

Established in 1936

The Doon School WEEKLY

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

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Power and Press

The Doon School Weekly interviewed Mr Aroon Purie, the Chief Guest at the 90th Founder's Day.

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): How did your time in School motivate you to pursue journalism?

Aroon Purie (ARP): When I was in School, I had no idea about journalism, since in my time, the only respectable choices were to become a doctor or an engineer. Yet my dad told me to become an accountant because he thought that, as India was heavily into socialism in the sixties, India would soon become a communist country. He said you'd better become an accountant. So I went to the London School of Economics, became a chartered accountant and worked as an auditor for several years. And even though I hated it, I kept doing it. I came back to India to find that my dad, who was then in film financing, had started a press called the Thompson Press with Roy Thompson, a gentleman he had met by accident. I eventually started running it and realised that the only way we could sustain profits was to do our own work, and that's how I joined the media and decided to pursue journalism.

DSW: You've previously cautioned about the problems that billionaire channels pose. Logically, for a news channel, the money has to come from somewhere, so how can one stand up for editorial independence, especially when large corporations and the government seek to skew news?



ARP: I've always believed that although journalism has a social responsibility, it's also a business. This means that you have to be strong in your finances. And sadly, the main lifeblood of all media in India is advertising, because, traditionally, media has been very cheap there. You get one of the most prominent newspapers for as little as two rupees...

And you get more for its value in *raddi*, that is, the money you get when the guy comes to collect newspapers from your home at the end of the week. So the Indian consumer basically not only gets the newspaper free but also makes a profit from it.

Even the news channels, the broadcaster gets nothing from the cable operator. In fact, it has to pay carriage fees to make it available to the consumer. And after the

internet came, it got even worse because everything was available. So, you are totally dependant on advertising.

DSW: Speaking about editorial independence, has there ever been a moment where taking the right action came at a cost? How did you decide whether it was worth it?

ARP: Of course, these kinds of issues come up often. Fortunately, in my life, I've always had strong financial balance sheets. And I have been able to withstand pressures. Two big business houses banned advertising in the India Trade Group for five years, because they didn't like what we had written in one of the magazines. But because we had strong financials, we rode it out, and eventually they came back.

DSW: You've been the first Asian

(Continued on Page 3)

This Week in History

1632 CE: The Dutch microscopist Antonie van Leeuwenhoek is born.

1929 CE: The first day of real panic in the Crash of 1929, known as “Black Thursday,” takes place.

1945 CE: The United Nations Charter is established at the end of World War II to ensure global peace.

1956 CE: The Hungarian Revolution begins with a massive demonstration in Budapest.

1964 CE: French philosopher and writer Jean-Paul Sartre becomes the first person to decline the Nobel Prize for Literature.

2008 CE: India launches its first lunar space probe, Chandrayaan-1.

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

Is your birthday on 39 Jan?
Rehhan Chadha, date wizard.

I want to be coconut Prefect.
Aditya Koradia, the ideal public school boy.

Cations are sensitive.
AKM, chemical therapist.

The Taliban is a boy band.
Agniv Acharjya, living under a rock.

Around the World in 80 Words

The Louvre Museum reopened three days after a \$100 million jewel heist, with major investigations in progress. Peru declared a 30-day state of emergency in Lima to curb and tackle rising crime. Delhi became the world’s most polluted major city after this year’s Diwali celebrations. President Droupadi Murmu’s helicopter sank partially into a helipad while she was landing in Kerala. SpaceX reached a major milestone by launching its 10,000th Starlink satellite, advancing global internet coverage and connectivity worldwide.

THE WHO?

Who is Marshall Bruce Mathers III?

Anvit Agrawal: A Lawyer
Vivaan Kumbhat: A Baseball Player
Anhad Sarin: An F1 Driver
Adhyayan Rajgarhia: A Basketball Player

Marshall Bruce Mathers III, known as **Eminem**, is an **American rapper and record producer** regarded as one of the greatest in hip-hop. Born on October 17, 1972, in Missouri, he rose to fame in the late 1990s. His alter ego, “Slim Shady” and albums like *The Marshall Mathers LP* made him a global icon, **earning multiple Grammys and an Academy Award.**

MICROFICTION

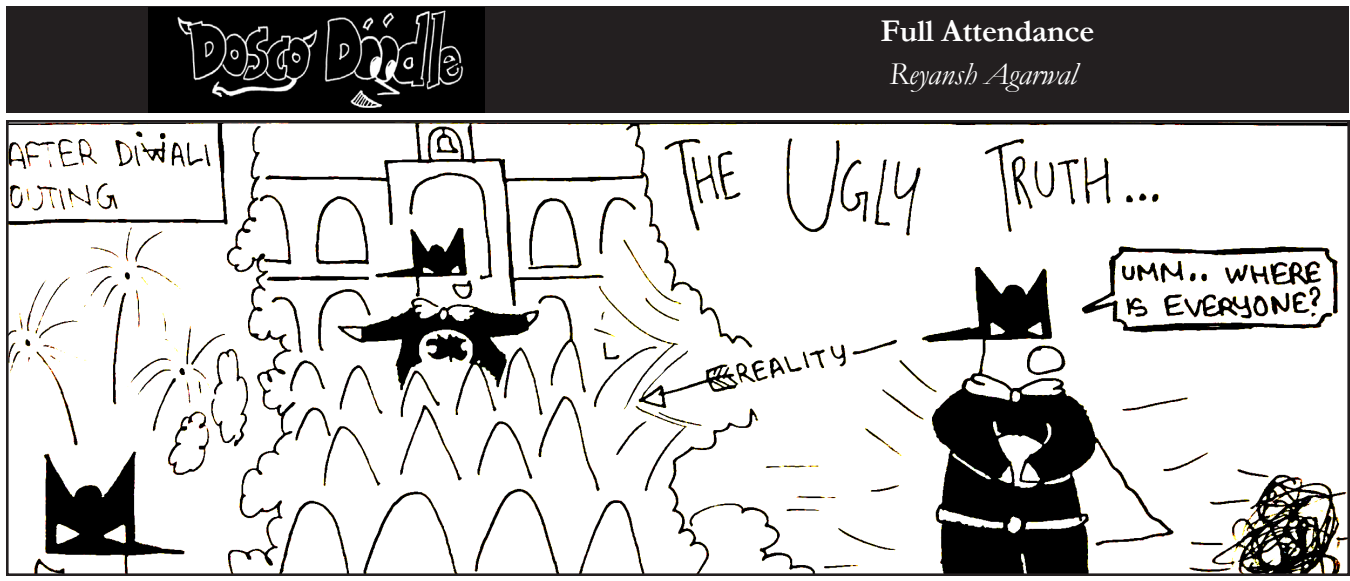
You wake up, chest heaving under the weight of a thousand burning cinders as you struggle to breathe, a fiery flame burning fiercely in your lungs as you lie on the thundering sheet of ice below. You are floating, water roaring somewhere beneath you, and yet you are drowning, drowning under the weight of sorrow and guilt pent up in your chest. You struggle to your feet, gasping with the effort, almost tipping the sheet of ice off-balance, blinded by the flying snow all around you. You scan your surroundings — just water, water, and - air? Thin air. Thin air disappearing into a black void, a black void filled with your fleeting screams as you tumble into the unknown depths below.

- Kahaan Vadodaria

“

Remember that no matter how cool you think you may be, you’re not cool enough to look down on anyone... ever.

—
Paul Walker



(Continued from Page 1)

to chair the FIPP. What unique strengths or weaknesses did you notice about Indian media and how it's perceived globally? Is there anything we can do to close this gap?

ARP: Indian media is very vibrant, in the sense that the number of news channels and publications we have is unmatched by any country in the world. We have almost four hundred 24-hour news channels, it's unbelievable! Abroad, you'll have only a few 24-hour news channels. In Delhi itself, I get 10 English newspapers, and there are several regional language newspapers too. So, you have a vast media ecosystem in India.

But the problem, as I said, is that consumers do not pay enough for it. So, there's an over-dependence on advertising. It all comes down to producing content that people are willing to pay for. So, whether you're on the internet, in a magazine, or in any other form, you have to attract the consumer to pay. Like *The New York Times* has subscriptions. Its subscriptions exceed its print circulation. Also, there's a science to how you market digitally.

DSW: Just now, you said there are more than four hundred 24-hour news channels in India. Doesn't that cause a huge problem with so much fake news and misinformation?

ARP: Yes, it does. That's what I said -the billionaire news channels are not there for the business. They are there for influence and access, and many other smaller channels are the same. This is when they cease to be called a news channel, as they then start blackmailing politicians and so on. The ethics of the news channel, of being in the news business, have been corrupted.

And that is a problem in India now. How do you deal with it? I don't know. Because you need to have freedom of the press. Anybody can start a business, but you must have the ethical values that are required to ensure trust and transparency.

DSW: With the advent of AI journalism, we have also seen a rise in misinformation. And you know, these AI engines often hallucinate. So, many people believe this has jeopardised journalistic integrity. Because many publications are simply

opting to use AI-generated pages instead. So, knowing that your group launched SANA, which is India's first AI news anchor, how do you navigate the possible problems of AI journalism? And how do you make sure you utilise the positive aspects of it?

ARP: Journalism depends on credibility, which comes from trust. That's where legacy and brand matter. Influencers can't always be trusted — you don't know who's paying them or what they're promoting. Legacy brands have an advantage because readers trust their credibility and professionalism.

One major challenge today is that tech companies like Facebook, Google, and YouTube aren't treated as publishers but as platforms. If I publish something defamatory, I'm liable — but they aren't. They hide behind "safe harbour," which is unfair. These tech giants are now the biggest media companies in India, taking nearly 70% of ad revenue — thousands of crores — creating huge pressure on the media ecosystem.

Borrowed Time

Uday Thakran

Creative

They say I have time.
Three more years of uniforms,
Of running late to breakfast
And pretending I'm not.

But some days,
I catch a senior staring out their study's window,
And I wonder —
How does someone pack up
A version of themselves
That only lived here?

I still get annoyed at night pracs,
Still fake excuses for missed PT,
Still joke that I want to go home —
But I don't, not really.

Because deep down,
I know the day's coming
When I'll walk past this place

And not be allowed in.
And maybe that's what scares me most
Not leaving,
But leaving behind
A version of myself I can't take with me.

Screens and Stories

The Doon School Weekly interviewed Mr Ali Fazal, a world-renowned actor on his visit to School.

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): What distinctions can you make between Hollywood and Bollywood, in terms of the style and nuance of the industry?

Mr Ali Fazal (AFL): The economies to begin with, Bollywood caters to particular belts within the Indian region. A typical Hollywood production, on the other hand, goes global instantly, and the scales are different. I am primarily referring to studio films here. But I also like to think that over time, we are inching towards closing those gaps because the world keeps getting smaller, and the democracy in the festival circuits allows filmmakers from all over the world to come and showcase their work. The ones that get out and make the awards become successes. And big ones, too. With our own homegrown film, *Girls Will Be Girls* or Payal Kapadia's *All We Imagine As Light*, making waves globally last year, we aren't very far from just being different in flavour but excelling in all other avenues when it comes to filmmaking. Of course, both sides also have their usual commercial jargon that runs the crowds... sometimes formulaic, but undoubtedly proficient in money-making.

DSW: What has your experience been with sensationalism dominating the Bollywood industry and the blockbusters always taking centre stage? What drives the smaller producers and actors to keep going despite the risk of limited traction?

AFL: India is a very interesting country, and by that, I mean through its people, of course. We love and hate our heroes with equal *gusto*, which I think speaks volumes of our sheer capacity to love but also sheds light on the fickleness of acceptance and flavour... God forbid we lose a World Cup final and the players' effigies are seen burnt out on the roads. WhatsApp groups go wild with hate, and, of course, politically, this crutch in our collective sentiment has been exploited on many occasions.

So when it comes to Bollywood, it's the easiest thing to do, pick and judge the world of 'glam', which leads to questions spurring in the filmmaker's mind: is it a true mirror of a society? Or must it be? Or how dare they (the audience)? We don't quite know. So while we debate that, the audiences rely on nostalgia and what's worked for us in the past, and therefore the big blockbusters either transport the audiences to a time known, or they pump enough adrenaline into a working class unit on the weekend 7 PM *matinée*, that it sets the tone for the week long *ghisaai* at the behest of the corporations funding these exorbitant cinema ticket prices.

But, mind you, at the heart of it all, we are all storytellers here in the film industry. Some tell tales of the past, some show up in the mirrors... and some bend to power and project a forced nationalism. The small films find safe havens on OTT platforms, while the big ones gamble on the mere fourteen thousand odd screens we have in our country. I work globally, so maybe sometimes I anticipate the film's future... but we are all 'indie' until we are not.

DSW: Did your time in Doon shape the course of your acting career in any way? If so, how?

AFL: It truly did. Quite literally. I broke my shoulder, which got me more involved in drama and other cultural pursuits. I fancied a spot on the basketball team for India — glad that didn't pan out, because I am happy where I am. I found the discipline of sport in acting... and it's a space that keeps you grounded because relevance is such a drive in my world. Doon gave me what I could not have ever imagined, a sense of individuality and the spirit of teamwork, all at the same time.

This capsule, which is the Doon School, keeps a time in my life very safe and secure, a time I cherish very much. This was a time I learnt how to observe, empathise, learn, listen... share grief, happiness and everything else, really. Every time my mother left, I knew I had a friend sitting in the dorm somewhere, absolutely familiar with what I was feeling because he, too, had just bid goodbye to his folks. That, I suppose, teaches you to observe how you feel when you have to let go.

As an actor, that's the hardest thing to do, and yet we must learn to let go. Our characters stay with us, or at least some parts of them do, and also a part of myself chips away with every part I play. It's a mutual deterioration of sorts. Who knows, really? But, to answer truthfully, Doon is a home I carry with me most places in the world.



Hashtags Over Humanity

Samar Singh critiques the widespread hypocrisy surrounding global crises.

"You fasten all the triggers

For the others to fire

Then you sit back and watch"

This unforgettable lyric by the legendary artist Bob Dylan perfectly encapsulates the state of the world right now; we share messages in support of Ukraine, debate about issues like the Israel-Palestine conflict endlessly, but never once do we notice that the chocolate we are eating might actually be a product of the child labour itself. In today's age, where everyone thinks they are self-aware because they are standing up for exhibitionist morality, we often tend to forget that we might actually be supporting this immorality in the first place. We often forget to realise that our moral compass itself is plagued with selective and shallow morality. Today's society has become self-righteous; we may act morally when it is convenient, but we also quietly become complacent when it comes to daily injustice. The common person is slowly losing the power to actually make a lasting change. While some conflicts might get lots of media coverage, other equally critical crises often get overlooked. For example, while the Ukraine-Russia conflict was prioritised by the media, equally important conflicts, like the civil wars in Sudan or Yemen, barely reached the people. The media is becoming more and more westernised day by day, with only conflicts of Western allies or rivals being given preference.

We are very good at condemning injustice happening anywhere in the world, while we don't even think twice before enabling it ourselves at home.

While the death toll in Yemen keeps rising, its coverage critiques the widespread hypocrisy surrounding global crises. Adding to this, the common man is also unable to find a medium to convey his thoughts, with boycotts seeming less useful in today's globalised world. is still a fraction of that of Ukraine. This unequal empathy truly shows how we may not be as righteous as we think we are. We are slowly moving towards a world where righteousness has become selective and priority has become based on popularity and convenience. This selective morality is not just limited to foreign policy; its purview also extends to something as normal as the everyday products we consume. The world is becoming increasingly

hypocritical when it comes to everyday life. We are consuming goods contrary to our belief systems. We eat chocolates made from places like the Ivory Coast or Ghana, ignoring the fact that the chocolate is actually produced through child labour. The phones we use are made from minerals like cobalt, which are mined in places like Congo, where exploitation of labour is almost the norm. It is ironic that while we voice concerns over how a certain country is abusing human rights, we ourselves have no problem in indirectly funding this exploitation.

We often forget to realise that our moral compass itself is plagued with selective and shallow morality.

We are good at condemning injustice happening anywhere in the world, while we don't even think twice before enabling it ourselves at home. The common person is also unable to find a medium to convey his thoughts, with boycotts seeming less useful in today's globalised world. The average person has been feeling increasingly powerless day by day. Once a weapon of the masses, boycotts now seem futile as they do not actually affect multinationals as much. For example, Nestlé has faced numerous boycotts over child labour, but child labour continues on, and Nestlé remains one of the most profitable food corporations. While social media has served as an outlet for rage, this rage is often expressed in symbolic gestures rather than real actions. This powerlessness has led the citizens to retreat into the comforts of self-righteous speech over real, sustained action. Despite all these concerns, self-righteousness is still widespread as people still cling to it due to its fake comfort. This creates an illusion where even a hashtag on social media is appreciated by society, making people feel that they are still doing the right thing despite the unimportance of their actions, further leading to self-righteousness. We still cling to self-righteousness just due to its fake comfort, even though we may not be achieving much. Today, our world is simply marked by selective morality, daily hypocrisy, the acceptance of the powerlessness of the common man, and the societal acceptance of self-righteousness. The problem does not lie in the fact that we are immoral; it lies in the fact that we are comfortable in self-righteousness. We must learn to fight injustice not selectively, but through a proper moral compass, and be the ones who truly make a difference.

The Week Gone By

Krish Agrawal

Admittedly, I am not as experienced as my counterparts in terms of writing this section. But after cramming ten college essays in three days, I'm starting to feel like I was born for this. It's rather ironic, however, that the one week I finally got to write *The Week Gone By*, we were sitting in the comfort of our homes, far away from the sweets in our Masters' residences. Not far enough though, considering that the annual outbreak of the *Divali Virus* managed to arrive right on cue. Symptoms include a sudden need for a "Doctor's appointment" and an inexplicable spike in body temperature exactly a day before departure for School. Clearly, people were far too exhausted

from the 'hyped-up' DS90 finally ending. All the performances, the drone show, and the overeating at the *Gymkhana* stalls, post which you could spend another three days watching stories about said Drone Show on Instagram.

As a result, Thursday dinner was a rather empty affair, save for the S Form tables filled with hopefuls, as we approach that special time of the year. Speaking of which, the fraction of Sc Form that has returned seems to be clambering about in the Careers Department, polishing the best essay versions of themselves ahead of the EA/ED deadlines. However, as a whole, the few that have returned are being duly rewarded with a special feast later today.

And yet, even as it feels like the term has already begun playing its outro track, it isn't quite over just yet. Somehow, there's still 'Baski' and the Tiger's Inter-House to be played, and the ghastly presence

of Trials lurking over the horizon. Remember though, that spending all your time in the Careers Office only raises the bar for yourself in November so make sure you spend ample time at your Toye as well.

So, in case you plan to kick back, sit, and relax, you may want to remember the promises you made to your parents during the break. If you don't, you may also unlock the post-credit scene, a special stay back in School. However, we've heard this ~~threat~~ story quite a few times, and I'm afraid it just might be a myth.

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to bid farewell, as this will be my last contribution to this publication. It has been my pleasure and privilege to serve this publication and its readership. Just in case I don't see you again: good afternoon, good evening, and good night!

Sudoku

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

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

Key:

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