



The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot
August 26, 2023 | Issue No. 2682



LESSONS UNWRAPPED

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Experiences, Challenges, Lessons

The Doon School Weekly interviewed Mr Rohan Chand Thakur (ex 563-O, 2001).

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Being an IAS officer is one of the most sought-after careers in the country. However, what are some of the aspects of the profession that you feel are often overlooked?

Rohan Chand Thakur (RCT): I think it is definitely a career that allows you to work on pressing issues at a very early stage, and it also puts you into leadership positions from day one. But with great power comes great responsibility. You need to be very, very conscious about your conduct. Just because you have a lot of discretion in these roles, you can get carried away by the sheer amount of people who are fawning all over you, or trying to be sweet, or trying to keep you happy, so to say. But I think personal conduct is very important and that is a challenge for people who are very young. One more thing is, you also need to work very hard. Often, when people make it to the IAS, they feel that they've already worked very hard. So why do they have to continue working hard after that? To sustain the momentum of your efforts remains a huge challenge. That is one aspect of it. As for the second, there are many people who are serially online on social media including Facebook and Instagram. These are people who just record stuff you're saying, and just put it up. So you have to be very, very careful in your personal as well as professional conduct. Remain hardworking. And of course, maintain your integrity.

DSW: So now you are moving on to your role as the Managing Director of the Himachal Road

Transport Corporation, what strategies are you implementing to improve the efficiency and the accessibility of transport services in the state?

RCT: Just to give you a background, the Himachal Road Transport Corporation has something around 3,200 buses, with the about 13,000 employees. It's a huge organisation. One of the challenges I have, being in a state-run organisation, is catering to problems where no private sector operator is willing to operate. So, we have this social objective which we need to meet. We also need to recognize that we are working in a larger democratic framework where the people's voice matters. Even if a route is not commercially viable, we have to provide it. This is where a conventional public sector model differs from the private sector model. In the private sector, if it's not viable, you can just apply personal opinion and say no, and then nobody can say anything to you. Here, we are state-run. The government has an accountability. It's chosen by the people and it's for the people. Therefore, we need to provide such services to the people. Having said that, what we need to keep in mind is, "How can we improve ourselves within these constraints?" In fact, there's a lot of things we can do. Firstly, we can monitor our services much better. We can use information technology to get faster and more timely reports. We can use, as I said in my speech, the entire idea of positive recognition. We are punishing people who are undisciplined, but are we rewarding people who are efficient? We are not.

The government's system doesn't do that enough. We need to do that. We need to recognise such people, and we also need to put in place a system of report cards, parameters, and create an incentive-based assessment scheme of the officers. We also need to recognize where the slack is in the system. For example, are my buses travelling optimally? Often buses are, you know, terminating at a point and then travelling back 20 kilometres without any travellers simply because the driver does not have a place to stay. This wastes a lot of resources, it's dead mileage. If you think about it, 20 kilometres means roughly six litres of diesel. And that's just for one bus. Imagine you have one or two thousand such buses. Just imagine the wasted budget spent on fuel. That is the type of optimisation we have to do, and we are completely capable of doing it. We are trying to put objective parameters on everything. For example, our breakdown rates. It doesn't matter how many breakdowns we have in a day, there has to be a parameter we need to monitor. There is a standard that says you should have around 0.2 breakdowns per ten thousand kilometres of coverage. Currently, we are at 0.8. We need to ensure that our breakdowns go down, and that our breakdowns aren't just measured anecdotally but through concrete parameters.

DSW: Building upon that, in your opinion, what are some

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This Week in History

1889 CE: Labour activists close the entire Port of London in the London Dock Strike.

1911 CE: Three Italian handymen steal Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa from the Louvre.

1959 CE: Hawaii becomes the 50th U.S. state.

1960 CE: Senegal secedes from the Mali Federation, declaring its full independence.

1968 CE: The Warsaw Pact nations (except Romania and Albania), led by the Soviet Union, invade Czechoslovakia to put an end to the Prague Spring.

1949 CE: The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) comes into force, following the signing of its treaty four months earlier.

READER'S CHECKLIST

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

Hridhaan Gupta: *Diary of a Middle Schooler* by Ayaan Mittal

Jigmet Urgian: *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

Arish Talwar: *November Nine* by Colleen Hoover

Loechin Phangcho: *Atomic Habits* by James Clear

LISTENER'S CHECKLIST

What members of the School community have been listening to this week:

Yohaana Marda: *Fe!n* by Travis Scott

Neerav Bansal: *Teenage Dream* by Katy Perry

Ansh Kuriyal: *Calm Down* by Selena Gomez

Rohan Taneja: *Love it if you made it* by The 1975

Veer Duggal: *Golden Hour* by JVKE

“

The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

—

Nelson Mandela

THE WHO?

Who is Daryl Franklin Hohl?

Rehhan Chadha: A ballerina

Abhimanyu Chaudhary: An actor

Danish General: A wine connoisseur

Arin Modi: A percussionist

Daryl Franklin Hohl, known professionally as **Daryl Hall**, is an **American rock, soul singer and musician**, best known as the co-founder and principal lead vocalist of Hall & Oates. Since late 2007, he has hosted the streaming television series *Live from Daryl's House*, in which he performs alongside other artists, doing a mix of songs from each's catalogue.

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

I am gonna go brush my face now.

Loechin Phangcho, hygiene 101.

I will shoot you with a knife.

MMR, the Assassin.

A pentagon has eight sides.

Dhruv Murgappan, revolutionising Maths.

Is the methoding right?

Rohan Jalan, study of methodology.

Work faster, your work is not working.

Jansher Grewal, efficiency.

Around the World in 80 Words

The Indian spacecraft Chandrayaan-3, successfully landed on the Moon's south pole, making India the first country to do so. A wildfire on the outskirts of Athens led to the deaths of 18 people. Former United States President Donald Trump surrendered himself to authorities in the state of Georgia, where he faces criminal charges related to efforts to overturn the 2020 election. An under-construction railway bridge collapsed in India, claiming the lives of 26 workers. Tottenham Hotspur defeated Manchester United 2-0.

Dosco Doodle

Mayhem

Pragyan Goel



(Continued from Page 1)

of the critical areas that need improvement in the Indian bureaucracy?

RCT: There is definitely scope for improvement like any other system. I feel that they can do a better matching of skills with postings. You know, if somebody is for example, an MBA, with a good finance background, he could do a good job in the finance sector or in ministries which have a direct interface with economic affairs. I think better matching of skills and the assignment is one way that we can improve. But it could be done a bit more. I think another big field of improvement is, of course, in how we groom our officers. Make the officers realise that they are not just supposed to deliver, but that they are also supposed to be perceived as fair, just, and efficient. The public's perception of us

matters. They need to be educated on that as well. Like I keep saying, we need to prioritise getting things done.

DSW: When you were transitioning out of Doon, did you have a large change in mentality?

RCT: One thing I want to tell all Doscos is that they need to not get stuck within their limited cohort. They need to reach out, they need to be people who go beyond their socio-economic profile. You should be as comfortable in the company of kings as you are with an ordinary man on the street. That's the skill which School should give you. That's my only advice to Doscos, when you go out of School, meet people and get to know people, and that's when you start to really up your leadership ability, and your power to negotiate situations will just increase

exponentially. To be honest, you can't be making decisions on behalf of people you've never seen, people you don't know. That was the major drawback of colonisation, they were not making policies for the people, they were just making them for their own purposes, their own personal interests. So that's something for you to remember when you go out there. When all is said and done, we are privileged people, and our privilege should not allow us to go out and make fun of people for their bad English. If you have good English, that's very good but even if you don't, that doesn't measure your intelligence. If you go to other parts of the world; people in Europe can't speak English, people in Latin America can't speak English. It's only in Africa and Asia that we speak English. You need to expand your mind.

Lessons Unwrapped

Mr Oliver Hannay talks about his experience as an intern at School.

From the moment I walked through the gates of Chandbagh, I knew this place was special; a school above all others, a true pinnacle of education. Yet I struggled to put my finger on what makes this place so special; after all, from the outside it looks and feels like a quintessential public school not dissimilar from my own, one where students excel at academics, sports and in the arts and never tire of getting involved. However, I have come to realise that what makes this place a Shangri-la of education, is its community.

I have had the unique perspective of both being a teacher and a student. I left my own school in June and so to have returned to school, this time on the other side of the classroom as a member of staff, has been quite a change. Indeed I believe my curious title of simply 'Oliver' sums it up. Like some peculiar Scottish ghost I have managed to walk the line of both staff and student, partly due to the ambiguity surrounding my actual title. Is it gap-year student, intern, master, I don't think I will ever know. Either way it does look jolly good on a CV!

I have treasured my time here, and to be greeted by such warmth and unwavering kindness has been truly astounding, especially as a stranger in a strange land. I have cherished teaching students who are so eager to learn they are often bursting with excitement to tell me some new historical fact as I try to read the next page of their textbook, and find my way around

a school full of confusing three-letter acronyms.

I believe strongly that we are all merely tenants of the institutions we are fortunate enough to call home. As these tenants depart, these institutions often change and adapt, and that is why it is so impressive to see that Doon has stuck to its founding principles. I was taught a Hindi word the other day, *jugaad*, and so, like all the Britishers who came before me, I am now going to butcher its use whilst looting it for my own language. I believe Doon is the *jugaad* way of education; it is an institution which does not merely teach you how to pass an exam (unlike most UK public schools). It teaches you how to be a functioning and impressive member of society, a skill of vital importance.

Hence this brings me back to my first point of what makes Doon so special. The community here is full of inspiring individuals with an unrivalled work ethic and whom, most importantly, are kind and caring. It was drilled into me from a young age that to succeed in life one must embody Rudyard Kipling's poem 'If', which the Doon education makes sure every boy does. So I would like to change Kipling's final line of his poem in which he concludes that if you follow his teachings you will be 'a man my son' to 'you will be a Dosco my friend'. After all I think that's the least Kipling can give back to India. Thank you for letting me be a part of your community and I wish you all the best as you go on to change the world!

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

In the Letter to the Editor, published on 'August 12 2023', Karan Agarwal delivered a beautifully articulated piece of writing, that would unfortunately find itself lost among the countless letters and articles that have already tried their hand at questioning the competence of the *Weekly*. It is oddly ironic how the author finds it so convenient to place himself in the shoes of a critic, highlighting the 'failures' of the Editorial Board, while having done nothing on his part as a writer to fix these supposedly gaping holes in the *Weekly*. This dear Editor, is exactly the problem. As another fellow Dosco, who also likes to think of himself as a writer, I take it as my responsibility to remind the School community, and of course the author, of the role of the *Weekly*, and then address a few of his arguments - that is the few that I could infer.

Being a critic is easy, and the ease of finding flaws rather than solutions leads us to discover critics in almost everyone. However, I believe that as writers it is our responsibility to support the custodians of the Weekly.

One of the primary arguments the author presents is the lack of quality pieces, that would spark discussion and controversy, in the *Weekly*. Understand, dear Editor, the *Weekly* is not and never was an elitist publication. To quote the present Editor-in-Chief in his very first Editorial, "The most fundamental purpose of the Weekly is to be an 'echo of Chandbagh' and not an 'echo of itself'." It is clear that the Board understands the significance of this and to be true to this purpose, it must set a balance between the critical, analytical, controversial pieces authored by the board members and, to quote the author, the 'sycophantic' writing contributed by the School community. We need to understand that the fundamental problem here is not the incompetence of the *Weekly* in ensuring such content, but rather the inability of the School community to write on such topics and write well in general. When the Board presents itself as custodians of this fine publication and promises to stay true to their purpose, they must also ensure that they are able to rebuild a culture of quality writing in School. To publish articles for the

sake of controversy, without adequate quality writing to support that article, is pointless. The role of the Board is to first, rebuild that culture of quality writing and only then will such articles naturally find their place in the *Weekly*. To expect an Editorial Board to publish quality, controversial, 'juicy' content every week, while also trying to rid the publication of its elitist facade, is rather unreasonable, given the dire state of writers in School. I wholeheartedly agree with the author when he says that articles used to be better, content used to be better, but writers also used to be better. However, to hold the *Weekly* accountable for the decline in the quality of writing in School, in a post-covid age, is rather unfair. Change takes time, and to be able to restore the quality of the *Weekly* to its original stature, while only being the second post-COVID board, warrants merit. What the author gets wrong about change, is that it was never meant to be just one Editorial. Instead, it is a steady process of bringing back a culture that we have lost as a community. In my C Form, to be published in the *Weekly* was a big deal, and to see one's piece being read by people was the best feeling in the world. Somewhere, we lost that as a community. There was a time when the Weekly's inbox would be flooded with articles, stories and poems - I want that time to come back. As soon as the students in this School appreciate writing once again, literature and controversy will flow from these pages. That day will take time, but I am here for it.

Being a critic is easy, and the ease of finding flaws rather than solutions leads us to discover critics in almost everyone. However, I believe that as writers it is our responsibility to support the custodians of the *Weekly*. While they have the position and the power, the responsibility of ensuring that the *Weekly* returns to its former glory, the responsibility of ensuring that writing and reading are appreciated once again, and the responsibility of ensuring that people read the *Weekly* for its articles and not its humour is as much on our shoulders as it is on theirs.

This letter, much like Karan's, will undoubtedly find itself lost among the countless other articles in the Weekly archive, never to be read again. Unless, of course, the author finally updates his collection of interesting *Weekly* articles, if not for its quality, then at least for its offence.

Regards,
Rohan Taneja

Roving Eye

Ch. Ed., Sr. Eds.

With the culmination of more than five months of effort and everyone pouring in their blood, sweat and tears (some of us taking it quite literally), DSMUN this year seemed to be quite the success at first glance. However, the omniscient Eye feels it is its solemn duty to emerge from the shadows and report some of the more intricate details of the action-packed conference.

We must first congratulate the entire Secretariat for a record-breaking number of attentive eyes at the opening ceremony, setting a record we thought no one would break for a while. Little did we know that their closing ceremony would not fail to surprise. Moreover, the Eye, along with the entire School community was flummoxed as to how our beloved IPC chair was unable to attract a date considering his rather strong gravitational field.

Having emerged victorious from the tussle to become the face of the conference, a certain Dark Swan claimed his throne in the Lok Sabha in hopes of spending quality time with a special someone. While his Chinar counterpart, pining for the action that he missed at our neighbour's conference a fortnight back, cantered through each committee desperately in search of his special someone, all inspired by the Nizam's esteemed mathematician's conquests as he galloped around blasting R.Kelly on his airpods. At this moment, we would like to remember the Chai Wala's wise, wise words: "She's a 9 on a bad day, but she's 10 on her birthday."

The eagerly-awaited Delegate Dance saw the smoke machines and the antics of a certain chairperson covering up activities near the front of the stage as a "best delegate" was seen swaying the votes in her favour. The night also saw those some who seemed to mingle rather well with the audience, disappearing into the dark before conveniently and periodically appearing every few minutes in an attempt to make things appear normal. Speaking of mingling, two delegates seemed to meet with a few difficulties but took it upon themselves to lend each other a helping hand before being interrupted by Chandbagh's very own Jesus, who descended from the very heavens to prevent them from sinning.

Unfortunately, not everyone's taste of first love was pleasant, as the Turbanator was led astray by the well-meaning Fido Dido, which marked a change in the

former, as he sought to guide others on the right path and became in his own words, "the coach who got played." Moreover, his tea-selling counterpart found himself caught in the mouth of a rather expressive baleen as he desperately tried swimming away into the deep dark depths of the ocean.

Mrs Manningham's hopes were quickly dashed by the Turbanator who decided to play coach yet again. Dejected, he resorted to violence and became an agent of chaos while flitting through various committees with his impeccable impressions. The Eye would like to ask him, "Why so serious?"

Having rocked the stage, our very own Don Henley, seemed to have almost strummed the springs of someone who was just slightly older than acceptable, however a certain worker from the steel plant seemed to have provided him with enough momentum to complete the last leg of that race.

The Eye would also like to take a moment to acknowledge the invaluable contributions made by the Media Team who quite literally caused crises throughout the conference, disarming a whole committee by heating up the AMC and ensuring that the security of the committee was most definitely compromised.

Towards the end of the conference, the entire School was enthralled by the various faculty advisors and the most assertive Vice President to ever exist. The video screened by the naturalist was also particularly exhilarating as it encapsulated the most entertaining aspects of the conference, much to everyone's pleasure. Fortunately, this time around he was wise enough not to violate any of our School's IT policies, considering how it positively impacted his race to lead the flock of Swans a few months prior.

Despite heartbreaks and disappointments, DSMUN, this year, to say the least, was exciting for most. But considering that Socials are just around the corner and with all the uncertainty around whether or not there are more to come, the Penguins drown in trepidation over losing the company of their favourite school in Dalanwala. The Eye must now retreat momentarily, for it has revealed enough. But, my dear batchmates, heed this warning: be mindful of your next steps, for you never know who is watching.

The Week Gone By

Abhay Jain

Although it feels like every week is more packed than the last, I don't think that it would be an understatement to say that this week in particular had us all on our heels as we juggled multiple events at once. However, with another round of heavy rainfall, the eventful week has slowly drawn to an end.

As the flavoured clouds left behind by DSMUN clear, we find some casualties along the way. A fog has set upon Campus, as recent events have set up a tense atmosphere running up to the September Trials. Days away from

the extra-extended timetable, and PTMs, A and Sc Formers have already started to feel the heat, further heightened by upcoming IA and assignment deadlines. In typical Doon School fashion, we also see an unbroken chain of three back-back weekly events as Kamla Jeevan is all set to start this week. As preparations for the Kamla Jeevan Debates concluded with the chit-picking event, I wish the organising committee the best of luck with the conference going forward.

The Football season has seen itself struggle as the plethora of extracurricular events have created problems in scheduling and planning of matches, leading to a staggered schedule as the drawn out competition finds itself losing its identity as DoscOs struggle to manage the competition with

academics, extracurriculars and events.

Pastorally, the School has granted many of its Seniors a variety of chances to exercise their soft skills, with MUN, socials, and a career fair packed- all packed within a span of two weeks. Some have worked wonders with their magic, while others look forward to more opportunities going forward.

As readers pore over the *Weekly*, Sc formers work in pleasant anticipation of all that the evening holds for them. I wish all of them an evening well spent. With the last slew of events awaiting us, I encourage all DoscOs to stand vigilant, as we stand in the last, strenuous stretch before the start of the *much-anticipated* September Trials.

Sudoku

				8				
3		8	4			7	2	
6			1			9		
5			8	2				
	9		7		1		8	
		1		6	5			4
		3			4			2
	4	7			2	6		5
				7				

Key:

9	3	4	8	7	6	5	2	1
5	1	9	2	3	6	7	4	8
2	7	8	4	1	5	3	6	9
4	9	2	5	6	3	1	8	7
3	8	5	1	4	7	6	9	2
7	6	7	9	1	6	7	3	5
8	4	9	3	5	1	2	7	6
1	2	7	6	9	4	8	5	3
4	1	9	2	8	7	3	5	6

Source: <https://www.theteacherscorner.net/>

Online Edition: www.doonschool.com/co-curricular/clubs-societies/publications/past-weeklies/ weekly@doonschool.com



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