam*, was released. I was compelled to watch it because I love sports-related movies. The movie was gripping – it had some interesting cameos and great twists. I like that *Space Jam* movies include real-life basketball stars: the first one had Michael Jordan and this one has LeBron James. Moreover, I liked how technology, humans, and animated characters all came together in this movie. I thought the storyline was well thought out and executed. Further, the inclusion of humans in a mostly animated movie led to an interesting combination of characters, which made the movie more enjoyable.

-Vir Mehta

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