



The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot
February 8, 2025 | Issue No. 2727



MAINTENANCE

A house that's fallen to the elements.
.....
Page 4

A SCIENTIFIC CONFLUENCE

Eight Days of Scientific Collaboration and global enrichment.....
Page 5

WEEK GONE BY

A humorous account of the Week's events
.....
Page 6

What Matters?

Krishiv Jaiswal

.....
Ambivalent yet smirkingly, I asserted "*Kya hi farak padhta hain,*" as my formmate rambled on about the unforgiving nature of college applications and what the future holds for a twelfth grader who's known nothing better than what's inside these dusty red walls. I was reminded of the moment when I reiterated those very words to console my Junior who couldn't score well in his pre-boards. I was also reminded of the other one hundred times when I used the same phrase the same week – for positions, awards, trophies, family, friends, college, school, home, work, rest and whatnot. However, what was within me as I produced those decibels each time was parallel to my outward self: pale, unconvinced, apprehensive, and unassertive. It was self-depreciating but at the same time the phrase somehow made me feel comfortable and reassured me that my actions must not always be justified for there is always a way out in "*Kya hi farak padhta hain.*"

To people who constantly look for an easy way out or conversely struggle to find an easy way out, the word "*farak*" is nothing short of a gift bestowed by language itself. The convenience and familiarity of the term lie in its convoluted nature. Fundamentally, it does not claim or hint that nothing matters; it simply grants a brief respite from the burden of meaning. It offers us a facade of control, enabling us

to downplay our issues even if we know deep down that some things are unavoidably significant.

But now that I truly think of it, I feel that yes something does matter. There is an internal force, a rather unkindled fire evoking everything that matters involuntarily. That's what makes us a part of the 'rat race' that we so often try to escape but end up revolving our lives around. We bemoan and despite this cyclical process yet never truly find our purpose even though it's there somewhere lurking in our organs.

But what is it? Well, it has to be something definitive or quantifiable. However, the answer is not the clichéd pursuit of happiness, nor the accumulation of accolades or wealth, nor incessant success, nor is it your lovable family and friends or the people you despise. It is something more supple, something that dwells between assurance and uncertainty — the silent times of reflection where you go like you have to do something to make your life memorable, the little moments of intimacy with the form of activity that you try, the subliminal recognition that certain things, no matter how trivial, bring with them. To me, these things hold weight beyond measure. So, 'what matters' are the things that define you; sure, it could be how you want to be defined and remembered looking back. But again, then you

start breathing into others' lives and joy, and not yours (which is true in the practical world but definitely not ideal). This process would result in you renouncing yourself and a world where you're (to put it simply) decapitated.

So, how are we even defined? What really defines us? Are we nothing more than the sum of our denials and rejections, of all the times we shrugged and asserted that it didn't matter? Or are we the unresolved, haunting questions that reverberate in our minds long after we voice those words? It appears that the enquiring process itself is more difficult than any binding response.

I have lived in a state of contradiction, vacillating between indifference and the inevitable weight of the outcomes. Every time I reassured myself that my missed opportunities did not matter, I was essentially looking for an escape from the accountability of guilt. Even still, I find myself questioning whether anything I write today matters in the end (on Saturday).

So, here's the actual response to the question 'what matters'. Is it approval and validation? The safety of connections? The search for meaning? For a frivolous S Former, I believe that it is not the answer that is important but rather the fact you ask these questions. It is an indication of something

(Continued on Page 3)

This Week in History

1690 CE: The colony of Massachusetts issues the first paper money in the Americas.

1958 CE: Eight Manchester United FC players and 15 other passengers are killed in the Munich air disaster.

1985 CE: Portuguese football legend Cristiano Ronaldo is born in Madeira, Portugal.

1992 CE: The Maastricht Treaty is signed, leading to the creation of the EU.

2004 CE: Facebook is founded.

2018 CE: SpaceX's Falcon Heavy makes its maiden flight.

READER'S CHECKLIST

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

Loechin Phangcho: *The Game* by Neil Strauss

Uday Rana: *The Giver* by Lois Lowry

Omar Malik: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce

Abhyuday Solanki: *Inferno* by Dan Brown

LISTENER'S CHECKLIST

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

Aakash Mishra: *Aadat* by Atif Aslam

Vivaan Kumbhat: *Do I Wanna Know* by Arctic Monkeys

Atharv Uppal: *Chatak Mataak* by Avika Dhukia

Viransh Jain: *Espresso* by Sabrina Carpenter

“

I once cried because I had no shoes to play, but one day, I met a man who had no feet.

—
Zinedine Zidane

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

She was smiling from chin to chin.

Udathveer Pasricha, overjoyed.

I am not late, I am tardy.

Aarit Singhania, rephrasing.

I am speaking in chemistry.

ABE, new revelations.

I am not in a gang, I am the gang.

SBG, the gang is what we trust.

I tell who take.

Luksh Shah, dictator.

You can immediately change from the rightist to the leftist.

MPY, Karl Marx's descendant.

BIBLIOPHILE

Vir Marwah has been awarded the **Silver Reading Award**.

Kudos!

BARAZZA LEADERS

The following are the appointments for the **Round Square Council** for the Year 2025-2026:

President: Neil Kashyap

Vice President: Aarit Singhania

Secretary: Kai Kubo

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

Around the World in 80 Words

So far, over 340 million devotees have attended the *Mahakumbh Mela* which concludes February 26th. Over ten people died at a shootout in Sweden on Tuesday. R Praggnanandha defeated Gukesh Dommaraju to claim the Tata Chess title. Ozzy Osbourne announced a final reunion show for Black Sabbath. Trump announced a proposal for the US to temporarily take over the Gaza Strip after talks with Israeli PM Netanyahu. Liverpool FC beat Tottenham Hotspurs 4-0 to reach the EFL Cup Final.



(Continued from Page 1)

important: awareness. To question is to contribute, to recognise that, despite our best efforts to dismiss it, we are all drawn to meaning. For, as I see it in every Senior that I've been close to: the answers seem to

unravel themselves by the end of this 'rat race' at ceteris paribus and I hope that's the case for you and me alike.

So, maybe, "*Kya hi farak padhta hain*" is a beginning on its own rather than an end. It is not a

phrase suggestive of nihilism but a sense of transition—an uneasy pause before my formmate dares to ask, "Then what does matter?"

And that is where the real dilemma starts within me; a perpetual loop.



UNDER THE SCANNER

Los Angeles Wildfires | Manit Jain

In January of 2025, the south of California faced one of its most dangerous episodes of wildfires with Los Angeles county bearing the brunt of this disaster. The most significant ones in these scary series were the Pacific Palisades and the Eaton fires which took precious lives, destroying billions worth of infrastructure and turning the city of angels into a post apocalyptic barren land.

The Pacific Palisades is a neighbourhood in the western region of Los Angeles close to the Malibu beach and near the Santa Monica pier which has substantial amounts of greenery and plenty of open spaces. On 7th January, 2025 a dark cloud of smoke was seen rising above the neighbourhood rapidly as the blaze beneath spread throughout the area, fueled by the hot and dry winds of Santa Ana. These fires consumed everything and anything in their path leaving destruction in their wake and frightening the people of the area who panicked and only escalated tensions. They formed a gridlock on sunset boulevard in around half an hour which blocked people in traffic for miles around, making matters worse for the government and the public.

Around 6 o'clock, a new fire emerged in Altadena: the Eaton fire. Altadena is a place close to the San Gabriel mountains which is surrounded by pine forests, rows of deodar cedars and vast shrubland. Much like the Pacific Palisades, it is open and dry and home to multimillionaires and celebrities. The Eaton fire was devastating, scorching more than fourteen thousand acres of Los Angeles. The resources of the city's fire-fighting department were already preoccupied by the Palisades fire leaving the city unprepared for further fires like the Eaton outbreak. With no time to react, the delayed aid and evacuation caused the effect of this fire to amplify.

Detectives are analysing every possible scenario and outcome and are trying to determine the cause of these fires. Lightning, which is the most common source of fires in the US, has been ruled out as a cause. Currently it seems the most probable cause of these devastating blazes are the hot and dry winds of the city of Santa Ana. Scientists all across the world

are stating that climate change is a massive factor behind the hot and dry weather which caused these fires in the first place. The increase in global average temperatures has created conditions that drove the Los Angeles fires to be expected once every 17 years. While climate change appears to be the most probable cause of these wildfires, there are suspicions that the Eaton Fire was triggered by faulty utility lines as legal cases have been filed against the electrical corporation Southern California Edison Company. Several claims assert that there is substantial evidence that proves the firm's negligence in the handling of overhead wires led to the conflagration.

The electrical company is not the only one in the hot seat, as a political row has erupted on the readiness of the city to tackle these disasters in the first place. Between 2023 and 2025 the Los Angeles Fire Department faced a budget reduction of 17.6 million dollars, which paired with a seven million dollar reduction in overtime hours severely affected the efficiency of the crew. The LA mayor Karen Bass, who was on a diplomatic trip to Ghana, faced major backlash questioning her abilities to tackle such a massive disaster. The most controversial event occurred when Santa Ynez, the 117-million gallon water resource near the Pacific Palisades, was out of bounds due to prolonged maintenance. The absence of this water supply caused the LAFD's water tanks to run dry; a humiliating fault from the Californian government.

The LA wildfires will be etched in the halls of time as a dark period and a cruel reminder of the consequences which occur when humans prioritise themselves over the environment. As climate changes continue to yield unstable weather conditions, the world must be prepared for repercussions which can strike at any point of time. Governments and city leaders must take strict and straightforward action to combat these disasters and derive long-term solutions focused on addressing the root causes of climate change.

Maintenance

Ayaan Adeeb

Jillian Reed loved life at 946 Ashbourne Avenue, where he lived with a couple hundred other 'like-minded' occupants who lovingly took up various errands around the estate, maintaining its pristine elegance and beauty. Residents of the estate, 'divvied' up the work amongst themselves, ensuring that the gardens, catacomb, and residential unit itself remained neat and proper. There were a few 'regulators' to ensure that everyone did their fair share of work around the house, but they really served no function; each resident, in an attempt to outdo the other, would trim the grass down till the minutest unit, polish each surface till its reflection would be capable of blinding passers-by, or tidy the dressers enough times to last time for months at an end.

Life was so simple and rudimentary around the establishment, that it made it even harder to understand where everything went wrong. It all started that one random morning when Jillian's companion Big Mike remembered and had an 'awakening' about his past. Every resident just mystically showed up at the estate one day, with the sole motive of maintaining it. No one remembered where they had actually come from. They didn't realise why they were working so hard,

striving to maintain an estate that really served no importance in any of their lives. They frantically looked around for the regulators, who they expected would dispel their little 'thoughts of disobedience'; they realised that there were no 'regulators.' They had never existed. Crisis ensued. 946 Ashbourne Avenue was gradually lost to the elements.

The bushes unkempt. The fruit wasn't picked, even during the season. It had been a couple of years since 'the great awakening', as it had been christened by now, and 946 Ashbourne Avenue was a shadow of its former self. A rotting smell persisted down every hallway; as if to appeal to its former maintainers to eradicate it. The estate had lost the grandeur and elegance it was once renowned around the county for, as its residents struggled to find a purpose to maintain its physical beauty. The slave-like franticness by which they had once toiled to protect it gradually weaned away, as the residents realised just how little importance the estate held in the grander scheme of their existence. Jillian Reed sighed to himself. At least, they were free.

Wings of Time

Chitransh Gulati



Wings of Time, so soft and wide,
Flying through the day and night.
In every moment, quick and bright,
Carrying stories, taking flight.

No start, no end, just endless space,
Guiding us with gentle grace.
Through joy and tears, it leads the way,
Helping us grow with each new day.

Wings of Time, so free and true,
Always moving, yet never through.
It shows us paths we cannot see,
Reminding us who we're meant to be.

A Scientific Confluence

A report on the International Student Science Conference, held in School during the Vacations.

Written by Taarak Harjai and Arnav Tiwari.

“Somewhere, something beautiful is waiting to be known”— Carl Sagan.

Our School was privileged to have the opportunity to host the International Student Science Conference 2024, from December 2, 2024 to December 8, 2024. Themed “Breaking Boundaries: Global Collaboration in Science and Technology”, the conference hosted 70 delegates and teachers from nine schools of Australia, Italy, Germany, Taiwan, and India. The conference began with a simple vision in mind – to create a hospitable environment for the scientists of tomorrow, fostering cultural and scientific exchange. In that regard, the conference was a massive success.

On the first day, delegates tried to uncover the mysterious ‘murder’ of a famous scientist in an attempt to break the ice. Clues leading to a specific Doon School building set delegates running around Chandbagh, where a scientific challenge, ranging from decoding audio files to performing chromatography to identify blood samples awaited them. The Conference was officially inaugurated the next day in the Opening Ceremony, where the performance of our cultural classical and folk music and dance highlighted Indian culture. The auditorium then hosted the initial set of research presentations, one of the most essential aspects of the conference, introducing delegates to the process of scientific research and defending their research in front of a large audience. A hands-on sustainable soap making module led by entrepreneurs Mr Sahil Jain and Ms Mriga Jain introduced delegates to the scientific processes behind a flourishing economic field. Simultaneously, a science exhibition spread across the entirety of the science block, showcasing Doon School science projects and activities. Upon receiving feedback, it was noted that many delegates were inspired and planned to conduct similar activities in their schools. Early morning bird spotting and a trip to the Forest Research Institute featuring iconic museum visits and speeches by experts were scheduled the next morning, giving an extremely relevant start to a day which aimed to shed light on the diverse Chandbagh ecosystem. Upon returning to School, a keynote presentation on birds by renowned ornithologist Dr Sarabjeet, followed by an insightful second set of research presentations ended the third day.

The fourth day was perhaps the most eventful. The much-awaited ISRO Module led by Dr BA Subramani, a retired ISRO scientist, taught delegates amateur satellite communication in practice on the main field. Following this, the conference hosted its biggest show, “Chemistry is Fun!” by Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar awardee Dr Uday Maitra and Dr Samita

Maitra. Smiling faces and gasps persisted for the entirety of the two hour show. The night concluded with a relaxing movie screening of *Ad Astra* in the Art and Media Centre.

A visit to the Indian Petroleum Institute to learn about industrial level oil purification processes, and engineering challenges simulating real life scenarios on a microscopic level constituted the next morning. The evening was all about celebrating diverse cultures. A musical performance by a local dance group and *mehendi* artists put Indian culture on display, following which delegates presented a famous cultural item from their country, ranging from iconic stories to dances and games. A dance session ended an eventful day with smiles.

The next day was dedicated to a cultural visit to the Parmarth Niketan in Rishikesh. This was followed by an enlightening talk on the intersection of spirituality and science by Ms Sadhwi Bhagwati, and a mesmerising *aarti* on the banks of the river Ganges.

The last day of the conference began with a hands-on Robotics & AI Workshop led by the School robotics department, where delegates created robots designed to operate in detailed scenarios. After a brief relaxation period, the conference concluded with a closing ceremony featuring heartfelt addresses and certificate presentations. A dinner filled with teary eyes and goodbyes concluded with a farewell dance session within the CDH.

As the curtains drew on an unforgettable eight days, we got a chance to reflect on our learnings from the conference. The preparations for the conference began seven months prior, with a team of students and masters sitting and working every single day, burning the midnight oil, and toiling away to make the experience seamless for all involved. What made the conference stand out was the level of student participation in organising, something that was witnessed and admired by students and teachers from different nations. Time and time again, our school has been recognised for the high levels of organisation and competence exhibited by its students. ISSC was, without a doubt, a resounding success due to this very competence and commitment. Students and teachers across schools, around the world, gave positive feedback, showing their appreciation for the hospitality, level of scientific discourse, and the rich Indian culture. The eight days of the conference filled our hearts with memories that we will cherish forever and have helped expand our scientific temperament and knowledge.

The Week Gone By

Kanishk Bammi

Another year, another term, another *Weekly*. Welcome dear reader, to the first Week Gone By of 2025. Off we go!

The Headmaster ‘flagged in’ the term last Saturday, and in typical Dosco fashion, we have hit the ground running. Cricket season has started in full swing and it won’t take much effort for one to spot a fight over whether they are out or not, a poor *Bhaiya* trying to find cricket balls that were apparently “hit high up” and our favourite Masters-in-charge ensuring that everyone is properly padded up.

Apart from that, the cold weather has gotten to us, as attendance for classes before breakfast is marked by unwilling feet sadly trudging across the *Bajri*. I, however, think we should be thankful that it’s

seven in the morning we have to wake up at, and not six, with the gods graciously having blessed us to that extent. Each day we wake up grateful and well-rested, thanks to the absence of what the average Dosco fears most – PT. Just the thought of it sends chills down my spine.

Let’s not forget though, that what has been the first week for most of us, is in fact the fourth for our A and Sc Forms as they prepare to take on the final frontier. Two years of hard work, sweat, tears, bunked classes and copied projects culminate into this next month, and on behalf of the *Weekly*, I wish you all the very best! That being said, it wouldn’t hurt if the rest of all also took the time to flip through our books every once in a while, because if the weeks coming up are going to be anything like this one, time certainly does fly by, and PT’s closest competitor for what the average Dosco fears most – Trials will soon be looming around the corner.

Meanwhile, Monday saw the Main Field flocked by our beloved Sc-Ls for their *Senti*-change, and once again our creative capabilities were on display as the once plain and simple kurtas are now decorated with a mix of things that can make you either laugh, cry or just feel disgusted.

On a happier note now, the much-awaited Tuck Shop has finally been given a date for its grand opening. Talks of world-class smoothie machines and ice creams have certainly gotten everyone excited, and soon we shall find out if it was worth the wait.

To conclude, I know it seems like there’s a long way to go and a lot to come ahead but keep your head down and focus on what’s truly important- finding a date for Valentine’s Day next week, because if your best friend has one and you don’t, you will have to hear about it for the rest of the year. Good luck!

Sudoku

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

Key:

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

Source: <https://www.theteacherscorner.net/make-your-own/sudoku>

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



©IPSS: All rights reserved. Printed by: The English Book Depot, 15 Rajpur Road, Dehradun, Uttarakhand–248001, India. Published by: Kamal Ahuja, The Doon School, Dehradun.

Editor-in-Chief: Krish Agarwal Editor: Ganadhipati Aryan Senior Editors: Kanishk Bammi, Krishiv Jaiswal Hindi Editor: Madhav Mehra Associate Editors: Agastya Chamaria, Ayaan Mittal, Hrishikesh Aiyer, Rafay Habibullah, Rehhan Chadha Special Correspondents: Aashman Agarwal, Ayaan Adeeb Cartoonists: Reyansh Agarwal, Vihaan Lakhotia, Yuvaan Todi Webmaster: Communications Manager Faculty Advisors: Purnima Dutta, Sabyasachi Ghosh, Sameer Chopra, Satya Sharma, Stuti Kuthiala