

Established in 1936

The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot
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MOSQUITOES, MURDER, AND MAYHEM

A theatrical journey, and the lessons learned.

Page 3

TURNING A NEW LEAF

A degrading environment. The first signs of progress being made.

Page 4

BEYOND HARMONY

A musical transformation, a workshop to remember.

Page 5

Camaraderie or Curriculum?

Ganadhipati Aryan and **Krish Agrawal** *explore the relevance of boarding schools today.*

This publication often critiques/discusses our School at length, we often forget that these issues probably aren't unique to Chandbagh. After all, we aren't the only boarding school out there, are we?

From my still-developing perspective on this matter, every school has its priorities. Some completely academic, some holistic. For traditional boarding schools, it's the latter — for some others, it's the former. But the fundamental tenet of every boarding school remains the same — a place of boarding, a place to study, and a place to play. But education is a dynamic landscape, and boarding schools often seem like a fixture of the past.

Thus the question: Are boarding schools as a concept still relevant in this day and age? Like most things, there are two sides to this coin. The primary argument that boarding schools rely on are the social aspects of 'the boarding school education'. The friendships that you forge last a lifetime, and the tough times will make you resilient.

However, in the case of most boarding schools like ours, there are also certain detrimental aspects. Your interaction with the opposite sex comes to a screeching halt for a little under six years, barring a few Socials in between. Not very enriching if you ask me. Then you have the academic aspect

of this argument. A few decades ago, boarding schools served as educational hubs when most towns and cities did not possess the educational infrastructure that parents wished for. Today, barring smaller towns, that is not the case. Most boarding schools do not offer anything special in terms of instruction, or curricula. In those cases, why don't you stay at home and relax?

If boarding schools want to survive today's competitive education environment, they have to reevaluate their priorities. This means reassessing how academic rigor and extracurricular activities — sports in particular — are balanced.

To effectively compete with top-notch day schools, the focus should be shifted to a model that is more in line with modern teaching methods seen in many institutions. This entails implementing a structure in which leadership appointments and sports competitions are subordinated to academic pursuits. Sports can still play a significant role in education, but they shouldn't take away from the main objective of encouraging academic success.

For alumni who have gone through the system, sending their wards back to boarding school is often a no-brainer; but for new parents, the question is a lot more complicated. While camaraderie and brotherhood are appealing,

unless one has first-hand experience, it holds no tangible value in the minds of many. At the risk of generalising far too much, education in the Indian society is considered simply as a means to an end, with all these extracurriculars and sports considered to be mere supplements. The system values pure academic aptitude over any other factor. Apart from a smaller segment of the populace, the value of what a 'boarding school education' entails specifically is severely misunderstood.

So why did we choose a boarding school, knowing full well the challenges it presents? Personally, we didn't want to spend our time trapped within four walls of our homes (something which the Pandemic helped us realise), and I knew that restricting myself to just books for the final years of my schooling was a bleak prospect. For others, joining boarding school was a necessity; for yet others, it might have been a whim after passing the entrance. Needless to say, a majority of us here probably don't regret our decisions, so maybe choosing boarding school was the correct choice.

As one navigates through life, it becomes clear that the decision to attend boarding school is not to be taken lightly. It necessitates careful assessment of not only the immediate rewards post-high school but also the long-term

(Continued on Page 3)

This Week in History

1821 CE: Napoleon Bonaparte dies in exile on the island of Saint Helena.

1886 CE: Coca-Cola is made available to the public at Jacob's Pharmacy in Atlanta, Georgia.

1937 CE: The German passenger airship Hindenburg catches fire and is destroyed during its attempt to dock in New Jersey.

1945 CE: Germany surrenders unconditionally to the Allies in France, marking the end of World War II in Europe.

1998 CE: India successfully tests nuclear weapons in Rajasthan, leading to sanctions.

READER'S CHECKLIST

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

Phongang Buchem: *Chainsaw Man 14* by Tatsuki Fujimoto

Yuvaan Jalan: *Arthashastra* by Chanakya

Ayaan Gupta: *The Sandman* by Neil Gaiman

Ayaan Adeeb: *The Godfather* by Mario Puzio

LISTENER'S CHECKLIST

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

Samarth Pundeer: *The Summoning* by Sleep Token

Abhijit Sanamanda: *Roar* by Katy Perry

Loechin Phangcho: *Gods* by Sleep Token

Aprameya Gulati: *Piano Man* by Billy Joel

Pange Buchem: *Drops of Jupiter* by Train

“

The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.

—
Mahatma Gandhi

THE WHO?

Who is Yuki Tsunoda?

Umaid Dhillon: A Chef

Samarth Agrawal: A Graphic Designer

Reyansh Agarwal: An Artist

Vir Sandhu: A Football Player

Aryan Ranjan: A Sumo Wrestler

Yuki Tsunoda is a **Japanese race car driver** currently competing in **Formula One**. He was the **2018 Japanese F4 champion**. He finished third in the 2020 Formula 2 Championship and made his Formula One debut in 2021 for AlphaTauri.

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

If men have bistoires in DNA, do women have herstones?

Viraj Rastogi, gender-inclusive.

Where are my eyes?

SRT, looking for them.

Red is not red enough.

Sagnik Biswas, colour-conscious.

My biggest accomplishes include my mistakes.

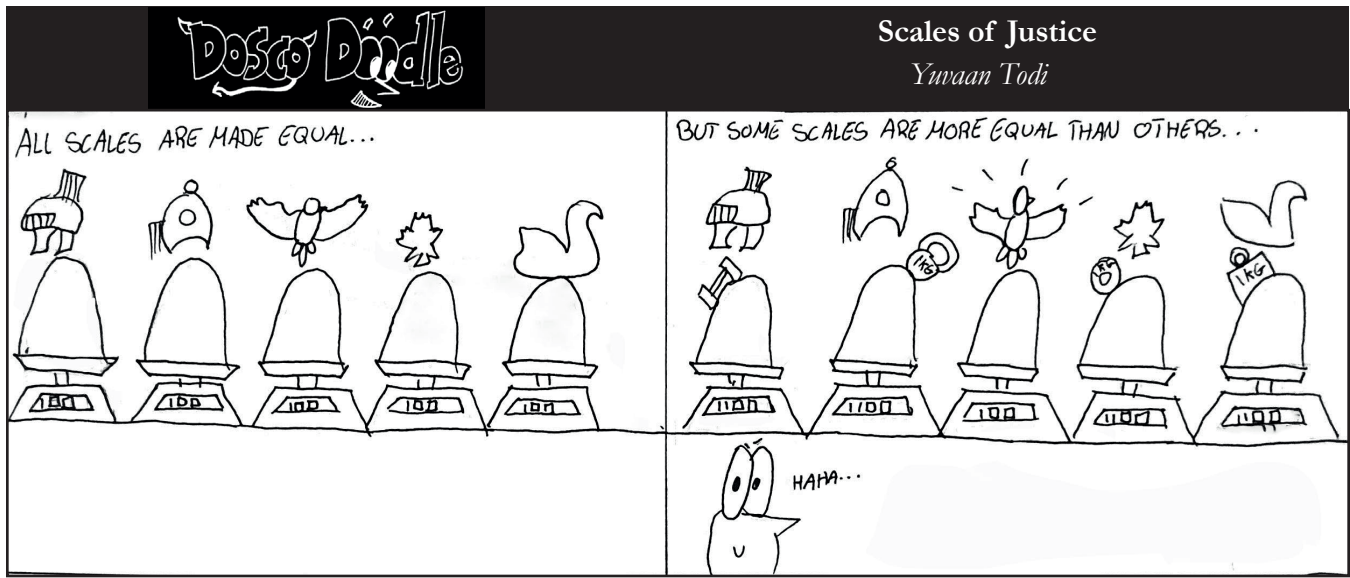
Prabhav Jain, suffering from success.

People tree cut, my heart fall.

Abir Garg, falling for the environment.

Around the World in 80 Words

Pro-Palestinian protests across universities broke out globally, sparking clashes and arrests. The Met Gala took place at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. The Supreme Court extended the pre-trial detention of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal until May 20. The launch of Boeing's first spacecraft, the Boeing Starliner, which was set to take astronaut Sunita Williams to space for a third time, was called off due to a valve issue. Manchester United lost 4-0 to Crystal Palace.



(Continued from Page 1)

consequences for a student's growth and development. While making this judgement, it is also important to understand that not all schools have the same level of infrastructure or a positive environment such as ours.

The question of whether boarding schools are still relevant in today's society extends beyond individual experiences to much

broader societal trends. As education evolves to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world, boarding schools are adapting. For some, the appeal of boarding school stems from the idea of independence and self-discovery away from the comforts and restraints of home. It can be an opportunity to establish one's path, develop resilience, and form a strong sense of self, while many

may find the solitude and regulated structure of boarding school to be suffocating, impeding personal growth.

Thus, rather than looking for a conclusive answer as we consider the relevance of boarding schools in modern society, let us take a step back and reflect. The truest wisdom lies not in certainty, but in the pursuit of understanding.

Mosquitoes, Murder, and Mayhem

Omar Malik pens down his thoughts regarding the recently concluded Inter-House One Act Play.

With the last month being all about utilising each and every second of our invaluable one hour of Rose Bowl rehearsals, modulating and projecting our voices at the same time, ensuring all props were placed properly and that we were following our cues on time, the Inter-House One Act Play has been nothing short of a memorable experience.

Being continually vexed by mosquitos, Doscas still managed to scamper to the majestic amphitheatre to witness the final performances; a result of the long nights spent rehearsing by each Houses' cast and crew. We were up for a unique start, with the Nizams presenting a dark comedy aptly titled *The Pillowman*. Through a horrifying tale of murder, the production certainly was successful in leaving the audience with a sense of forboding.

Following that, Oberoi House presented a scintillating act, as 'The Bear' was conflicted between his misogynistic ideals and his untameable love for the widow in black. We still don't know whether to be a lover or a lender? As for the final performance of the evening, the audience was treated to an absolutely thrilling experience. Comically unveiling the harsh reality of the media, 'Maya' and 'Punditji' 'from the House of Steel revealed how people may sometimes not be as 'true as steel'.

Even though we walked away from the Rose Bowl after that, our hearts and minds were still deeply rooted in our seats, as increasing anticipation and anxiety took over and made for yet another sleepless night. It's also worth highlighting, for the record, that the Headmaster's Day off really did help make a difference in next day's performances. The Eagles seemed to have soared high and the Gentlemen appeared even more energetic since their last rehearsal. Nevertheless, Day 2 still seemed to be blanketed with mysteries as both strived to use a 'Clue' to find the 'Real Inspector Hound'. Both attempted to answer the moot question: Who

committed the murder?

Now that it's all over, I wish it wasn't. This being my first experience in theatre, I am absolutely overjoyed that it did happen. The preparation for this Inter-House provided me with the opportunity to indulge in an extraordinarily magical experience. Every night, I was transported into my character, priding myself with its behaviour, celebrating its flaws and embracing it with open arms. To put it simply, I spent time within my character understanding its needs to cater to them. I felt that there was room for a lot of improvement, so my heart aches to perform just once more, and perfect it. But perhaps the learning lies in that; being able to put up a performance after which there are no regrets of any sort.



Turning a New Leaf

Yash Dongre and Reyansh Agarwal *comment on the Eco-Bricks in School.*

Be young, be free, but be responsible for the globe and its people. We see media outlets throwing around the phrase “You can make a difference”, but what really would you classify as meaningful change? It seems many of us have been keeping our motivation idle — but it is simpler than one would think to truly make a difference. As two people involved in the eco-brick project, we can at least say that we are happy with our service, and while we are not in much of a position to talk about other initiatives in School, through our own experience we can shed light on one of the many ways one can leave a mark on this place.

It is the little things we take pride in. For example, when people take a keen interest in the eco-brick bench which we have laid outside CDH. While it seems like something inconsequential, how much convenience have we provided to the numerous DoscOs who frequently sit on that bench? The eco-brick project has grown exponentially since its inception in the 2022 Founder’s Day Celebrations. What seemed to be a small and neat project for exhibition evolved into a large and hidden undertaking in School.

Normally, these 18.4 kg of plastic would end up rotting in landfills or being incinerated along with mounds of hazardous waste...

Collaborating with the Houses and across the School, approximately 18.4 kilograms of plastic, including tuck wrappers and bottles, have been disposed of carefully and sustainably. Normally, these 18.4 kg of plastic would end up rotting in landfills or being incinerated along with mounds of hazardous waste producing harmful substances such as carbon monoxide and methane. We thank the Housemasters and Dames for ensuring strict segregation during ‘night cafe’ distribution and otherwise, but here we must also thank the community for their responsible disposal of waste into the correct provided bins. An eco-brick lasts for ages, longer than the invincible plastics in the environment, and will always serve a purpose, unlike their deadly castaway former selves.

While fundamentally the eco-brick project is straightforward, it required a good amount of

time for us to consider and actualise. It was all a cakewalk from then on, just going to show it is not too difficult to make a difference. We collect plastic bottles from House feasts and tutorial treats, measuring a clunky two litres each, while also collecting the dreadful multilayered plastics from all Houses.

After collection, we start with the main process. The plastic is sliced and shredded into thin layers, making it easier to fill the plastic bottles without compromising their structural integrity by cutting openings, which is pushed firmly through a rod in a highly dense and compressed fashion. This process continues until the bottle is completely stuffed with plastic and is as hard as a brick; you would be surprised to hold it! In fact, we even step on top the bricks after they are made as a strength test!

It is here where we encourage the School community to continue to actively participate in this project despite time constraints and greater commitments — the little acts, like we mentioned, are what bring about real change. We need to indulge in these small steps not only for the sake of sustainability or any other credits but also to enhance individual growth and skill-making, shaping us to become a part of the ‘Aristocracy of Service.’ Such projects not only help the School community follow the concept of sustainability but also helps us to follow up with and learn the morals and ethos the School seeks to foster within young citizens of the country. The eco-brick project has served as a testament to our School’s green philosophy, and as we move along with our busy routines, we must remember that it is these basic and minor services we can provide to our community to step forward into a better world.



Beyond Harmony

Loechin Phangcho *shares his experience of the recently-concluded Band Workshop.*

Last Sunday marked a remarkable day at School, as the air was filled not just with excitement but with the promise of musical exploration. Our Guitar and Band Stage Performance Workshop, directed by the renowned musician and guitarist Chandresh Kudwa, was a life-changing event that went beyond simple notes and chords.

From the moment Mr Kudwa took the stage, his passion for music radiated through every word and gesture of his. As the workshop unfolded, Mr Kudwa shared invaluable insights into the art of stage performance. From stage presence to communication with bandmates and audience engagement, he equipped us with the tools to command the stage with confidence and charisma.

In addition to honing our ensemble performance, Mr Kudwa conducted individual sectional workshops with each house band of School. During these sessions, Mr Kudwa offered tailored guidance on repertoire selection, arrangement, and performance techniques. He nurtured leadership skills and fostered camaraderie within each band, empowering us to

collaborate seamlessly and achieve a shared musical vision. Furthermore, he didn't overlook the individual growth of each participant. His patient demeanour and encouraging feedback motivated us to push our boundaries and strive for excellence in every strum and pluck.

As the workshop drew to a close, I was left with a renewed sense of enthusiasm and purpose in my musical pursuits. Chandresh Kudwa had not only imparted his musical wisdom but also inspired us to continue our musical journey with passion and dedication. In retrospect, the Guitar and Band Stage Performance Workshop was more than just an event; it was a transformative experience that left an indelible mark on my musical journey. I am immensely grateful to Chandresh Kudwa and to School for providing this opportunity to explore, learn, and grow as a musician. Armed with the lessons learned and memories cherished from this unforgettable workshop, I am eager to continue honing my craft and sharing the gift of music with the world.

Teamwork to Triumph

Shiva Shamanur *reports on the School's participation at Smarika held at the Welham Girls' School.*

The Inter-School event, Smarika, held on the 3rd and 4th of May 2024, was an unforgettable experience which provided many learning opportunities. The Welham Girls' School hosted this cultural festival, catering a variety of activities like both English and Hindi debates and visual arts, which our School participated in. It provided a stage for students to display their abilities and creative talent.

School won the runner-up position in two of the four art divisions. This result, which emphasises our collaborative and creative prowess, is not only a sign of teamwork and effort but also a manifestation of the nurturing atmosphere and artistic focus that School boasts of. I found the helpful tips and wise words of my accompanying Dosco, Ashima Dean, in particular, quite encouraging. The event also made evident to me the value of practice and effort. The category I practised for, which was Lino print, I was awarded the runner-up position. However, the category I decided to participate in with no prior practice, ended with a below-average performance.

Our performance in the English debates was nothing short of exceptional. Engaging in thought-provoking discussions and presenting articulate arguments in the debates sharpened our critical

thinking and oratory skills. These experiences not only showcased our abilities but also reinforced the importance of collaboration, as we worked together to bring arguments to life.

However, what truly made the event memorable was the opportunity to interact with other participants and witness their creative insight. The Smarika event served as an eye-opener, broadening our perspectives and inspiring us to push the boundaries of our creativity.

The diverse range of artistic expressions on display fostered an atmosphere of mutual learning and appreciation. The event also taught me how vastly talented my fellow students are, and of the presence of better and more skilful people all around and in every field.

The occasion provided me with an avenue for an invaluable interchange of ideas with other participants, out of which we gained integral insights into our content. I am certain that we will always look back at Smarika with fondness.

‘हर की दून’ घाटी में दुर्योधन की पूजा : एक सत्य या मिथ्या!

चन्दन घुघत्याल

“हर की दून” एक रहस्यमयी, मनोहारी और प्राकृतिक सुंदरता से भरपूर घाटी है। यह घाटी हिमालय की गोद में गढ़वाल मंडल के उत्तरकाशी ज़िले में स्थित है और हिमालय के खूबसूरत परिवेश के बीच है, जिसकी ऊँचाई समुद्र तल से लगभग ११७०० फीट है। ‘हर की दून’ का शाब्दिक अर्थ है “ईश्वर की घाटी” यानि यह एक महत्वपूर्ण पौराणिक क्षेत्र है। यहाँ का प्राकृतिक सौंदर्य, प्राचीन संस्कृति और अनूठी जीवनशैली इसे एक प्रमुख पर्यटन स्थल बनाते हैं। यह घाटी गोविंद पशुपति नेशनल पार्क के पास स्थित है। यह घाटी पर्यटकों के बीच बहुत ही लोकप्रिय है। यहाँ पर्यटक ट्रेकिंग, कैम्पिंग, और प्राकृतिक दृश्यों का आनंद लेते हैं। इस घाटी में प्राचीन मंदिर, गाँवों की आदिवासी संस्कृति, और पारंपरिक बस्तियाँ हैं। इस घाटी में वन्यजीवों की अधिकता है। यहाँ पर जंगली जीव जैसे कि हिरण, भालू, तेंदुआ, और चीतल पाए जाते हैं।

स्वर्ग रोहिणी चोटी, जौन्धार ग्लेशियर, आटा पीक, मजिंदा लेक, रुईसारा लेक इसकी सुंदरता में चार चाँद लगाते हैं। इतनी ऊँचाई पर करीब २३ किलोमीटर का ट्रैक कर पहुँचने पर ऐसा लगता है कि मानो हम स्वर्ग में पहुँच गए हैं। सामने स्वर्ग रोहिणी और चार खम्भा चोटियों को देखकर सारी थकान उतर जाती है।

इस घाटी के बारे में अक्सर लोगों से सुनते आये थे। यहाँ की दो प्रथाएँ क्रमशः दुर्योधन की पूजा और बहु-पति प्रथा जानने की जिज्ञासा हुई। साथ ही यहाँ की प्राकृतिक सुंदरता को देखने की ललक हुई तो अपने साथी श्री विशाल मोहला और ओबराँय सदन के अपने नवीं कक्षा के २० छात्रों (ट्यूटीज) के साथ मिड टर्म के दौरान ‘हर की दून ट्रैक’ की योजना बनायी। साथी मोहला और छात्र काफी उत्साहित हुए और हमने ट्रैक के लिए पुख्ता इंतज़ाम कर काफी खरीददारी की और आठ अप्रैल के दिन सुबह पांच बजे अपने गंतव्य के लिए निकल पड़े। हमारी बस विकासनगर होते हुए डामटा पहुँची और यहाँ छोले-भठूरे, जलेबी और गरम चाय का आनंद लिया। बच्चे बार-बार बर्फ देखने के लिए उत्साहित थे और उत्सुकतावश पर्वत शिखरों को निहार रहे थे। गाने गाते, मस्ती करते पुरोला से आगे बढ़े। पता ही नहीं चला कब मोरी आ गया। हमने टोंस नदी के दीदार किये और हमने हनोल के महासू देवता के बारे में भी बात की क्योंकि इस क्षेत्र के लोगों का महासू देवता में बहुत ज्यादा विश्वास है।

मोरी के आस-पास हमने लोगों को सेब के बगीचों में काश्तकारों को काम करते हुए देखा। पिछले कुछ सालों से इस क्षेत्र के लोग हिमाचल की तर्ज़ पर सेब उत्पादन की दिशा में बढ़ रहे हैं। सेब और ट्रेकिंग लोगों का प्रमुख व्यवसाय बनने से लोगों के आय स्रोत बढ़े हैं। इस क्षेत्र के ज्यादातर युवाओं ने ‘ट्रेकिंग गाइड’ को अपना पेशा बनाया है।

शाम चार बजे हम सांकरी पहुँचे, वहाँ हम राणा जी के होम स्टे में रुके। चाय-पकोड़े खाकर बच्चों ने क्रिकेट खेला। ठण्ड

काफी बढ़ गयी थी और बिजली भी गुल हो गयी थी। धीरे-धीरे बूँदाबांदी ने हमारी टेंशन बढ़ा दिया कि अब अगले दिन की यात्रा कैसे होगी? खैर सुबह होने तक बारिश थम गयी और सुबह सात बजे अपना-अपना टिफ़िन पैक कर हमने जीप द्वारा करीब 14 किलोमीटर का सफ़र तय किया। तालुका तक सड़क अच्छी बनी है, उसके आगे बहुत ही खतरनाक है। जैसे-तैसे हरिनाम जपकर डरते-डरते सभी सीमा गाँव तक जीप से पहुँचे, उसके आगे सड़क का काम चल रहा था। यहाँ से आगे धाटमीर गाँव होते हुए हमने ओसला गाँव के नीचे सुपिन नदी में बने पुल को पारकर खड़ी चढ़ाई चढ़ते हुए अपने बेस कैम्प कलकत्तिधार पहुँचे। पुल के दायीं तरफ का ट्रैक रुईनसारा लेक और यमुनोत्ती के लिए निकल जाता है। बेस कैम्प में पहुँचते ही हल्की बारिश शुरू हो गयी थी। तापमान भी करीब २ डिग्री तक गिर गया था। अपने-अपने टेंट में स्लीपिंग बैग के अंदर घुस जाने का निर्देश पाकर हम सभी ने अपने को ठण्ड से बचाया। गाइड राणा जी और उनकी टीम ने गर्म सूप देकर ठण्ड से थोड़ी रहत पहुँचाई। एक टेंट डाइनिंग एरिया के रूप में सजाया गया था। डिनर कर हम सभी अच्छी नींद सो गए। रात को तापमान -४ डिग्री तक गिर गया था। सुबह करीब सात बजे हर की दून देखने की जिज्ञासा ने माँनो शरीर में प्राण फूँक दिए। मस्ती करते, बातें करते और सामने रुईनसारा की ओर ट्रैकर्स को देखते हम सभी अपने ट्रैक में आगे बढ़ते चले। कहीं उतार तो कहीं चढ़ाव लिए यह ट्रैक, ट्रैकर्स को दुर्गम नहीं तो आसान भी नहीं लगता है। कहीं-कहीं पर बर्फ दिखने से बच्चे खुशी से झूम उठे। करीब ५ घंटे ट्रैक कर हम 14 किलोमीटर चलकर आखिर में हर की दून पहुँचे। चारों ओर हिमाच्छादित चोटियाँ और ग्लेशियर देखकर तथा अपने को बर्फ में पाकर मन प्रफुल्लित हुआ। बच्चों ने बर्फ में खूब खेला।

करीब एक डेढ़ घंटा वहाँ रुकने के उपरांत हमने वापसी का ट्रैक शुरू किया। वापसी में बर्फबारी भी शुरू हो गयी, अपने रेनकोट पहनकर सभी सुरक्षित बेस कैम्प तक पहुँचे। अगले दिन मन में उठ रही जिज्ञासाओं और इस क्षेत्र के इतिहास को जानने के उद्देश्य से बच्चों ने क्षेत्रीय लोगों से कई प्रश्न पूछे। ‘अपने बच्चों को स्कूल भेजें’ कहकर हमने कई अभिभावकों से वार्ता की। हमारे बच्चों के साथ इस ट्रैक पर अन्य कई दल भी थे। कई प्रोफेशनल्स और विदेशी ट्रैकर्स से भी हमने वार्ता की और उनके उद्देश्य को भी जाना।

साँकरी से आगे तालुका, धाटमीर, धारकोट, गंगवार, पुवाढ़ि, और ओसला गाँव इस ट्रैक में आते हैं। सुपिन नदी के किनारे-किनारे आगे बढ़ते हुए ट्रैक का सफ़र रोमांचक होता है। जौन्धार ग्लेशियर ही सुपिन नदी का उद्गम है। यही नदी नैटवाड़ में रुपिन नदी से मिलकर टोंस नदी का निर्माण करती है। बाद में यह यमुना में मिल जाती है। हर की दून यानि “ईश्वर की घाटी” एक महत्वपूर्ण पौराणिक क्षेत्र है। इस क्षेत्र से पांडवों और कौरवों का भी इतिहास जुड़ा है।

अज्ञातवास के दिनों में पांडवों की शरण स्थली लाखामंडल भी इस क्षेत्र से काफी नज़दीक है। महाभारत युद्ध के बाद अपने संन्यासकाल में युधिष्ठिर जिस स्वर्ग रोहिणी से स्वर्ग गए वह पर्वतमाला भी हर की दून से बिल्कुल सामने दिख जाती है। इस तरह यह घाटी महाभारतकालीन मान्यताओं के लिए भी जानी जाती है।

मन में ट्रेक करने से पहले मन में सवाल उठा कि क्या यहाँ दुर्योधन की पूजा जाता है? इस सवाल को हमने कई क्षेत्रीय लोगों से पूछा। इस तथ्य के पीछे के इतिहास को जानने की कोशिश की।

नैटवाड़ में महान योद्धा कर्ण का मंदिर भी बना है। क्षेत्रीय लोग कर्ण मंदिर में पूजा अर्चना आज भी करते हैं। यानि लोग दुर्योधन का महाभारत युद्ध में साथ देने वाले की पूजा करते हैं। इसके पीछे जो भी कारण हों लेकिन दुर्योधन को देवता मानने वालों की संख्या आज भी कम नहीं है। हो सकता है उस काल में इस क्षेत्र के लोग दुर्योधन की तरफ से लड़े हों। जब मैंने इस ट्रैक के अंतिम गाँव ओसला के बुजुर्गों से गाँव में स्थित मंदिर के बारे में पूछा तो उन्होंने मुझे बताया कि गाँव में स्थित मंदिर सोमेश्वर भगवान का है और वे सभी शिव की पूजा करते हैं। उन्होंने बताया कि २२ गाँवों में सोमेश्वर भगवान की डोली जाती है, और यही उनके आराध्य हैं। जब मैंने पूछा कि दुर्योधन मंदिर कहाँ है? उन्होंने दबी जुबान से बताया कि दुर्योधन का मंदिर भी सोमेश्वर मंदिर के पास ही था लेकिन अब वह मंदिर इसी मंदिर में समाहित हो गया है। दुर्योधन की अब कोई मूर्ति नहीं है। जब यही प्रश्न नवयुवकों से पूछा तो उन्होंने दुर्योधन की पूजा और उसके मंदिर वाली बात को नकार दिया। उनका कहना था कि ट्रैकर्स ने यहाँ के इतिहास को गलत ढंग से पेश किया है।

हर की दून में ट्रैक गाइड जसपाल सिंह राणा ने बताया कि दुर्योधन को उनके बुजुर्ग सुयोधन नाम से बहुत मानते थे और उसकी वीरता का बखान भी करते थे। बचपन में कई गाने सुयोधन की वीरता और राजपाट पर क्षेत्रीय भाषा में उन्होंने अपने माँ-बाप से ही सुने। श्री राणा का कहना है कि दुर्योधन की पूजा अवश्य होती थी भले ही आज की पीढ़ी इस बात को नकार रही है। ट्रैक के किनारे जंगल में चाय की दुकान चलाने वाले कालू जुवांठा ने बताया कि सुयोधन को देवता का रूप अवश्य मिला, लेकिन समय के साथ यह मान्यता कम हो गयी है। हुड़के की थाप पर सुयोधन आता है या फिर और कोई लेकिन क्षेत्रीय देवता, प्रकट अवश्य होता है। जब हम ओसला गाँव में स्थित सोमेश्वर भगवान के मंदिर में दर्शन हेतु गए तो लोगों ने बताया कि आजकल भगवान सोमेश्वर जखौल गाँव में विराजमान हैं। मंदिर के पास में दो और मंदिरों को उन्होंने हमें स्टोर रूम बताया। हो सकता है कि वे दो स्टोर रूम सुयोधन के मंदिर हों। सुयोधन ने अवश्य इस क्षेत्र में कुछ अच्छे काम किये होंगे। तभी आज भी लोग उसे देवता मानने में परहेज नहीं करते हैं। पांच हजार साल पुरानी विरासत के अवशेष या पाण्डुलिपि तो उपलब्ध नहीं है अपितु किवंदती से ही रचा-बुना यह विश्वास है। गाँव के ही बुजुर्ग श्री राजू पंवार से भी जब यही प्रश्न बच्चों ने पूछा तो उन्होंने बताया कि राजाओं की पूजा तो सभी करते थे,

राजा में ईश्वरीय अंश होता है। दुर्योधन भी तो राजा ही थे। यानि उन्होंने दुर्योधन की पूजा होने वाली बात को स्वीकार किया। सूचना क्रांति के इस युग में महाभारत के किरदारों में दुर्योधन की भूमिका अत्यधिक नकारात्मक देखने को मिली, हो सकता है नयी पीढ़ी के लोगों ने जनमानस की भावना के अनुरूप ही अपनी सोच को रखना उचित समझा और अपने बुजुर्गों की मान्यता को तिलांजलि तभी दी हो। साथ ही ट्रैकर्स द्वारा लिखी गयी रिपोर्ट को गलत बताने का बीड़ा क्षेत्रवासियों ने उठाया हो। यही कारण रहा होगा कि दुर्योधन के मंदिर को सोमेश्वर भगवान के मंदिर में समाहित किया। खैर जो भी हो दुर्योधन की पूजा होती ज़रूर थी, भले ही आज लोग इस बात को एक मिथ्या कहकर टाल रहे हैं।

अब बारी थी दूसरे प्रश्न के उत्तर को खोजने की। क्या आज भी बहुपति प्रथा है? हमने गंगगवाड़ से ओसला को जा रहे ग्रामवासी श्री चतुर सिंह रावत से यह प्रश्न पूछा। उन्होंने बताया कि इस क्षेत्र में आज भी लोगों का पलायन न के बराबर हुआ है। खेतीबाड़ी, पशुपालन, जड़ी-बूटी और अब पर्यटन की वजह से लोग इस क्षेत्र विशेष में ही रमे रहते हैं। यही कारण है कि यदि दो या तीन भाईयों में उम्र का अंतर कम होता है तो एक भाई द्वारा ब्याही गयी दुल्हन सभी भाईयों की पत्नी होती है। इसका मुख्य कारण उन्होंने बताया कि इससे जानवरों और खेतीबाड़ी में बँटवारा नहीं होता है। गाइड जसपाल सिंह राणा ने भी हमें उनके गाँव के खच्चर पालक दो भाईयों से मिलाया। दोनों भाई अपनी पत्नी के साथ मिलजुलकर रह रहे हैं। हमने गाँव की ही एक बुजुर्ग महिला से इस प्रथा की अच्छाई और बुराई के बारे में बताने को कहा तो उन्होंने बताया कि गृहशांति का यह अचूक बाण था। उन्होंने पांच भाई पांडवों और द्रौपदी की कहानी हमें सुनाई।

बकरी चारा रहे रोशन जी ने बताया कि करीब २०-३० साल पहले शादी के लिए वर पक्ष को बहुत पैसा देना पड़ता था। आमदनी उन दिनों बहुत कम थी। जोड़-तोड़कर एक दुल्हन के लिए लड़के के परिवार वाले पैसा जमा कर लेते थे, बाकी बेटों की दुल्हन के लिए पैसा नहीं जुटा पाते थे। इसलिए बहु-पति प्रथा थी। अब बहु-पति प्रथा गिने-चुने परिवारों में ही है।

महिला सशक्तीकरण और शिक्षाक्रान्ति के इस युग में बहु-पति प्रथा का प्रचलन होना हर सुनने वाले को गलत लगता है, वहीं इस क्षेत्र के लोग भी इस प्रथा को नकारते हैं। आज के सुशिक्षित और सभ्य समाज में यह प्रथा बिल्कुल भी मान्य नहीं है। मानव जीवन विकास के पथ पर अग्रसर है, समाज में व्याप्त कई कुप्रथाओं का उन्मूलन समय के साथ हुआ है। मेरा विश्वास है कि इस कुप्रथा का भी उन्मूलन अवश्य होगा। 'ईश्वर की घाटी' शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, व्यापार, पर्यटन, बिजली उत्पादन, आदि अनेकों क्षेत्रों में प्रगति करेगी।

इस तरह तीन दिन में हमने कुल ४६ किलोमीटर का ट्रैक किया। हरे-भरे पहाड़ों, पीले-पीले सरसों के फूलों से रंगमयी घाटी, कलकल बहती सुपिन, मोनाल की चहचहाहट, हिमनद, बकरियों का मिमियाना, खच्चरों की घंटिका आदि सबकुछ आँखों के सामने एक चलचित्र की भाँति आ-जा रहे हैं और 'हर की दून' ट्रैक की गुदगुदी सी महसूस हो रही है।

The Week Gone By

Arjun Prakash

“When you can’t make them see the light, make them feel the heat.”

The week began with a horde of visitors on campus, as School hosted the BSAI leadership workshop for prefects in boarding schools around the country. As lectures and discussions became the Auditorium’s focal point, the Inter-House hockey competition commenced in full swing — with a record number of players being seen giving their all under the scorching sun. Amidst the relentless heat however, cries of victories and tears of joy have been quite the commodity in our sports teams, with another

historic *Afzals* triumph adding to the double hockey surge. Our school lives are about the small moments that make it worthwhile, and those three-pointers with the entire School going wild will have a special place in our memories for time to come.

Looking at the time to come, this Sunday’s inauguratory triathlon is gearing up for a fierce battle of pull, sprint and wheel.

The summer weather has forced Doscors to roll up their sleeves, and perhaps pull up their socks as well — since assessment week has caught us in the thick of a plethora of activities. Everyone seems to be running from one place to another, trying to catch a few moments of shut-eye amidst it all, but our fears of being inadequate to our house, and our ourselves even, is unknowingly pushing us to end this term on a strong note.

As one bunch of Sc-Leavers grind through their last bout with IB, the School’s ISC results proved to be a mixed bag of high highs and lower lows. All in all though, It is important to appreciate the work they’ve put in alongside our Masters, and long may their success continue beyond the confines of these walls.

Dear reader, as we head into the last two weeks of what’s been a jam-packed term, I hope today’s section offers a momentary pause — for reflection and recovery, because we all know that the last two feel like the longest few, and if you don’t believe me, check out the end of term schedule outside the DHM’s office. So grab your lemon ORS and strap in for what is going to be a rollercoaster of events, right from the Old Boys’ hockey match to the 12x25 swimming relay. Until next time!

Wordsearch | Prime Ministers

Clues:

- 1. This Prime Minister was assassinated by her bodyguards in 1984.
- 2. The first Prime Minister of India.
- 3. The Prime Minister who was in office during the Kargil War in 1999.
- 4. This Prime Minister implemented the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India.
- 5. The holder of the office of the Prime Minister during the 2008 Mumbai attacks.
- 6. The shortest term was served by this Prime Minister.
- 7. The economic liberalization of India in 1991 is credited to this Prime Minister.
- 8. This Prime Minister announced the “Operation Flood” program to increase milk production.
- 9. This Prime Minister introduced the concept of *Panchayati Raj* (local self-governance) in rural India.
- 10. The demonetization of high-denomination currency notes in 1978 was announced and looked over by this Prime Minister.

R N J I I O M P P H L P M N S W H L L B
F P N R H O A C F W Y C G G V P Q L Q Z
L I N T D A T V Z Z Q F P I W S T V I Z
N I D S N R A P Q P B R T S U I I C Q S
Z F Y A A A L E G W M M I O T D T Y A F
C H L H G H B V N T S W I J N O Q I O M
E N M S V M I R O A Y T A I F M J H M A
V Y C R I I H H A Q Q B S S D A Z D L E
F T H U J S A G A S M N E D E R Y N D C
P M A D A A R O N V M C D F J D I A Y E
M A R A R R I S E I I Q I M I N H G Y I
S K A H D A V D H X S J J X X E M A P H
B I N A J N A G R Y C N R E A R V R L I
S G S B E R J P U K J A A C U A E I E T
G A I L I I P V W N F E R H S N J D E H
V X N A M L A U Y Y R A O L O T A N S D
R L G L J F Y B R Z N Z M M B M O I L I
X S H S S C E M B E L I R R Z Z N D A X
N Z B V R B E V F R G N W X X J F A V N
L M U Q V S S Q P K S Z Z E N Y N O M H

1. Indira Gandhi	4. Narendra Modi	8. Lal Bahadur
2. Nehru	5. Manmohan Singh	9. Rajiv Gandhi
3. Atal Bihari	6. Charan Singh	10. Morarji Desai
Vajpayee	7. Narasimha Rao	

Answers to this week's wordsearch:

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