

The Doon School WEEKLY

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

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DESERT'S EMBRACE

On personal identity, the natural world, and legacy.

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A book review on the scandalous and fascinating *The 48 Laws of Power*.

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Into the Jungle

The Doon School Weekly interviewed Dr Jagmohan Sharma, the Director of the Indira Gandhi Forest Research Institute.

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Given that you had a background grounded in chemistry, what motivated you to join the IFS? What motivated you to make the atypical switch and join the civil services?

Dr Jagmohan Sharma (JSH): I have a technical qualification in Chemistry, which I received from IIT Kanpur. Then, I went to IG Pradakpur and pursued a Master's degree in technology and polymers, and was soon recruited by a tyre company. The idea of joining the Services was something that never crossed my mind. Yet at that time, civil services were highly talked about and sought after as employment avenues. Lakhs of fresh graduates aspired to join civil services with each batch. So, like the rest, I also took the Civil Service examination and was selected for the Forest Service. This was an All India service. After selections were made, the government sent new officers all over the country to keep the whole country's fabric intact. So I was selected and I joined. However, the life I experienced was quite different. It was a life of outdoor activities, interacting with nature, not the load of paperwork I had expected. Just like anyone else, I was drawn into the charm of working with

forests and nature. The people around me had a far deeper emotional attachment to nature as well. So that's how I entered the Forest Service. I would say my journey was not very structured, but once I got into it, I found it immensely exciting and engaging. Today, I am glad to have had over three decades of experience in this field.

The coexistence of people and forests has been debated for several decades. This coexistence has always been unique and interesting. Government policies now aim to ensure voluntary relocation so that the area can be fully preserved.

DSW: You have spent over three decades in the Forest Service; what is the most challenging or the most interesting task you have ever undertaken?

JSH: During my time in the Forest Service, I have faced several

obstacles. Out of the several instances, right off the top of my head, was when I was an officer in charge of a national park. That national park spanned over 600 square kilometers and was home to several tigers, alongside a number of other species. It was my responsibility to keep that area intact, as well as manage it for various other values, including water. Water is an essential element of nature. You do not always have an adequate fresh water supply available. There are certain standards you must uphold to ensure basic requirements are met. But, as an officer in charge, if you find that the availability of water is decreasing, and you are accountable for this, you may be unsure of what to do. Posting was our first solution. One type of posting is a natural pump. Other kinds of postings we have done involve regenerating areas to undertake planting work. Additionally, there are people living inside the forest. The coexistence of people and forests has been debated for several decades. This coexistence has always been unique and interesting. Government policies now aim to ensure voluntary relocation so that the area can be fully preserved. This process requires deliberation on economic,

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This Week in History

1787 CE: The final draft of the U.S. Constitution is signed by delegates at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

1810 CE: Miguel Hidalgo issues the ‘Grito de Dolores,’ marking the beginning of the Mexican War of Independence against Spain.

1935 CE: The Nuremberg Laws are enforced in Germany, legalising discrimination against Jews and other minorities.

THE WHO?

Who is Isis Gaston?

- Neerav Agarwal: A Dancer
- Samarth Agarwal: A Model
- Aryaman Shilswal: An Actress
- Aditya Agrawal: An F1 Driver

Isis Naija Gaston, better known as **Ice Spice**, is an **American rapper and songwriter**. Renowned for songs like ‘**Did it First**’ and ‘**Munch**,’ she is considered to be one of the most promising up-and-coming rap artists.

“

The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honourable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.

—
Ralph Emerson

LISTENER'S CHECKLIST

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

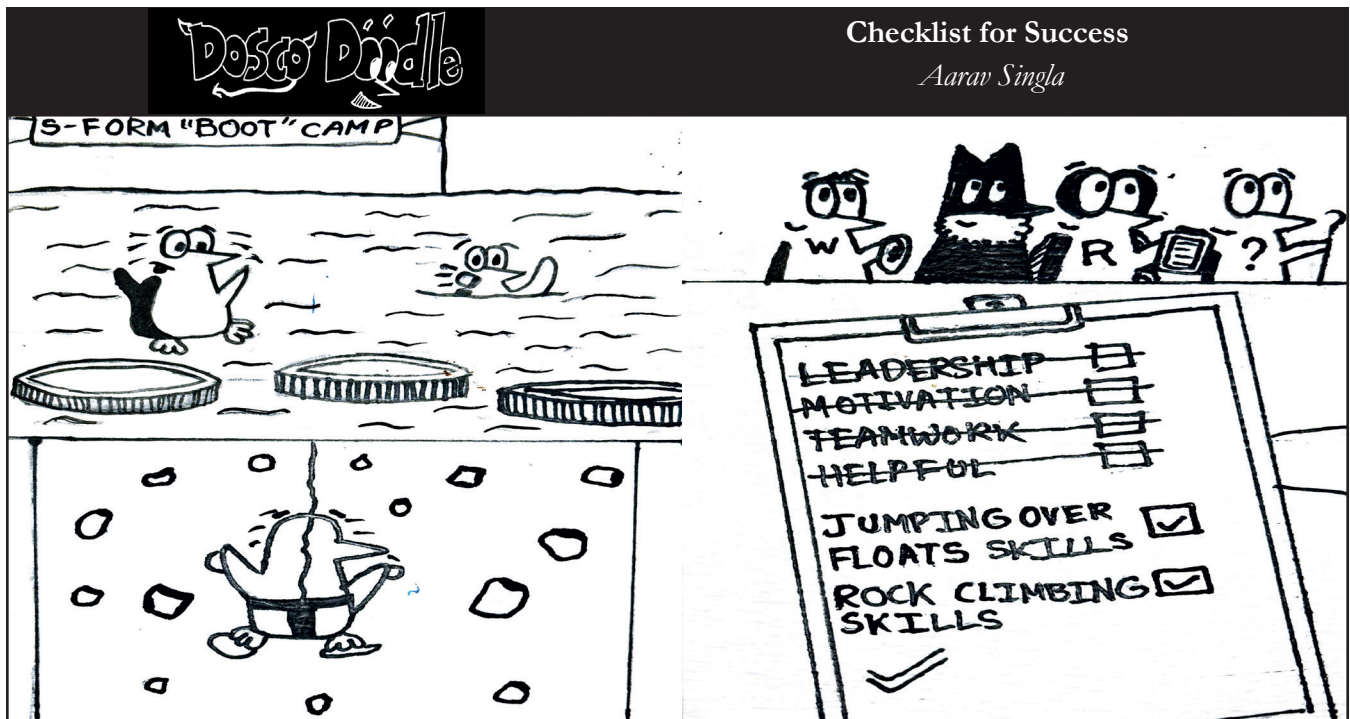
- Abhijit Sannamanda:** *Popa* by Ice Spice
- Krish Ghai:** *The Emptiness Machine* by Linkin Park
- Anantvikram Sinh:** *Ain't No Sunshine* by Bill Withers
- Raghav Walia:** *Mo Bamba* by Sheck Wes
- Vedanshh Dewan:** *Shake it Off* by Taylor Swift

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

- Anemic is anime character.*
- Aditya Koradia**, weeb.
I'm putting in the placing.
- Rehhan Chadha**, EiC material.
Shut your teeth.
- ABE**, the silencer.
Words speak louder than action.
- HM**, talking the walk.
My family is the only family in my entire family.
- Udai Singh**, the family guy.
Be colourful but don't be coloured.
- MIA**, making America great again.
I have to prove that I'm better at her than English.
- Loechin Phangcho**, Shakespeare already.
'Khana' is just another way to eat food.
- Aaditya Agarwal**, eating: The Indian Way.

Around the World in 80 Words

Twelve people were killed and over 2,750 others were injured after pagers used by Hezbollah members exploded in Lebanon and Syria. Following the resignation of Arvind Kejriwal, Atishi Marlena became the new Chief Minister of Delhi. A proposal to simultaneously conduct the Lok Sabha and state polls elections was approved by the Union Cabinet under the name “One Nation, One Election” and is to come into effect in 2029. Brazil beat Croatia 8-1 in the FIFA Futsal World Cup.



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sociological, and rehabilitation issues. It involves uprooting people, their livelihoods, and all that it entails. Global climate change is another issue the Forest Service must address on a national level. To ensure that invaluable resources like air are not commodified, as water is, we need to take care today. The country has a national clean air programme, which addresses particulate matter, such as particles that are 2.5 micrometres and less, which are detrimental to human health. The Forest Service encompasses all these aspects. I had the opportunity to work in all these positions. My final position involves providing training to new officers entering the Service and grooming them for the future. As the country aspires to become a developed nation by 2047, with initiatives like 'Viksit Bharat,' someone has to drive that progress. Those currently in charge must drive that process,

such that these new officers will eventually join those efforts and contribute to the country's transition from its current income level of about \$2,800 to \$12,000.

Different people have different interests, which often make policy making go in various directions, but we have to trust the system we are in, such that we can flourish together.

DSW: As you mentioned, you have been a bureaucrat for over three decades and have been involved in policy making. Have there been instances where you

had to make decisions due to political pressure that were not in alignment with scientific evidence or on-ground evidence? If so, how did you tackle such political pressure, considering that, as a bureaucrat, you have to work with both scientific evidence and political pressures?

JSH: The system of governance in this country is democratic under which we strive to consider everyone's interests and generally go by the majority view. There is a system of discussion that makes sense and leads to decision-making. Different people have different interests, which often make policy making go in various directions, but we have to trust the system we are in, such that we can flourish together.

Desert's Embrace

Aadvik Agarwal

This night knows me
This moon is serene to me
Do I know them?

The trees call my name
The sun greets me
Do I know them?

This road takes me not home
But somewhere far away
A barren desert surrounds me
Does it know me?

At the turn be sand
None to behold, but still, I wonder
Does it know me?

Drops of rain find Earth
Flowers bloom, green everywhere
Washed away with the Earth, my embrace
Shall I be remembered?

A New Dawn

Nedish Anand

As this whimsical wind,
Rips through these lush trees.
When God stops his bleed,
And around these puzzling lakes;
frogs rejoice.

When the drizzle
Kisses the ground awake.
And a sun which rises;
With hopes that abide.

When the darling buds of May,
Make mankind meet with resilience.
In that objective of freedom;
I am yet, only granted peace.

Is Discipline Best Enforced Through School Sanctions?



Jason Patel

“At his best, man is the noblest of all animals; separated from law and justice, he is the worst.” – Aristotle.

Every society, whether governed by formal laws or informal norms, is structured around rules and consequences for disobedience. This fundamental principle underpins judicial systems across the world. Similarly, when a student enters School, they are placed into a framework that has evolved over 89 years. Yet, to the young boy, Chandbagh may feel like just another school, its prestige not yet realised. Respect for the system develops over time — a fact that any Senior would readily attest to.

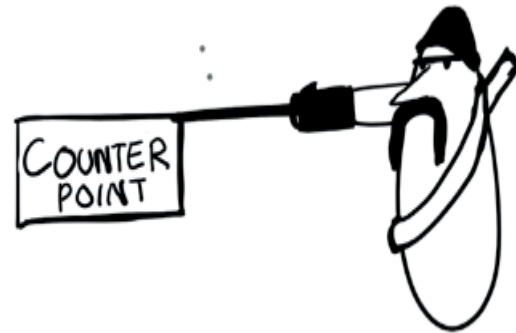
As much as I used to curse the Prefects during my D Form days for imposing sanctions on my Batch or me, I now stand on the receiving end of those ‘colourful’ wishes and looks from across the CDH. Life does indeed come full circle. Looking back, if those Change-in-Breaks or Extra PTs hadn’t been given, we would have lacked the self-control that is now ingrained within us. We learned self-discipline through understanding the consequences of our improper behaviour. Whether through a six-to-six or an essay, sanctions taught us not only the importance of upholding discipline but also how to distinguish between right and wrong — an essential virtue every Dosco must develop.

Then, might one question the standing of the Sc Form, who are conveniently exempted from every punishment? The answer very simply would be: with age comes a greater personal responsibility and accountability for one’s actions. Sanctions remain more relevant for younger students who are still learning boundaries and where to draw the line. By the time they reach their Senior years, they are expected to have internalised these lessons. Failure to do so results in interventions by their respective Housemasters.

As far as the Prefects are concerned, disdain towards authority is a natural human trait, especially in one’s rebellious teenage years. Perception of these

21 Prefects differs from Form to Form but speaking from my own experience, it only gets better once you start recognising their duties as role models and not enforcers, guiding and inspiring Doscos. Moreover, sanctions in School aren’t court-like (thankfully), which simply means that after punishments are carried out, Prefects tend to sit with the boys, counselling and guiding them in altering their behaviours. The Extra PT also comes with ‘Extra love’ the next day.

To conclude, sanctions are not given for the sake of punishment, but with an aim to teach young Doscos to distinguish between the right and the wrong, to teach them to remain accountable for their actions and remain true to their values when no one is watching. A small amount of reprimanding for the greater good of behaviour and discipline goes a long way.



Arish Talwar

Discipline is one of the pillars of our School and something that we take immense pride in. Hence, the question arises, is this discipline out of respect for this great institution, or out of fear of sanctions? Or more aptly, which one should it be? Well, I believe it should be the former. Unfortunately, we aren’t quite there yet. School has always had a rich tradition of maintaining discipline through the ‘charter’ of sanctions, but there has always been a question on whether it is really necessary. To what magnitude is it really necessary? We have seen this play out in the form of ‘no-sanctions week,’ but that just always seems to fizzle out. I’m sure every scientist would be rolling in their graves if I were to cite this singular week as definitive evidence to point towards the futility of sanctions, condemning my scientific method, but the fact remains. And it is not really anyone’s fault. The moment we enter School, from D Form itself, we encounter this unfamiliar system that teaches us to maintain discipline out of the fear of sanctions, and soon, we become nothing but a slave to this system, just like the ones before us, the ones before them and

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so on.

The problem with enforcing discipline primarily through School sanctions is two-fold. Firstly, to discourage bad behaviour with punishments is to create a Pavlovian association between the two; misbehaviour always results in punishment and sanctions. What this then achieves is two things. Firstly, it breeds a sense of disdain towards Prefects in general. It creates the perception that Prefects are just the executioners carrying out orders. But secondly then, it fosters a malignant sense of opportunity every time the absence of Prefects is seen. Examples include suspiciously low attendance at *call-overs* during Socials. It is also likely a major reason why misbehaviour increases up the ladder, with Prefects often having lesser control over an S Former than they do over a C Former. It propels a narrative that one should only shun misbehaviour due to these sanctions.

Secondly, it distracts from the root purpose of discipline. While the general public perceives this enforcement of discipline scornfully, considering it a form of pretence to the outside world, discipline is actually a very important attribute to be imbibed. Discipline teaches the values of self control, integrity, and leads the way to general success. To push the narrative that discipline should be adhered lest you get a *four-sign*, is to stray from this.

Cheat Codes to Power

Anvit Agrawal reviews *The 48 Laws of Power* by Robert Greene.

If the 'crow-like' Kautilya, Sun Tzu and Machiavelli hosted a dinner for history's greatest tacticians and thinkers, Robert Greene would be the one slyly slipping out the invitations. 'The 48 Laws of Power' is the definitive handbook for anyone fascinated by the enduring game of influence, manipulation, and ambition, all delivered in a sleek narrative of ruthless strategy.

Mr Greene does not ask the readers to agree with all the rules, let alone follow them, he simply wants you to recognise them... you'll appreciate how each law is steeped in cold, hard reality.

This isn't your cheesy self-help novella; no, this book is the ultimate handbook for those intrigued by the timeless themes of influence, manipulation, and ambition. From Law 1: *Never Outshine the Master* to Law 15: *Crush Your Enemy Totally*, it's not about the 'fair' option but more about outsmarting, manipulating, or simply smiling while others self-destruct.

The basic yet brilliant way of Greene's writing is that it's backed by centuries of history, featuring details from the power plays of ancient emperors, cunning masterminds and even swindlers. Imagine getting advice about power dynamics and influential tactics from Napoleon, Bismarck and Niccolò Machiavelli in the same breath; just sitting there, chilling on your bed

with a glass of iced tea in hand, getting a crash course on human nature by three of the most sociologically ruthless men of all time. The laws themselves are cut-throat and random in order; you go from reading about how to *Make Other People Come to You* only to discover the next law is *Pose as a Friend, Work as a Spy*. Mr Greene basically hands out cheat codes to the infuriating power struggles in life, to the point where you will begin to perceive every interaction as a move in a highly complex game of chess.

Now, before we begin sharpening the proverbial dagger ready to be plunged into the bosoms of many, let's address the elephant in the room: is this book too ruthless? Perhaps.

Mr Greene does not ask the readers to agree with all the rules, let alone follow them, he simply wants you to recognise them. Whether you are using these laws in basic interactions with Seniors and Masters or on the podium during a debate, you'll appreciate how each law is steeped in cold, hard reality. Ultimately, *The 48 Laws of Power* is like the literary equivalent of a villain's monologue — it's fascinating, manipulative, and maybe just a bit scandalous. Just remember, after reading this, you'll either be the puppet master or the puppet. Choose wisely.

The Week Gone By

Ganadhipati Aryan

As the week draws to a close, a collective sigh of relief echoes across Chandbagh. It came not from the classrooms, but from our beds — morning PT was finally put to a pause. Could this be permanent? Dare we dream? For now, at least, we bask in the freedom, though with the faint fear that PT could return at any moment like an uninvited guest.

While we celebrated small victories, the September assessments left a distinctly bitter aftertaste. What was once a small academic hurdle has now become a fully-fledged Trials clone, complete with the same sprawling syllabus

and the same weighty significance. School's sudden seriousness towards this so-called "assessment week" felt both commendable and exhausting. Though, for what it's worth, this new-found rigour might just be good for us — or so we tell ourselves while groaning over the pile of notes.

In the midst of all this, S Formers have been navigating the peak of their scoping season over the past few weeks, as each passing day is a step closer towards their aim. A **punishment** Leadership Midterms are also fast approaching, with all eyes trained on us at all times. The tension is palpable as students vie for coveted positions, each one hoping to leave their mark. Amidst all of this I would like to leave my fellow batchmates with something: *while it's important to aim for these roles, do not let it consume you. Titles are fleeting; the legacy we leave behind is built*

not just on position but on character. Stay grounded — there is more to school life than a tie and a title (cough, cough).

As Midterms loom over the horizon, it seems like even nature has decided to come and challenge us this year. The traditional high peak treks, once a rite of passage, have been scaled back to the foothills due to relentless rains. Our adventurous spirit remains undaunted however, but it seems like the legacy of Midterms might bow to forces beyond our control.

Soon we will once again be put into the whirlwind of Founders' preparations, rehearsals and final touches will begin, bringing with them an energy that sweeps away the weariness of the past weeks. The chaos might just turn out to be refreshing, and soon Chandbagh will be at its finest — if a little cleaner too.

Sudoku

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

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

Key:

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

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