

Col DPK Pillay addresses VOW Workshop at Welham Boys' School

By OUR STAFF
REPORTER

DEHRADUN, 2 Sep: Stories of soldiers' experiences are always worth hearing, but when one hears stories of extraordinary valour from the hero, it gives one's goosebumps and fills the heart with admiration and pride. That is what manifested at the Seventh VOW Workshop hosted by Welham Boys' School. The speaker was Colonel DPK Pillay, whose courageous act of defending citizens at the height of the Manipur insurgency, has won him respect and admiration nationwide. Present at the workshop were students of Rashtriya Indian Military College, Pestle Weed College, The Asian School, Unison World School, Cambrian Hall and Vantage Hall School.

The workshop commenced with student Aditya Mehra inviting Nidhi Moulak to address the gathering. She gave a vibrant presentation on the Valley of Words. The Valley of Words International Literature and Arts Festival is going to be organised this year from 23 to 25 November at the Madhuban Hotel. She shared with the students the vision of VOW and recalled the previous year's festival which involved enlightening sessions and scintillating evenings.

Following a brief introduction by Aditya Mehra, Colonel DPK Pillay took the stage and described the meaning of



valour as raw acts of courage and an earnest belief in one's mission which has the power to shape human history. These people are deemed heroes, but he argued that a hero is within everybody, having the power to determine the course of human history, only if they believe in themselves and try to extract that true soldier from within.

He also stressed on what a

soldier defends, which is the Constitution. There had to be a willingness to protect the dignity of the constitution come what may. But to pursue these acts of valour, one needed courage, so consequently he classified courage as being physical, moral, spiritual, and mental. He put forward the example of Mahatma Gandhi and Admiral Nelson.

In between the examples, he also argued that people usually find it easier to incite violence, but it takes moral courage to reject the hatred. Taking a cue from ancient philosophies, he reminded students of the courageous acts of Gautam Buddha and Emperor Ashok. He also outlined for students the teachings of various religions

emphasising on the fact through quotations from sacred books that no religion tolerated violence.

Next, he recalled his story of the Manipur counter-insurgency programme when he was shot in the chest, leg and shoulder, but when help arrived the then twenty-six year old soldier stayed back to save the life of two Manipuri children who too were grievously injured. He remembered the moment when he recently visited the village where the action took place and the warmth and compassion he received was reflected in his teary eyes when he saw those children grown up. The audience was filled with pride to hear about this true act of valour that the Indian Army's second nature. He added that the village had now adopted him as his own and how with his inputs he has contributed to its development. He ended his talk by saying that one is capable of doing much more than one believes one can.

Neha Raj led the standing ovation that the audience gave after the talk.

Thanking Welham Boys' School for hosting VOW as well as all the schools who participated, she also mentioned the volunteers' inputs and hard work.

The school outreach programme will conclude on 6 September with a Haiku and Limericks Workshop by Mona Verma at St Josephs Academy.

Temple decoration to welcome birth of Krishna

By OUR STAFF
REPORTER

DEHRADUN, 2 Sep: The temples in the town had made preparations in their own way for the birth of Bal Gopal Krishna, here, today. They were decorated to provide him a ceremonious welcome. Special prayers were held in the temples and homes, on the occasion.

The preparations were made since morning for the Janma Ashtami festival. Tableaus were put up outside some temples depicting the birth of Krishna. People thronged to the temples to offer prayers. This year's Janma Ashtami is being described as particularly auspicious in astrological terms.

