

Established in 1936

The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot

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UNITED WE STAND

An article on the repercussions of the invasion of Ukraine.

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A humorous account of the events of the past week.

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A Meritocracy of Service?

Karan Agarwal and Krishnav Sachdev write a response to an article written by **Mr Anjan Chaudhary** and explain why positions in a batch should not necessarily be distributed evenly.

The entire notion that some people in School seem to uphold, that an individual will not be able to do justice to multiple positions at the School level, is flawed. This is largely because it is premised on the assumption that no one student can commit time to various different activities simultaneously. Let's consider for a moment, how our School works: in S Form, those that "scope" for positions are pushed to contribute to the activities they're a part of. As a result, any individual who gets a position/title in Sc Form will have worked towards it in S Form. What that tells us is that any individual who is "deserving" of multiple positions will have already been able to dedicate time to those activities in S Form and thus will have proved that he can, in fact, handle such a workload. S Form essentially serves as a pilot test, a safe period for students to test how much they can handle on their plate, and then adjust accordingly.

This notion of spreading out positions among all stems from a larger mentality shift, one in which we start treating School as more than what it is: a school. These positions are not nine-to-five jobs that can't coexist, they are an added responsibility given to teach us how to manage our time. Further, it's important to understand how small our batch sizes really are. In a batch of 80 people, there are

approximately 130 positions to be claimed, many of which are niche activities that perhaps one person does. If such activities fall into the trap of "equal distribution", they tend to have a boy-in-charge that knows nothing about the field. If this becomes the trend, there is the

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real possibility that some aclubs, activities or societies will see no work done at the end of the year because of an under-prepared boy-in-charge. While proponents of distribution of leadership claim that since times are changing, we should change with them. We're great supporters of change in this School, but there is one thing that we can't afford to lose: our values. We believe that our School's system works because it is, in its simplest form, a meritocracy. An individual's background doesn't matter here, just their merit. How can a leader command respect from his peers if it's well-established that

he's only number two at what he does? In a School like ours, where information spreads like wildfire, it actually becomes detrimental to the tenure of an activity leader to be undermined in such a manner.

It is a bit of a contradiction to say that activities are intense and require a large amount of knowledge and expertise, and in the next instant say that positions should be distributed evenly, like laddoos at lunch, just because a person might fit the set 'leadership criteria', not taking into account their actual experience in the field. The notion that once thrown into the deep end of the pool, one will be forced to swim is an awfully large gamble to take, isn't it? Especially if you factor in that such a decision may come at the expense of another individual, to whom it comes as a slap in the face. It's the kind of approach where one throws stuff at a wall, hoping something will stick. And while I agree, one or two people will hit the water and swim, the majority will inevitably drown.

In an effort to make everyone happy, we're tampering with the natural flow of things, which is unjust to all the parties involved. What were once coveted positions will now be reduced to nothing more than participation trophies, and in an effort to push everyone

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This Week in History

1822 CE: Boston is granted a charter to become a city.

1976 CE: The regime of Fidel Castro adopts the constitution of Cuba for the first time, officially making Cuba a socialist State

1991 CE: U.S. President George H.W. Bush declares victory in the Persian Gulf War.

2022 CE: Russia invades Ukraine, waging war and disrupting energy supplies.

A SPECTACLE OF METTLE

The following are the appointed **Boys-in-Charge** for the **academic year 2023 - 2024:**

Environment Committee: Yuvan Kamdar
Historical Circle: Maadhavan Gupta

Wishing them a fruitful tenure!

DARK KNIGHT

Tejas Sharma has been awarded the **Scholars' Blazer**.

Congratulations!

“

The mark of the immature man is that he wants to die nobly for a cause, while the mark of the mature man is that he wants to live humbly for one.

—
J.D. Salinger

THE WHO?

Who is Shawn Carter?

Enaith Habibullah: A Professional Cyclist
Mr. Srinivas Swamy: An Actor
Atharv Uppal: A Chef
Zohaib Choudhary: A Fictional Character

Shawn Carter, known in the musical community as **Jay-Z**, is a **professional rapper and music producer** from New York. He was the first ever hip-hop billionaire and is also the CEO and founder of multiple businesses, bars, and clubs. He is one of the **world's best-selling artists**, selling over **140 million** copies and winning **24 Grammys**.

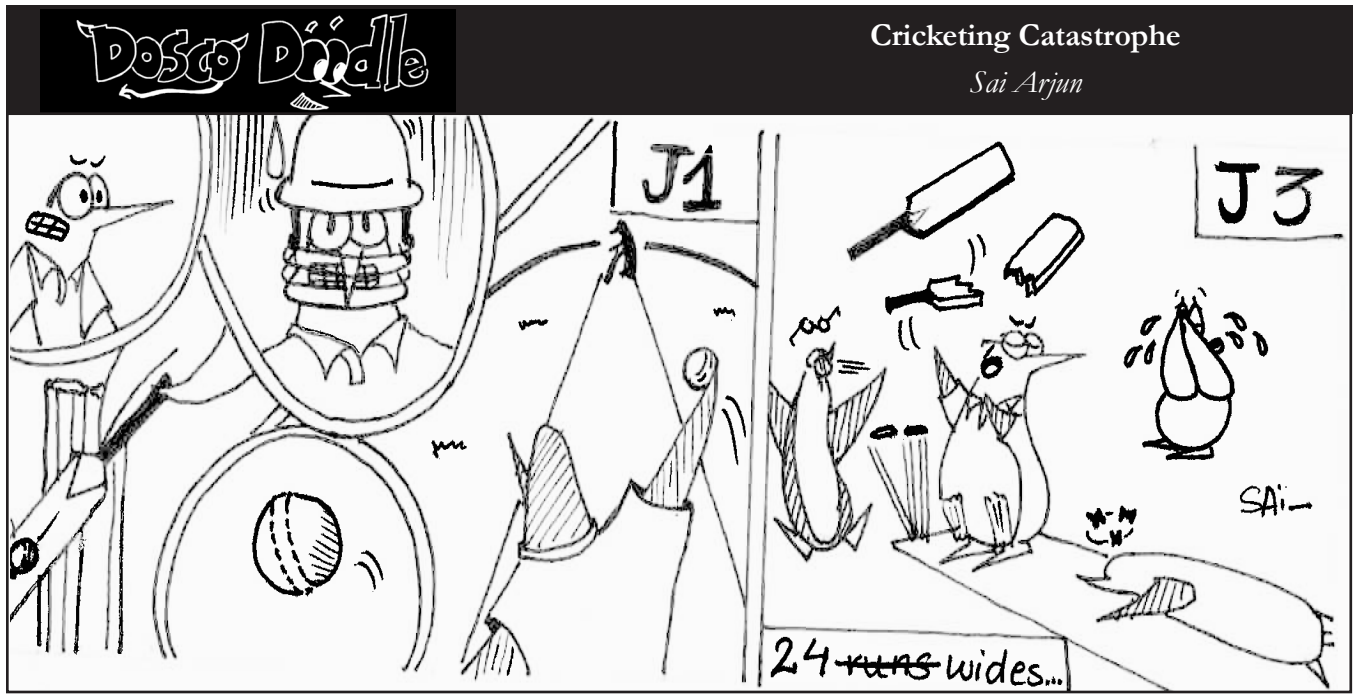
READER'S CHECKLIST

What members of the School community have been reading this week:

AVM: *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles.
Naahar Khattri: *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak.
Zubin Mehra: *Sapiens* by Y.N. Harari.

Around the World in 80 Words

This week marked the first anniversary of the Russia-Ukraine War. Israel launched airstrikes on the Gaza Strip in retaliation to rocket launches by Palestinian militant groups which resulted in over 49 casualties. Adenovirus cases spiked rapidly in West Bengal, leading to advisories being issued and the state being put on high alert. Neal Mohan has been appointed the new CEO of YouTube. Indian women's tennis player Sania Mirza has retired from the sport after a career spanning over 20 years.



(Continued from Page 1)

up, all we will end up doing is making everyone mediocre. If we care so much about a “happiness quotient”, then what happens to that same happiness quotient when a child isn’t given a position they deserve? For someone who hasn’t put in much effort to not get many positions is normal, and that is something they anticipate. Funnily enough, this student, who has gotten a position they weren’t

ready for, will also be adversely affected emotionally at some point in their tenure, because the stress is doubled for them, since they have to start at square one. As a School that nurtures healthy competitiveness and often has multiple people vying for the same roles, it is imperative that leadership roles are handed out keeping in mind the merit of a person rather than their availability. This institution has been flourishing

on a meritocratic system since its inception and the moment we abandon this system, we begin to fail our core values. On a closing note, consider the last element: much of what we do in School is a labour of love, and if you truly love something, it would bring you a great deal of pain to see someone tearing down the very thing you’re passionate about, simply because they’ve been handed a role that they weren’t prepared for.

United We Stand

Ganadhipati Aryan *reflects on Kremlin’s invasion of Ukraine and its repercussions through the past year.*

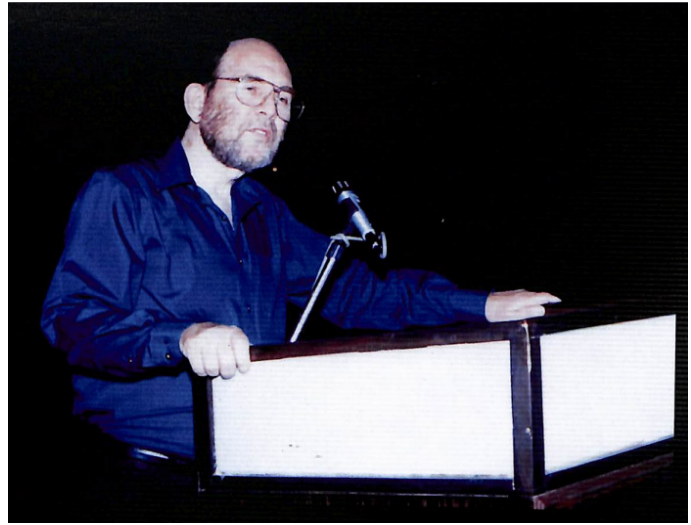
This week marked the first anniversary since the Russian forces rolled into Ukraine in what started the Kremlin’s full-blown invasion of its neighbour. It might not strike as surprising for many, because ever since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, Putin has nursed a deep sense of grievance over Russia’s lost power and influence. Ukraine was formerly part of the Soviet Union but declared its independence in 1991. The idea of Ukraine being a prosperous, modern, independent, and democratic European state posed a threat to neighbouring Russia’s autocratic regime. If Ukraine were successful in reforming their country along the lines of other western democracies, it would have established a negative precedent for former Soviet countries and served as an example for Russians who were seeking a more democratic country. Putin also viewed Western democracies as weak and vulnerable states - thanks in part to Russia’s multiple attempts to foment unrest and divides across Europe and North America, hence making 2022 an appropriate time to undertake such a massive military operation. Although Ukraine has managed to survive the initial onslaught, it continues to suffer from round-the-clock artillery assaults and other attacks. While the main focus remains, as it should, on the tragedy of human loss and the destruction of Ukrainian territory, the Russian invasion has triggered sanctions and other obstacles that have hampered critical logistics and trade route operations. The resulting ripple effects threatened the supply of essential food resources raising the possibility of global famine. Russia and Ukraine were among the world’s top barley, maize, and sunflower suppliers. The two countries accounted for about a third of the global wheat supply and a quarter of barley production, not to mention 75% of the sunflower oil supply. However, all of these exports were critically affected by the Russian invasion. Due to the blockade of the Black Sea ports in Ukraine by the Russian forces, a

major grain shipping route, wheat prices increased by 35% in 2022, hitting a record high in March. As a second-order effect of the Russian invasion, many countries’ currencies plummeted against the US dollar in 2022, raising the cost of imports. The global recovery from COVID-19 galvanised the market for commodities. Pent-up demand from nationwide lockdowns and massive economic stimulus programs fueled rapid price gains. The conflict exacerbated these patterns. Considering the intricate connection between commodities pricing and geopolitics, Russia’s invasion shook the world economy, and in particular, developing nations. The ramifications have varied both within and across developing as well as some developed countries. Yet, there have been shared difficulties, such as increasing commodity costs. And lastly, how can we not thank Russia for accelerating a global energy crisis? The invasion, and subsequent Western sanctions added to the strains already placed on the oil and gas supply as a result of the rapid economic rebound from the Pandemic. The world’s largest energy corporations fled Russia in haste, writing down tens of billions of dollars in assets. Between May and October, gas flows from Russia decreased by 80% across the European Union. Pipeline bottlenecks threatened swaths of energy-intensive industries, prompting European governments to turn to liquefied natural gas (LNG) to keep factories running. As we mark the first anniversary since Russian forces invaded Ukraine, the conflict continues to have significant global impacts. The situation for debt-distressed developing countries has become more challenging due to several factors, including the uneven recovery from COVID-19, an increase in food and energy prices, widespread currency depreciation, and the continued war in Ukraine. As we continue to deal with the ongoing impacts of this conflict, it is clear that the need for peace and stability remains paramount.

Songs of Service

The Doon School Weekly regrets to inform the School community of the passing of former headmaster, **Mr Jonathan Mason**. He will be remembered by several generations of Doscos and those he influenced in his lifetime with great honour and reverence.

We were all saddened to hear the news that Jonathan Anthony Mason has passed away. He was a man who left an indelible imprint on every task he undertook and every student he taught. He was a beloved teacher, an exemplary educationist and a wonderful human being. For me, he was John Mason Sir, who blazed a trail in the demanding field of education. He knew the critical importance of moulding young minds, instilling the finest human values and encouraging his students to forge their own paths through life. I first met Mr. Mason at Mayo College for Boys, Ajmer, where I was serving as Vice-Principal. He had been invited as the Chief Guest at the JTM Gibson Debates and Quiz. I remember him as a



strict disciplinarian, yet an emotional and sensitive human being. He was always ready to share his passion for literature and the arts and inspired many people to explore these fields more deeply.

Mr. Mason was born on 10th January, 1945 and was educated at La Martiniere, Kolkata. He shone at an early age and was awarded the Good Conduct Medal in his school for his impeccable behaviour and excellent manners. He went on to earn his MA degree in English from Jadavpur University. Soon after, he realised that teaching was his true calling and dedicated his life to it. He chose to return to his school to become a school teacher, heralding a stellar career in education. He later became the Principal of St. James' School in Kolkata and soon took it to the top echelons of educational institutions in the city, becoming one of the most coveted schools that parents aspired to send their boys to.

Doon School was privileged to have him as headmaster in 1996. The reforms he introduced to the School, the values and beliefs he inculcated in his students and his administrative skills enabled the School to carry forward its traditions and culture. He was a true leader who carried his team with him and never shirked from getting his hands dirty! He was a leader, thinker and doer, who saw education in a holistic way, balancing academics with extra-curricular activities. He made a positive impact on every student he taught and every teacher who worked with him. Ask them and they will have a story to narrate, illustrating all that they learnt from him. He will always be remembered and missed. Rest in peace, Mr. Mason.

-Dr Jagpreet Singh

A tall, well-built, bearded Anglo Indian with a gruff voice and invariably serious but always immaculately dressed in jacket and tie, Mr. Mason came across as an old-school, strict headmaster. A quintessential teacher, Mr. Mason was a self-made man who had worked his way up to the top in the education world due to his strong ethical values and thorough professionalism. True to his convictions he took some very bold and courageous measures to bring the School in tune with the changing world outside. For instance, he introduced PTMs albeit only at Founders. Some menial 'traditions' like *chots* fagging, boys piling up plates after meals were done away with and bullying was curbed in the face of bitter criticism and allegations from the Old Boys that he was turning Doon into a day school. Mr. Mason was a hard taskmaster a strict disciplinarian, and a perfectionist to a fault with an eye for the minutest details. He would lay down down on beds to check if pillows and mattresses were

comfortable for boys, pick out dust with his fingers from nooks that the staff wouldn't imagine. His visits to the Houses and CDH were regular but at any odd time which kept everyone on their toes. He had a passion for theatre and the productions under his stewardship have set a benchmark for years to come. Mr. Mason's passing away is a great loss but he will continue to inspire the Dosco community for generations. May his soul rest in peace.

-PMV

Towering at over six feet with a disarming smile, Mr. Mason commanded respect at first sight itself. And after five minutes of conversation, perhaps even reverence. However, working with him closely, we also began to see the rationality in his thinking. He never spoon-fed anyone; he only asked questions, never making the answer obviously clear, only leading us to it. That is perhaps the reason why he could altogether eradicate bullying in School. In all his dealings, the headmaster was an optimist to the core. An excellent orator, he easily held the attention of his audience with his eloquent voice and articulate sentences. There were only two occasions when a Dosco truly feared Mr. Mason's speech – when he was being sarcastic, and when he cracked a 'joke' – both of which would be incomprehensible to the layman until he did his fair share of reflection. Such wisdom befell upon Doscos on several occasions and at various places across School because of Mr. Mason's omnipresence. Mr. Mason could identify every one of the five hundred students on campus. With his keen eye for detail, he often surprised Housemasters by informing them about a broken photo frame in the House, or extra beds in some dormitories. To acknowledge all his contributions requires far more than an article in the *Weekly*; all we can say is that he will forever remain in the memories of the Boys and Masters who had the privilege of coming in touch with him.

It would not be fair to sign off without paying a tribute to a lady who quietly took charge of a lot of administrative work in School: Mrs. Mason's presence was comforting to many boys, especially the Juniors. Boys often felt comfortable speaking their mind to her, as she would listen patiently and advise well. In this hour of grief, may she have the strength to bear the loss.

-Siddharth Sethia, (ex 176-TA, 2003) and Abhishek Maity, (ex 180-OB, 2003)

My initial interaction with Mr John Mason was during my job interview at Doon. My first headmaster at Doon, JAM came across as a strict disciplinarian who was always very concerned about the development and education of every single boy under his care at School. He was a perfect mentor to all Doscos and to young masters like me who had joined the School during his tenure. We were always ready to go the extra mile when he called, especially in times of emergency in our workplace. He was a mobile person and loved to get things done, even if it took him after hours to do it. At a personal level, he knew every single family on campus and would ask about their wellbeing even years after he left School. My wife very fondly remembers her first meeting with the Masons when we were invited for tea at the HM's residence after getting married and how Mr Mason introduced himself as the father of the Doon family. I am very fortunate to have joined the School during his tenure and also very thankful for all the mentoring and encouragement I always received from him. He will be remembered very fondly by all of us...always.

-PKJ

The first time I met Mr Mason was when I appeared for an interview for the position of an assistant Master at The Doon School in 1998. It was evident from my first interaction with him that he was someone who would mentor and nurture young people wanting to take up teaching as a profession. I was thrilled to get an opportunity to serve under his guidance. In the years that followed, Mr Mason was someone who I revered and went to for advice. I learnt from him the importance of how the little things in life can make a huge difference. As a headmaster, he led by example and was a passionate teacher. I have always admired the way Mr Mason managed to be omnipresent in the School be it the sports field, the boarding Houses, or the academic spaces. He always put the boys and Masters' first and ensured that everyone in the community was well taken care of. I consider myself extremely fortunate to have had him as my first headmaster as I began my school teaching career. The values and rigours that he instilled in me as a young master have kept me going. I can proudly say that I learnt from the best. Mr Mason touched the lives of many and had a profound impact on them. He will be missed by his students, colleagues and everyone who has been closely associated with him.

-KLA

For me personally, Mr. Mason turned my life around in Doon almost single-handedly - he saw something in me that no other teacher, student or even I could see in myself. My housemaster once told me towards the end of S Form that I was the weak link of Jaipur House. Twelve months later because of Mason's tutelage and because of him taking me under his wing, I transformed myself quite a bit whether it be through athletics or dramatics- to ultimately getting School Colours. None of that would have been possible without Mr. Mason's personal touch and care which to this day I credit as a huge part of my personal development.

-Uday Jhala, (ex 454-JB, 2000)

The Week gone by

Abhay Jain

As the week comes to a close, an increasing number of DoscOs are wondering whether *The Last of Us* is closer to reality than expected. Following a typhoid scare earlier this week, the various water coolers around the School have been taped shut, replaced with stout little water containers that seem to run out far too quickly. The revival of the morning PT resulted in a record number of hospital admissions, which along

with the re-introduction of House Rest saw the Main Building classes looking emptier than usual. Those who remained were not better off either. A cursory glance at the main building reveals a legion of sleep-deprived and sluggish students, shuffling about as though auditioning for roles in a zombie film. A precautionary earthquake drill was in order for this week, as the prediction of a high-magnitude earthquake by a well-known seismologist made the headlines in newspapers recently. A more familiar sight was the procession for the various Yearbook photos taking place in the Circular and Southern Gardens, as many Seniors arrived

sporting their various ties and blazers for the very last time. With the start of the Cricket Interhouse, the Main Field saw itself come alive as the ferocious J1 matches and amusing J3 matches wowed and entertained audiences throughout the week. Midweek, we received our first address from our School Captain and towards the end, witnessed the School ramping up in preparation for the Final Trials as DoscOs can be seen eagerly awaiting tutorial outings and not so eagerly awaiting the House Feast where we will bid a final farewell to our Sc-Leavers, who will soon depart the red and white walls of Chandbagh for the very last time.

Wordsearch | Nobel Laureates

Clues:

- 1. This person was awarded the Nobel Prize for his experimental approach to alleviating global poverty.
- 2. The only person to receive two unshared Nobel Prizes simultaneously.
- 3. This Nobel laureate who won a Nobel Prize for his work on the structure of an atom also worked on the Manhattan Project.
- 4. The first non-European writer to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.
- 5. He was the only person in history to deny a Nobel Prize in 1964.
- 6 This person got his Nobel Prize for the discovery of quarks.
- 7. This Nobel laureate is also known as the father of quantum physics.
- 8. This is the only organization to have won the Nobel Prize three times.
- 9. This famous scientist won the Nobel Prize for the discovery of the law of the photoelectric effect.
- 10. He got his Nobel Prize for his work in light and even has an effect named after him on physics.

L I Z L C A V D Y L V G G Z E L C A L R
B P J O H X B L K X X O E X C W C D N E
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S J F P T C R H M T A G A S T Q L X K C
X V U H I J H O V Y R A H N E O F Z R X
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- | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| 1. Banerjee | 4. Tagore | 7. Planck | 10. Raman |
| 2. Pauling | 5. Sartre | 8. Redcross | |
| 3. Bohr | 6. Murray | 9. Einstein | |

Answers to this week's crossword.

Source: <https://worksheets.theteacherscorner.net/make-your-own/wordsearch/#top>

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