

# SCHOOL LIVE

VOLUME 09 | ISSUE 12  
June 2026

Monthly  
₹160

## Goal Rush 2026



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Of A Fifteen-Year-Old  
Schoolboy!

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**HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT**  
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## ed-note inside



For some strange reason, the Newsbytes section this month reads almost like a news supermarket, offering an astonishing variety of stories from across the globe. June has been packed with events that have captured public attention and sparked conversations everywhere. The IPL, the Women's Cricket World Cup, the Iran conflict, the emergence of the world's first trillionaire, the FIFA Club World Cup, and even the Cockroach Janta Party have all found space in these pages. It would be difficult to ask for a greater assortment of interesting news in a section dedicated entirely to current affairs.

Most schools, on their part, are preparing for reopening in July. Families return from their vacations as June draws to a close, and conversations once again revolve around classmates, projects, assignments, and the year ahead. For many students, July brings with it the excitement of a fresh beginning.

While cricket fever may ebb for a while, football is set to command worldwide attention in the days ahead. The FIFA Club World Cup continues to generate excitement, and Messi magic remains one of the sport's biggest attractions, enthraling fans across continents.

For more than ninety issues, School LIVE has featured news, thought-provoking stories, interesting people, curious happenings, humour, and unexpected discoveries from different corners of the world. This edition adds a few more to that collection.

**Hariharan Balagopal**

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- Fifteen And Fearless!**  
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- Plant Food For Thought!**  
A story that gently examines who needs help and who truly deserves it.

School Live has something for everyone.  
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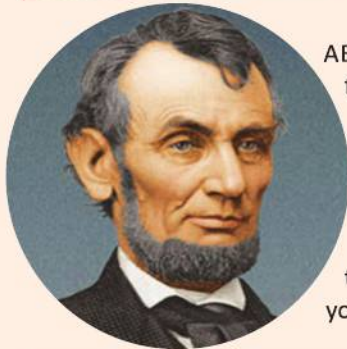
Collaboration : Amrita Bharati



SCHOOL LIVE - THE ONLY COMPLETE EDUTAINMENT MONTHLY FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS

# SPARKLERS

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE was a British nurse and social reformer who strove to improve civilian and army healthcare throughout her life. The death and disease she saw in the Crimean War made her a hypochondriac (abnormally anxious about her health). On her return home, she confined herself to her bed, not allowing even her mother to come near her. She was convinced that her life was hanging by a thread. It must have been a pretty strong thread because she lived till the age of 90.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN was known for his good sense of humour, but not for his looks. When a politician Stephen Douglas accused him of being two-faced during a debate, Lincoln replied, "Honestly, if I were two-faced, would I be showing you this one?"

KING GEORGE III was once passing by a field during harvest time, incognito. He was surprised to find just one woman working in the field. He asked her where the other workers were. The woman said that they had gone to see the king. The king then asked her, "Wouldn't you be interested too?"

The woman said dismissively, "Not at all. I wouldn't give a pin to see him. These fools will lose a day's work. I cannot afford to do so. I have five children to feed."

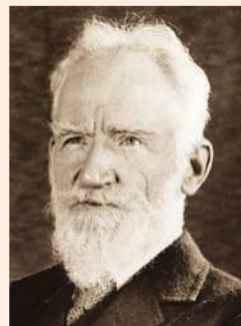
The king smiled, took out some money and gave it to her.

He said, "You may tell those fools who have gone to see the king, that the king came to see you," and walked away leaving her in utter disbelief.

He came to be known as Farmer George.



KRISTI YAMAGUCHI, the champion American figure skater, was born with club feet (a defect in which the feet are turned inwards). She was forced to wear corrective shoes all through her childhood. With her mother egging her on, Kristi learned dancing and figure skating. She would practise skating five hours a day, six days a week all through the year. The hard work paid off when she won a gold medal in her sport at the 1992 Albertville Winter Olympics, the first American woman in 16 years to do so. Kristi participated in 21 international competitions between 1987–92 and won 14 of them, including the World Figure Skating Championship titles in '91 and '92, before she turned professional.



THE Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw had once sent Sir Winston Churchill a card with two complimentary tickets for the opening night of his play *Buoyant Billions*. The words on the card were:

"Here are two tickets to the first night of my new play. Bring a friend with you....if you have any."

Churchill replied by sending a card with the following words:

"I cannot attend the opening night. I will attend the second night....if there will be one."

MARGARET THATCHER, the former prime minister of UK was known for her punctuality. She often arrived at a venue before time, sending local authorities into a tizzy.

Once, on an official visit to Czechoslovakia, she arrived early at the President's palace in Prague. The guard of honour snapped to attention and the band struck up the national anthems. Thatcher began to inspect the guard of honour. The only hitch—the Czechoslovakian President Václav Havel was missing! He emerged hastily a few minutes later, still putting on his jacket.



# Beyond the Textbook

*The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has approved Open Book Assessments (OBA) for Class 9 from the 2026–27 academic session. Will such exams be easier for students?*

WHEN you hear 'open book exam', it's tempting to relax. After all, if you're allowed to carry textbooks or notes into the hall, how hard could it be? The truth is, open-book exams are not about flipping to the right page, but they are designed to test your understanding, problem-solving skills, and ability to apply concepts in real situations.

## What is an open book exam?

In an open book exam, you can refer to approved study materials such as textbooks, printed sheets or handwritten notes, while writing your answers. But don't mistake this for an 'open cheat sheet'.

These exams focus less on memorising facts and more on thinking critically and using knowledge to tackle unfamiliar problems. The questions are designed to make you analyse, compare and explain concepts rather than repeat them word for word.

For example, you may be asked to design an experiment that measures the growth of a particular type of plant in sunlight vs. shade. You have to apply the concepts you have learned from different parts of the lesson.

## How should you prepare?

Many students believe they don't need to study at all. But if you spend the exam flipping pages, you'll run out of time. The best way to succeed is to know your subject well and keep your materials neatly organized so you can find information fast.

## Tips to do well in open book exams

**Learn the basics first:** Know important terms, formulas and concepts without needing to search.

**Organise your notes:** Use sticky notes, tabs or a contents page to reach topics quickly.

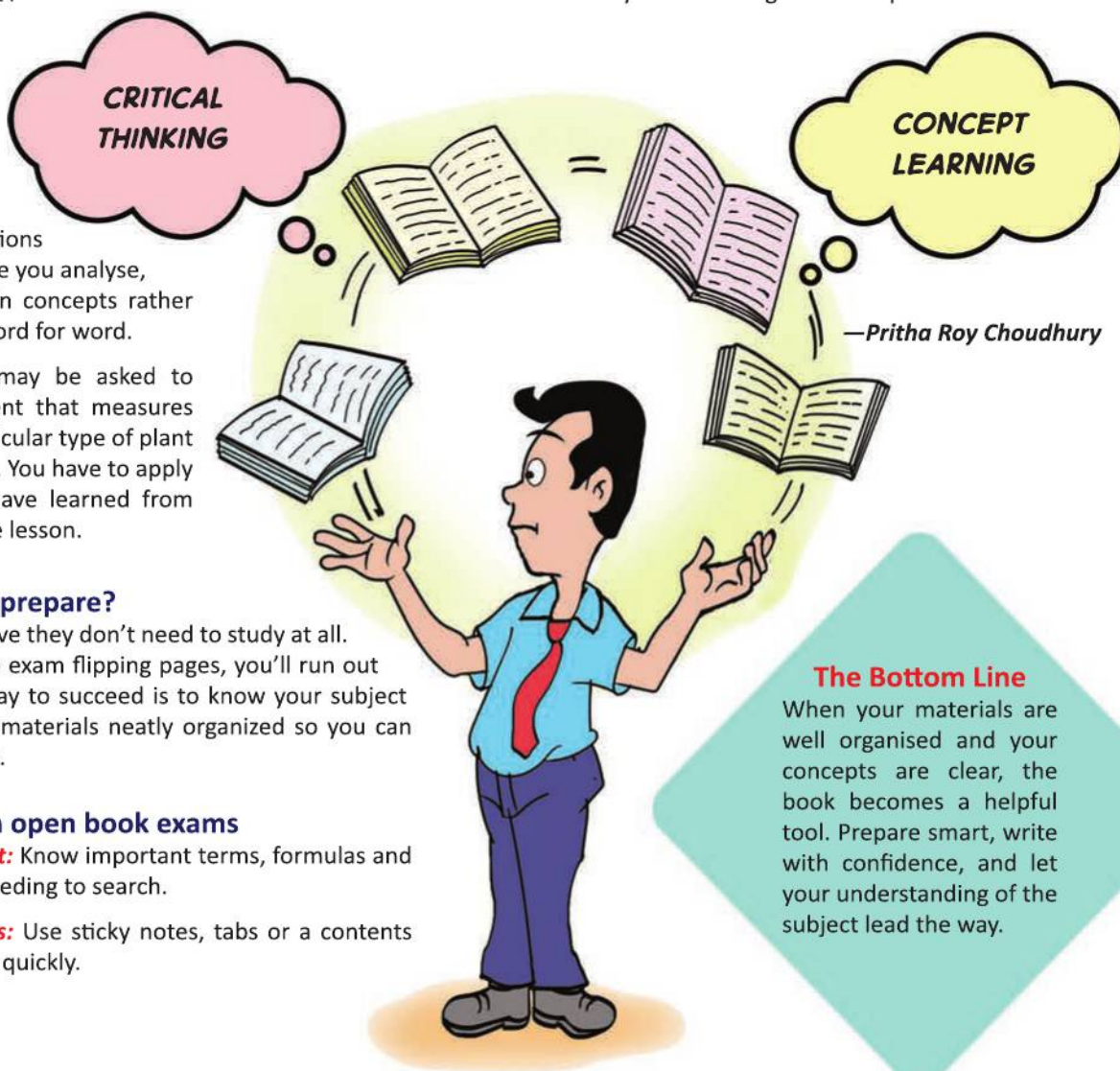
**Summarise in your own words:** Short notes or cheat sheets help you understand and review the material faster.

**Practise applying concepts:** Solve sample papers to learn how to use information, not just read it.

**Use your book as support:** Don't depend on the book completely; it's there to check tricky details.

**Manage your time:** Scan the paper first, plan your answers, and avoid spending too much time on one question.

**Stay calm and focused:** Think before writing, and structure answers clearly with headings or bullet points.



## The Bottom Line

When your materials are well organised and your concepts are clear, the book becomes a helpful tool. Prepare smart, write with confidence, and let your understanding of the subject lead the way.

# Knowledge Hub!

## QUIZ Time

- 1** Where did Gandhi study law?  
a. South Africa b. England c. India
- 2** This dam is the largest supplier of power in the US and is also one of the largest concrete structures in the world. Name it.  
a. The Mississippi Dam  
b. Grand Coulee Dam  
c. The Lincoln Dam
- 3** Who invented the World Wide Web?  
a. Tim Berners-Lee  
b. Peter Lothberg  
c. Jack Smith
- 4** What are lakes called in Scotland?  
a. Meres b. Moors c. Lochs
- 5** At 418 m below sea level, this is the lowest lake in the world and also the saltiest!  
a. Dead Sea b. Red Sea c. Caspian Sea
- 6** What is the scientific term for short-sightedness?  
a. Hypermetropia  
b. Myopia  
c. Astigmatism
- 7** James Hilton in his book, *Lost Horizon*, describes this place that has become synonymous with peace and happiness.  
a. Paradise b. Heaven on Earth c. Shangri-la
- 8** The gas leak from which factory in Bhopal was responsible for one of the worst chemical disasters?  
a. Enron  
b. Union Carbide  
c. Moser Baer
- 9** This 'Irish Fairy' can make his captor very wealthy. Who is he?  
a. Goblin  
b. Leprechaun  
c. Troll
- 10** How many Indian citizens have won a Nobel prize so far?  
a. 2 b. 5 c. 3
- 11** Hair is made of a protein called keratin that is not found in  
a. Claws and beaks b. Fingernails c. Eyeballs
- 12** When you sneeze the air zips out at a speed of about  
a. 2 kmph  
b. 10 kmph  
c. 150 kmph
- 13** Which was the world's first underground railway?  
a. The Metropolitan Line in London  
b. The Mandurah Line in Perth  
c. MAX Light Rail in Portland
- 14** Which of these cities did French architect Le Corbusier design?  
a. Chandigarh b. Dehra Dun c. Shimla
- 15** Where would you find drawings of giant lizards, birds and animals in the sand for miles?  
a. Kalahari desert in Africa  
b. Gobi desert in Mongolia  
c. Nazca desert in Peru

**Answers:** 1. England 2. Grand Coulee Dam 3. Tim Berners-Lee 4. Lochs 5. Dead Sea 6. Myopia 7. Shangri-la 8. Union Carbide 9. Leprechaun 10. 5 (Rabindranath Tagore, C V Raman, Mother Teresa, Amartya Sen and Kailash Satyarthi) 11. Eyeballs 12. 150 kmph 13. The Metropolitan Line in London 14. Chandigarh 15. Nazca desert in Peru

# Once Upon a Rupee...

**Most financial habits are not taught. They are inherited, stumbled upon or learned the hard way. For most teenagers, money remains an uncharted subject, right until the moment it demands attention.**

## The Ant Was Half Right

In Aesop's fable of the ant and the grasshopper, the ant spends the summer storing food. The grasshopper spends it in leisure. When winter arrives, the outcome is predictable. The moral, as it is usually presented, is simple. Work hard and save for the future.

But that conclusion leaves something out.

Man has essential needs. He also has wants, and wants have a way of steering him toward immediate pleasure. A life that denies all of that in favour of saving is not a well-thought-out financial plan. It is a kind of self-imposed scarcity. The grasshopper's mistake was that he spent his days without any thought for what lay ahead.

The ant and the grasshopper, then, are not opposites to choose between. They represent two instincts that must be balanced.

## The 30-70 Rule

One of the more practical frameworks for doing this is the 30-70 rule, a simple strategy that accounts for both the need for immediate living and the need to prepare for an unforeseen tomorrow.

Of every ₹100 earned or received, ₹30 is saved. The remaining ₹70 is available for today's needs, wants, and daily expenses—spent without guilt, because the future has already been provided for.

The rule works because it does not ask people to choose between the present and the future. It makes room for both. Saving works best when it's planned, not when it's forced.

## The Tortoise Won Anyway

Saving money is the first step. But money that simply sits idle does not grow. The question that follows saving is equally important. What do you do with what you have set aside?

For that, consider a fabled race you know the result of.

The hare was fast, confident, and far ahead from the start. The tortoise moved at his own unhurried pace. The win, despite all

expectations, went to the tortoise. The familiar lesson is that consistency trumps speed. What that lesson means for money, however, is rarely discussed.

Most people approach money with the hare's instinct. The desire for quick returns, visible growth, and dramatic results is natural. When those don't appear, interest fades. Commitments are abandoned. A new opportunity is chased instead. The pattern repeats and very little actually accumulates.

The tortoise did not start strong or accelerate. He simply kept on going.

## The Power of Consistency

Consistency is the primary step in wealth generation. A small amount, set aside regularly and without interruption, does something that a larger sporadic sum often cannot: it compounds.

Compounding is simply the process of earnings generating further earnings over time. The longer money remains invested and untouched, the more this effect builds on itself. It is unhurried, undramatic, and, given enough time, remarkably powerful.

Consistency also acts as a shield. Markets fluctuate. Circumstances change. But the habit of investing regularly, regardless of conditions, smooths out those variations over time.

## Putting It into Practice

One of the simplest tools for building this habit is a Recurring Deposit. A fixed amount—say ₹300 from every ₹1,000 saved under the 30-70 rule—is deposited into a bank account each month. The bank pays interest on this amount for the duration it remains invested. The longer the deposit runs, the more it earns.

No large sum or precise timing is required to begin. Cultivate the discipline to continue.

The tortoise did not win the race because he was talented or fortunate. He won because he was still moving when the hare had stopped.

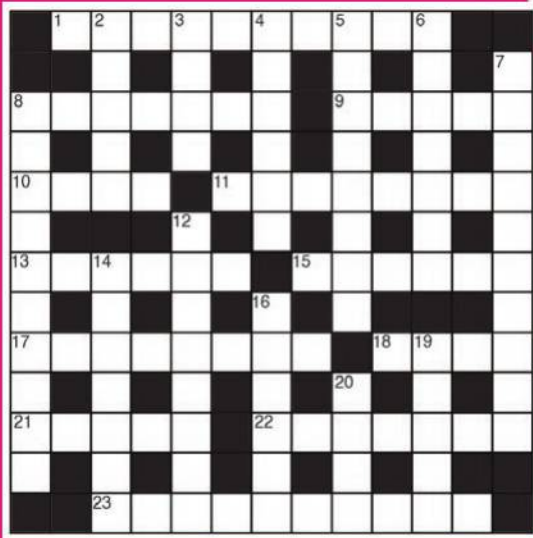
Wealth works the same way. It does not favour the one who starts with the most or moves the fastest. It accumulates with the one who stays consistent long enough for time to do its work.

—Uma Sundar



## MIND TICKLE

# CROSSWORD



### Across:

1. Providential; well-timed (6-4)
8. Acrobat's swing (7)
9. Capital of the Inca Empire in Peru (5)
10. Wild goat (4)
11. Solar specks (8)
13. Smooched (6)
15. Hurl abuse at public speaker(6)
17. Shortened (text) (8)
18. Bhutan airport city (4)
21. Large New Zealand parrots (5)
22. Piece of armour (breastplate) (7)
23. Re-establishes the truth of something (10)

### Down:

2. Avoid (5)
3. Change direction suddenly (4)
4. Birthmark (6)
5. Outrageous acts (8)
6. Small mound of thicker grass (7)
7. Exuberant (10)
8. Expert advisory committees (5, 5)
12. Type of dome in architecture (8)
14. Worker on hartal (7)
16. Searchlight (6)
19. Wake-up bell (5)
20. Small South American monkey (4)

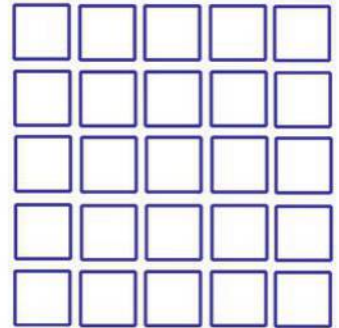
**Answers:**  
**Across:** 1. Heaven-sent 8. Trapeze 9. Cusco 10. Ixex 11. Sunspots 13. Kissed 15. Heckle 17. Abridged 18. Paro 21. Kakas 22. Cuirass 23. Reconforms  
**Down:** 2. Evade 3. Veer 4. Naevus 5. Excesses 6. Tussock 7. Boisterous 8. Think tanks 12. Geodesic 14. Striker 16. Beacon 19. Alarm 20. Titi

## Learning Through Puzzles

B

### Magic Square

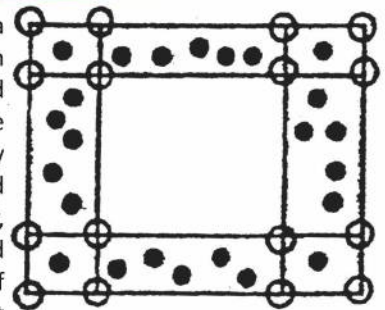
Can you arrange the numbers in the grid in such a way that each column, each row and each diagonal contains all the digits from 1 to 5? Note: each column, row and diagonal adds up to the same number.



C

### Calculated Moves

The commander of a fort was expecting an enemy attack. He had 23 men with him. He knew that the enemy was superstitious and afraid of the number, seven. He deployed his men and himself in such a way that there were 7 defenders on each of the four walls of the fort.



To do this, he placed 5 men along each wall and 1 man in each corner tower as shown in the diagram.

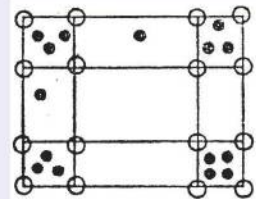
The attack came towards noon. The attackers were demoralised when they saw 7 defenders on each wall. They fired a volley of arrows and retreated.

The commander of the fort knew they would return. Unfortunately the arrows they had shot had claimed the lives of 9 soldiers so that now there were only 15 men left to defend the fort.

He again deployed his men and himself in such a way that there were 7 defenders on each side.

How did he position the soldiers?

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 |
| 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |



**Answers:**

A. She puts all the scoops in a blender and serves them as milkshakes to the girls.

A

### Where's the Scoop?

Tina returns from the playground with her four friends. She says, "Mama, we want ice cream!" There were 5 scoops of ice cream, but Tina's brother Tarun eats one, leaving behind only 4 scoops.

How can Mama distribute 4 scoops of ice cream equally among 5 girls?



# Setting a Benchmark

*A school with electricity and internet access, but no learning is not a school...*

EVERY YEAR, India's Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) collects data on and from every school in the country.

NITI Aayog's *School Education System in India: Temporal Analysis and Policy Roadmap for Quality Enhancement* (May 2026) which is based on 10 years of UDISE+ data, paints a depressing picture of India's school education system. At the same time it lays out a roadmap for improvement...

## India has the schools, but...

India has one of the largest school systems in the world. According to UDISE+ 2024–25, there are 14.71 lakh schools with 24.69 crore students and 1.01 crore teachers. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at the primary stage stands at 90.9 per cent drops to 78.7 per cent at secondary, and falls to just 58.4 per cent at the higher secondary stage. Nearly four out of every ten children who enter school don't reach Class 12.

## Who makes it to the next class?

Just 75.11 per cent of students, or one in four in Class 10, graduate to Class 11. Almost 91.58 per cent enrolled in the upper primary section in 2014–15 but this fell to 86.6 per cent in 2024–25.

More girls than boys go on to the higher class at every stage. At the secondary level, the national dropout rate is 11.5 per cent, though states like Andhra Pradesh have improved, cutting their dropout rate from 52.8 per cent to 15.5 per cent over the same ten years.

## Modernisation = Improvement?

School infrastructure has improved dramatically. Almost twice as many schools have electricity as compared to 2014. Computer access grew 40 per cent, and internet connectivity from a measly 8 per cent to 63.5 per cent. Yet Karnataka, home to Bengaluru and India's IT industry, has only half its

schools connected to the internet. Only one-third of schools nationally have smart classrooms. Seven out of ten schools still lack them.

## Numbers v/s Reality

India has 1.01 crore teachers, and the national Pupil-Teacher Ratio at the primary stage is 20:1, comfortably within the RTE norm of 30:1. But state-level data tells a different story. Jharkhand's higher secondary PTR is 47:1. Bihar has over 2.08 lakh teacher vacancies at the elementary level. There are over a lakh of single-teacher schools in the country, and a majority are in rural areas.

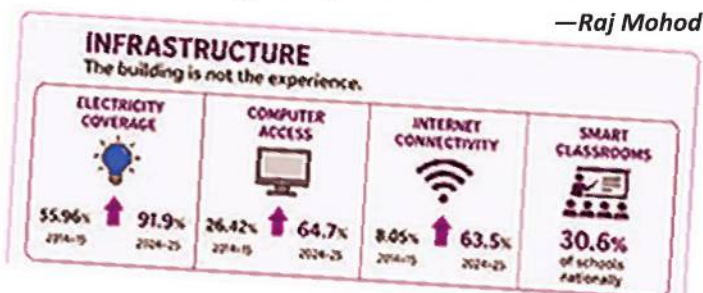
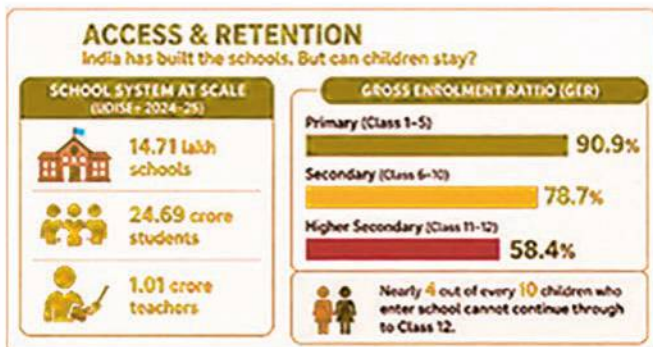
## Not up to the mark

ASER 2024 shows that only a little more than a quarter of Class 3 children can read a Class 2 level text, a figure unchanged from 2018. By Class 8, nearly one in three children still cannot read fluently. In arithmetic, less than half of Class 8 students can solve a basic division problem, a figure that has barely moved in 10 years. The PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024, a survey which covered over 21 lakh students across 74,229 schools, found that Class 3 students scored an average of 64% in language and 60% in mathematics nationally. Only half of them could classify basic geometric shapes or perform simple money transactions. Government schools and private schools scored identically in language at the foundational stage, both at 64%. The learning crisis is not only in government schools.

## So what's next?

The most important shift in the report is its insistence that India stop counting what is easy and start measuring what matters. Chapter V lays out 33 policy recommendations, each tied to specific, time-bound Performance Success Indicators tracked through UDISE+ and PARAKH dashboards. From 2022–23, UDISE+ has moved from school-level records to student-wise data using unique student IDs. This alone has corrected years of inflated enrolment numbers and made individual learning journeys trackable for the first time.

—Raj Mohod



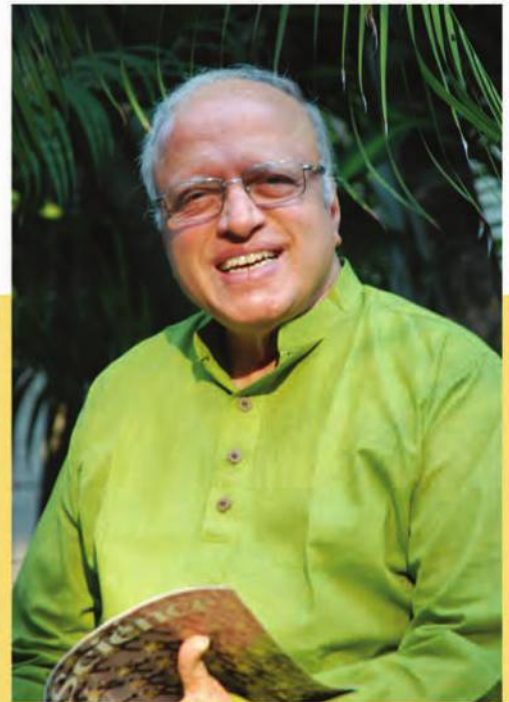
# In Her Father's Footsteps

ONE of India's most distinguished physician-scientists and public health leaders, Dr Soumya Swaminathan has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, one of the highest honours in the global scientific community. The Royal Society, founded in 1660 in the UK, recognises individuals who have made exceptional contributions to science and research.

Dr Swaminathan has earned international recognition for her pioneering work in tuberculosis research, HIV studies, paediatric health as well as her transformative leadership in healthcare policy.

The election of Dr Swaminathan creates a unique family legacy. Along with her late father, the legendary agricultural scientist and architect of India's Green Revolution, Bharat Ratna Dr M S Swaminathan, she now represents the first father-daughter duo from India to receive this coveted distinction. Furthermore, she is only the second Indian woman to enter the elite, 365-year-old scientific academy, following vaccinologist Dr Gagandeep Kang (2019).

Dr Swaminathan previously served as the Director-General of the Indian Council of Medical Research and then became the World Health Organization's first Chief Scientist, playing an important role during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Deadly Storm

A DEVASTATING dust storm accompanied by heavy rain, hail, lightning and winds exceeding 100 km/h swept across Uttar Pradesh in May, leaving a trail of destruction. Reportedly, at least 111 people were killed and over 200 injured within a span of 36 hours, making it one of the deadliest weather events in the state in recent years.

Most people were killed due to building collapses, uprooted trees and falling electricity poles. The storm caused extensive damage to infrastructure, destroying mud houses, decimating standing crops and snapping power lines that plunged entire regions into darkness.

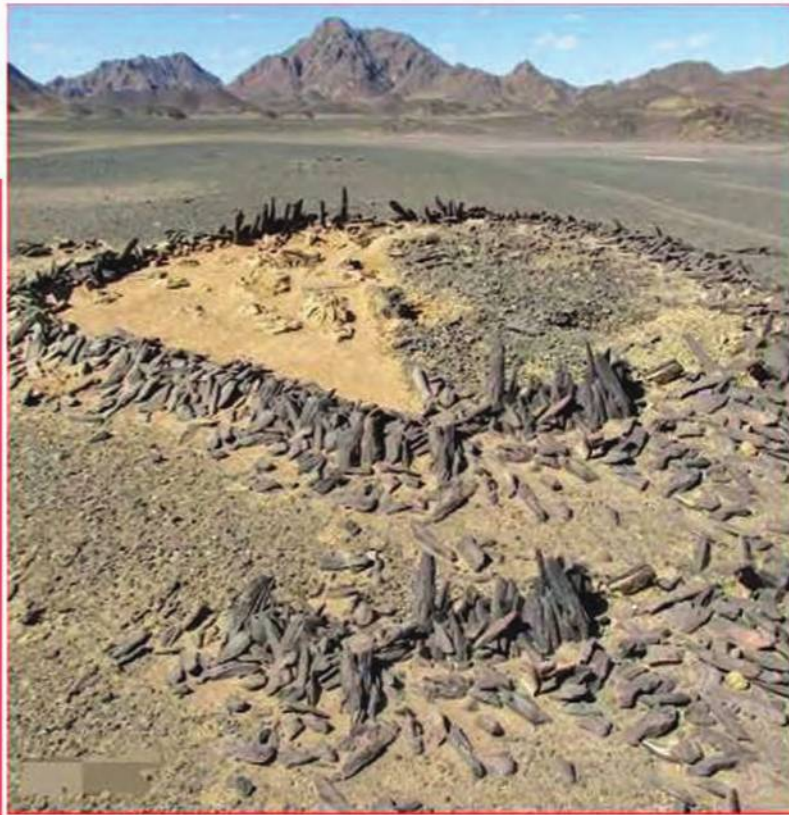
Meteorologists attributed the tragedy to unusually intense pre-monsoon thunderstorms fuelled by extreme heat, moisture-laden winds and atmospheric instability.



# Shifting Sands

ARCHAEOLOGISTS recently uncovered 260 giant burial sites in Sudan's remote Atbai Desert, evidence of a nomadic pastoral civilisation that thrived in the eastern Sahara nearly 6,000 years ago. The discovery was made through satellite imagery as part of an international research project exploring the vast desert region between the Nile River and the Red Sea.

The mounds were constructed when the Sahara was a lush savanna. The circular and oval stone monuments, some measuring up to 80 metres in diameter, were built between 4000 BCE and 2500 BCE, predating the Egyptian pyramids. The structures served as burial enclosures containing human remains along with cattle, sheep and goats.



## Man or Machine?

THE prestigious Commonwealth Short Story Prize came under fire after allegations that the winning entries may have been created using AI. The annual prize celebrates the best unpublished short fiction from the Commonwealth's five regions.

The debate began when experts questioned the authenticity of *The Serpent in the Grove*, the winning story for the Caribbean region by Trinidad and Tobago writer Jamir Nazir. Analysts noticed repetitive phrasing and a lack of stylistic nuance typical of generative AI models.

However, all the shortlisted writers have denied using AI.

The Commonwealth Foundation stated that AI detection tools are not fully reliable and that entrants certify the originality of their work.

There is a growing crisis in the creative arts, where institutions are finding it difficult to distinguish between human imagination and sophisticated algorithms.



## Gadget Grab



RAILWAY authorities in Bengaluru have arrested four men accused of stealing expensive electronic gadgets from passengers travelling on premium high-speed Vande Bharat Express trains. The arrests were made following multiple complaints of missing devices.

The accused targeted passengers carrying laptops, mobile phones and other costly devices. They slipped into the air-conditioned coaches unnoticed, watched the travellers and seized the devices the moment the passengers left their seats to use the restroom or collect food from the pantry.

The men were found in possession of stolen electronic items worth more than ₹2 lakh.

## Shattered Dreams

IN a setback for engineering graduates, US technology giant Oracle has reportedly withdrawn several campus placement offers made to students from leading Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and National Institutes of Technology (NITs). The revoked offers were



made during campus recruitment drives conducted in 2025. More than 50 students were affected.

The move comes weeks after Oracle carried out large-scale global layoffs as part of a restructuring exercise.

Most elite engineering institutes enforce a strict 'one student, one offer' policy. Candidates who accept an offer are barred from interviewing with other firms during the peak recruitment season. The affected students are now forced to re-enter a highly competitive job market just weeks before graduation, triggering immense anxiety.

## Legacy Comes Home



THE Netherlands has officially repatriated a set of 1,000-year-old copper plates to India, marking a significant milestone in the country's efforts to reclaim its cultural heritage. This was the culmination of decades of diplomatic negotiations.

The artefacts, popularly known as Anaimangalam or the Leiden Plates, date back to the Chola Empire of the 11th century CE. The plates are among the most valuable surviving records of that period.

The collection consists of 21 large and three smaller copper sheets weighing nearly 30 kilograms bound together by a massive bronze ring carrying the Chola royal seal. The plates feature inscriptions in both Tamil and Sanskrit documenting royal land grants to a Buddhist monastery in Nagapattinam and provide important insights into medieval South Indian administration, trade and cultural exchanges.

## Changing the Rules

BORN between the late 1990s and early 2010s, Gen Z now accounts for an estimated 40–45 per cent of online shoppers in the country. Indian Gen Zers are one of the biggest youth consumer populations around the world, currently exceeding 220 million.

Driven by Instagram reels and local micro-influencers, these young consumers prioritise convenience, personalisation and authenticity over brand loyalty. The shift is visible across industries ranging from fashion and beauty to electronics and food delivery.

The trend is not limited to metro cities. Even Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities are experiencing a boom in online shopping trends. According to industry estimates, India's online shopping market is expected to grow beyond ₹21 lakh crore by 2030, tripling its current value.



# Indian Jugaad

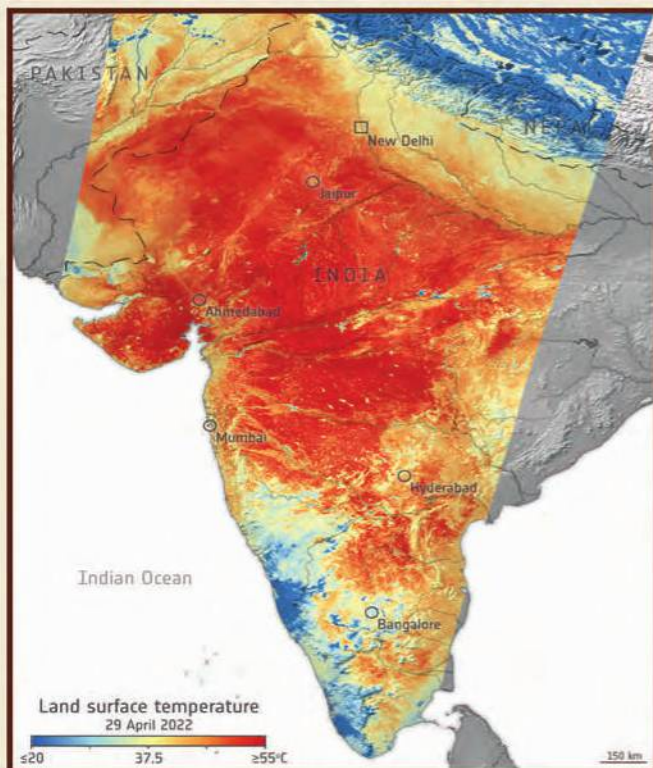
WEEKS after its high-profile inauguration, Delhi's first toll plaza without barriers at Mundka-Bakkarwala, has run into trouble.

The framework is designed as a Multi-Lane Free Flow system, aimed to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow. The toll plaza relies on AI-powered Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras and overhead FASTag readers to deduct charges seamlessly without vehicles having to slow down to pay toll.

However, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) said that drivers are actively rigging the system to dodge payments. They physically tamper with the High Security Registration Plates, bending, defacing or partially covering the numbers so that the overhead cameras are unable to read them. Other motorists are applying reflective anti-camera films or using mechanical plate flippers.

To curb this, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is tracking vehicles evading payment, and slapping digital penalty notices to the registered addresses. The NHAI is also actively upgrading the ANPR network to better detect obscured or manipulated plates.

Barrier-free toll payment is currently used in over 30 countries.



## Mercury Rising

THE dusty district of Banda in Uttar Pradesh's Bundelkhand region officially became India's hottest spot in May 2026, with the mercury breaching a staggering 48.2°C. The IMD issued a severe heatwave red alert for the region.

The extreme heat forced residents to remain indoors and prompted authorities to issue health advisories for increased risk of heatstroke, dehydration and other heat-related illnesses. Hospitals reported a rise in such cases, while power demand surged. Farmers were worried about the impact on crops and water shortages.

Local large-scale deforestation, drying riverbeds and extensive sand mining have transformed the rocky plateau terrain into an artificial heat incubator.

Other parts of Northwest and Central India were also reeling under brutal heatwaves.



## Roach Revolution

A UNIQUE political movement called the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) has captured the attention of millions of young Indians since May this year. What began as an online joke soon grew into a powerful symbol of youth frustration, resilience and political awareness. The movement was triggered after Chief Justice Surya Kant allegedly referred to unemployed Indian youth as cockroaches and social parasites. Instead of feeling insulted, youngsters embraced the image of the cockroach—a creature famed for its resilience.

Founded by Abhijeet Dipke, 31, a political communications strategist who once worked for the Aam Aadmi Party, the CJP's popularity spread across social media through memes, satire, and humorous videos. Its supporters used comedy to draw attention to serious issues such as unemployment, rising living costs, corruption, and examination irregularities.

The movement has attracted millions of followers on its X and Instagram accounts. The CJP has since organised protests in several Indian cities, including Delhi and Pune.

## Testing Troubles

TWO major issues—the NEET paper leak and the crash of the CBSE paper evaluation website—created confusion and anxiety for lakhs of medical college aspirants and CBSE Class 12 students.

The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET-UG), India's biggest medical entrance examination, was held on 3 May 2026. Soon after the exam, there were reports that parts of the question paper had been leaked, in a 'guess' paper that had been circulated earlier.

On May 12, the National Testing Agency (NTA) cancelled the NEET-UG results and announced a fresh test for June 21. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) was asked to investigate the matter. At least four students reportedly took their own lives after they learned the news. Those appearing for the test usually spend years preparing for it and some take it multiple times.

Around the same time, the CBSE paper revaluation portal crashed. Not only that, those who were able to access

the site met with glitches. The OSM (On Screen Marking) portal is used by CBSE examiners to evaluate scanned copies of answer sheets digitally. Several Class 12 students reported incorrect marking for seemingly correct answers upon receiving copies of answer scripts they requested for re-evaluation.





## A Feast of Cricket

THE ICC Women's T20 World Cup is the 10th edition of the Women's T20 World Cup. Hosted by England and Wales from 12 June to 5 July 2026, it is the largest edition so far with 12 teams in the fray. There are 33 matches at the group stage plus knockouts. The final will be held at Lord's. The defending champion is New Zealand.

For the first time, the event features 12 teams with the Netherlands making their debut. Scotland and Ireland qualified directly.

Harmanpreet Kaur leads India for the fifth time at the tournament. In 2024, the team exited at the group stage.

The team has a talented batting line-up including Kaur, Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues and Richa Ghosh. Deepti Sharma and Renuka Singh form the main bowling attack.

Bharti Fulmali, Nandani Sharma, Shree Charani and Kranti Gaud are making their debut in the T20 World Cup.

India crushed arch-rivals Pakistan in the opening group game on 14 June by 64 runs. They are in Group A alongside Australia, Bangladesh, Netherlands and South Africa.

## World's First Trillionaire



CEO of SpaceX, Elon Musk, already the world's richest man, became the world's first trillionaire on June 12 with Forbes estimating his wealth at \$1.1 tn. As of writing, SpaceX traded at around \$161 per share, following a successful public market debut where it raised \$75 billion in the largest IPO in history on June 11. The shares, initially priced at \$135, surged by over 19 per cent on their first day of trading.

The listing on the technology-focused NASDAQ index is seen as a test case for other companies with private valuations nearing \$1tn, including Anthropic and OpenAI. Both of those companies are likely to go public this year.

Prior to the share sale, Forbes put his net worth at around \$780 billion, far ahead of second-placed Larry Page, Alphabet co-founder.

# A Tribute to Gaudi

EVERY year, millions of tourists flock to see the Sagrada Família, the renowned church in Barcelona, Spain, designed by architect Antoni Gaudí. Soon, fans of the famed basilica will be able to build a miniature, but still pretty big, version.

Danish toymaker Lego will launch a 12,060-piece set of a 3D model of the landmark in November. The kit has many of the church's famous features, including the towers, the stained-glass windows, the apse, the crypt, the grand naves and the three main facades. The instructions for building the 60-cm-tall model are based on the actual construction sequence that Gaudí followed.

Lego's new set is meant to honour the 100th anniversary of Antonio Gaudí's death. Though the Sagrada Família is considered Gaudí's most iconic work, he died when it was only a quarter finished.



# All in the Family!



GRANDMASTER R. Praggnanandhaa made history at the 2026 Norway Chess championship in Stavanger on June 5, becoming the first Indian to win the prestigious title. He was victorious in his final four consecutive classical games, including a rare double win over World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen.

Though he was in last place midway through the tournament, Pragg crafted a miraculous comeback, reportedly after his mother Nagalakshmi gave him a morale-boosting talk. He won four back-to-back classical games against Alireza Firouzja, Magnus Carlsen, and Vincent Keymer.

Pragg finished with 18 points, one point ahead of American GM Wesley So. Magnus Carlsen, considered the GOAT in the chess world, had previously won the Norway Chess title seven times.

This has been a landmark year for the family as his older sister R Vaishali won the FIDE Candidates Chess tournament in April, a first for an Indian woman. She will face defending champion Ju Wenjun for the title of world champion later this year.



# Goal Rush!

**All eyes are on the beautiful game as the FIFA World Cup kicked off on June 11...**



THE 23rd edition of the tournament will end on July 19. For the first time ever, the tournament has three hosts—Canada, Mexico and the United States. Sixteen cities will host matches: 11 in the U.S., three in Mexico and two in Canada.

Mexico will make history by becoming the first country to host three World Cups, having previously hosted the 1970 and 1986 editions. Its legendary stadium, Estadio Azteca in Mexico City hosted the opening game between Mexico and South Africa and has a capacity of 80,024. The final will be held in the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey in the U.S.

Perhaps most remarkably, the 2026 edition is the first to include 48 teams, a big jump from the 32-team format in the past. Cabo Verde, Curaçao, Jordan, and Uzbekistan made their debut.

The Caribbean island of Curaçao is the smallest country ever to be part of a World Cup. It has a population of 158,000, not even enough to fill the Azteca stadium twice. Their manager, Dick Advocaat, broke down in tears before his team made their debut against Germany on 14 June, a heartwarming reminder of what this tournament means for so many.

Sadly, India have not qualified for the tournament. Despite this, some joy may be felt in knowing that there are four Indian origin players at this World Cup. Nishan Velupillay of Australia made his World Cup debut on 14 June, helping them defeat Türkiye 2-0. He thus became the first Indian-origin player to play at the World Cup since Vikash Dhorasoo for France in 2006.

### Teams to Watch

#### Spain

**Key player: Lamine Yamal**

Having won the European Championship two years ago in some style, Spain have come into this World Cup as one of the favourites. With an exciting squad boasting talent like Yamal, who is still only 18 years old, Spain will be expected to go far into the competition despite some doubt creeping in after their shock draw against Cabo Verde in their opening game.

#### France

**Key player: Kylian Mbappé**

France have had one of the strongest squads for at least the last two World Cups, and it is no different this time. Having won the trophy in 2018 and reached the 2022 final, they will be expected to dominate this time around too. With players like Mbappé, who has an amazing World Cup scoring record, and Ousmane Dembélé, the current Ballon d'Or (an award for the best player in a season) winner, they are frontrunners for the trophy.



## Argentina

### Key Player: Lionel Messi

Argentina have placed their hopes this time around on a balanced squad and their talisman, Lionel Messi, to inspire his nation. He did just that right in the first game against Algeria on June 17, scoring his first-ever World Cup hat-trick, equalling the all-time men's World Cup scoring record in the process. Time will tell if this Argentina team will become the first since Brazil in 1962 to defend the World Cup successfully.

## England

### Key Player: Harry Kane

Expectations for England to perform well at international tournaments have been sky-high in recent years with the emergence of a new generation of young talent. With their captain Harry Kane hitting the best form of his career, English fans will be demanding a strong showing in this tournament.

## Portugal

### Key Player: Cristiano Ronaldo

At 41 years old, Ronaldo is set to play in his sixth World Cup, a record he shares with Lionel Messi. But unlike Messi, his dream of winning the trophy is still to be realised. He may well become the first player to score in six World Cups. With a squad full of world-class players, Portugal will hope to set their hands on the trophy for the first time.

## The Trophy

The first World Cup trophy, the Jules Rimet Cup, was designed by a Frenchman. It stood 30 cm high and was made of gold-plated sterling silver.

The trophy was stolen from an exhibition in London in 1966 but was later found under a hedge by a dog named Pickles.



In 1970 Brazil were awarded the Jules Rimet Cup for good after becoming champions for the third time. The trophy was stolen again in 1983 and has never been recovered.

The current FIFA World Cup trophy is hollow and made of 75 per cent pure 18-carat gold and two circular bands of a semi-precious green stone called malachite. It stands 36 cm tall and weighs 6 kilos in total. The original trophy is kept at the FIFA Museum in Zürich, Switzerland. Winning teams are awarded a gold-plated bronze replica known as the FIFA World Cup Winners Trophy.

## Tidbits

- ◆ Brazil has won the most, five times, followed by Germany and Italy who have won it four times each. Brazil is also the only team to have played in every World Cup. Italy failed to qualify for the last three editions.
- ◆ The inaugural FIFA World Cup in 1930 was won by Uruguay, the host nation. So far, six of the eight champions have won at least one of their titles while playing in their homeland, except Brazil which lost the last time it hosted the tournament.
- ◆ In the initial few World Cups, very few teams participated as it took long to travel by sea—European teams would be reluctant if a South American country hosted the event and vice versa.
- ◆ An estimated 173,850 people watched the 1950 World Cup final between Brazil and Uruguay at the Maracana Stadium in Rio de Janeiro. The 2022 final in Doha had a television audience of 1.42 billion people.
- ◆ Maple the Moose (Canada), Zayu the Jaguar (Mexico) and Clutch the Bald Eagle (United States), are the mascots.
- ◆ 'Dai Dai' performed by Shakira and Burna Boy, is the official song. With English, Spanish, Italian, and French lyrics, it is a fusion of Latin pop and Afrobeat.



—Bharat Jayan

# THE CANTERVILLE GHOST

THE Otis family moved into Canterville Chase, a beautiful Tudor mansion, despite dire warnings from a number of people, including the owner Lord Canterville himself, that it was haunted.

"Oh, don't worry, Lord Canterville," said Mr. Otis with a shrug. "There is no such thing as a ghost."

Mrs. Otis was a no-nonsense middle-aged woman. Their elder son Washington was a handsome young man. The daughter Virginia was a lovely 15-year-old with a sweet and gentle nature. The Otis' 10-year-old twins were nicknamed 'the Stars and the Stripes' because they got whipped so often for mischief.

It was a beautiful July evening when they arrived at Canterville Chase. As soon as they entered the driveway however, the skies clouded over.

They were welcomed by Mrs. Umney, the old housekeeper whom Mrs. Otis had agreed to keep on. She had laid out tea for them in the library and the family sat down around the fire. Suddenly Mrs. Otis saw a dull red stain by the fireplace.

"Oh, Mrs. Umney, something has been spilled there."

"Yes," said the old lady. "It is blood!"

"It must be cleaned at once!" cried Mrs. Otis.

"It cannot be cleaned," declared she with a smug look. "It was here that Sir Simon Canterville murdered his wife Lady Eleanore in 1575. Nine years later, Sir Simon disappeared but no trace of his body was ever found. His guilty spirit haunts the house still."

"A stain that cannot be removed?" said Washington. "Nonsense! Pinkerton's Champion Stain Remover and Paragon Detergent will get it out in no time!"

He pulled out a small black stick from his pocket and set to rubbing the stain energetically. In a few minutes, there was no trace left.

"I told you so!" he said getting up with a grin. No sooner than he had uttered these words than there was a flash of lightning followed by a peal of thunder that rattled the stained glass windows.

That night the storm raged fiercely but nothing notable happened. In the morning, the bloodstain had reappeared. Washington erased it but the stain re-appeared every morning without fail, even when the doors and windows had been securely locked.

The next night, at 1 a.m. Mr. Otis was awakened by what sounded like someone dragging a rusty piece of metal. He got up and fetched a small bottle out of the cupboard. He opened the door. An old man stood in the corridor. His eyes glowed red, his long matted grey hair hung in untidy coils and he wore tattered clothes. From his wrists and ankles there hung heavy, rusted manacles and chains.

"My dear sir," said Mr. Otis, "you really must oil those chains. I have a bottle of Tammany Rising Sun Lubricator here. It removes rust and will stop all that clinking and clanking."

He placed the bottle on a marble table in the corridor, shut the door and went back to bed.

For a minute, the Canterville ghost stood there, dumbstruck at the man's audacity. Then he flung the bottle on the floor, where it shattered, and fled down the corridor, letting out hollow groans and emitting a ghastly green light. At the top of the stairs, two little boys came out of a room and a pillow whizzed past his head. The ghost vanished through the wall. He reached a secret chamber in the left wing and leaned against a moonbeam to catch his breath.





Never in his brilliant career of 300 years, had he been so insulted. The glorious (mis)deeds of the past paraded before his mind's eye. He thought of old Madame de Tremouillac who had awakened to see a skeleton in her armchair reading her diary. He recalled how he had caused a ruckus by juggling his own bones on the tennis court.

He could not bear it that he, the celebrated Canterville Ghost, should be offered lubricator and have pillows thrown at him by some Americans who claimed that they did not believe in ghosts.

The rest of the week the ghost did not stir out of his room, except to keep the bloodstain fresh. He had resolved to frighten the family so badly that they would vacate the house never to return. He turned up in various terrifying forms, but the family remained unperturbed and went about their daily chores. The twins tripped him up many times with string stretched out across the landing and even created their own 'Otis ghoste' with the help of a turnip, a pan, a broom and a white sheet. This last terrified the Canterville ghost who had never seen an apparition before.

He waited for the right opportunity, creeping about the house silently and unobtrusively, having reluctantly oiled the chains, and carrying a small sword for protection against the wily twins.

One afternoon, Virginia was passing the Tapestry Chamber, when she saw a movement. She entered the room and to her astonishment, she saw the Canterville Ghost sitting by the window. He looked so sad that

Virginia's heart went out to him. She tiptoed softly forward and spoke in a low voice.

"I feel very sorry for you," she said. "But if you behave yourself, no one will bother you."

"It is absurd to ask me to behave myself," cried the ghost turning around. "It is my duty to rattle my chains, groan, and walk the corridors at night. It is my reason for existing!"

"It is no reason at all," said Virginia. "You have been very wicked. We know you killed your wife."

"Yes, yes I admit it. She was so plain to look at, didn't know how to cook or to starch my collars. Even so, it was wrong of her brothers to starve me to death."

"Starve you to death? Oh, Mr. Ghost, I mean Sir Simon, I have a sandwich here. Would you like to eat it?" said kind-hearted Virginia.

"No, thank you. But you are much nicer than the rest of your horrid family."

"No!" cried Virginia stamping her foot. "It is you who are horrid! You stole my paints to make the bloodstain."

"Well," said the ghost meekly. "It is difficult to get real blood and besides, your brother kept rubbing it out. We Cantervilles have blue blood. But what would you Americans know about that?"

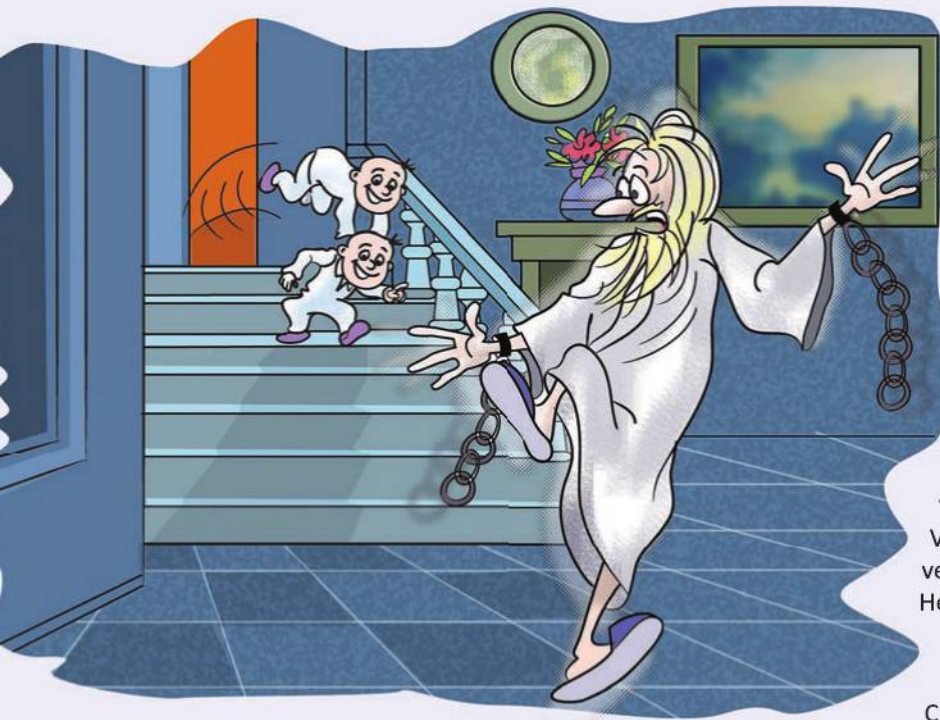
"Oh," said Virginia hotly. "You should come to America to broaden your mind."

"I don't think I would like America," replied the ghost.

"Good evening, then," said Virginia, coldly.

"No, no, please don't go Miss Virginia!" begged the ghost.





And so she took Sir Simon's hand and walked with him to the far wall of the chamber. It dissolved and there was a black void beyond. They stepped out and the wall closed behind them.

When Virginia did not turn up for supper, Mr. Otis and Washington searched everywhere, but she was nowhere to be found. The clock struck the midnight hour and the family was climbing the stairs to go to bed, when a panel at the top flew open and out stepped Virginia with a casket in her hand.

"I have been with the ghost, father," said Virginia. "Sir Simon. He is dead. He had been very wicked but he was sorry for all he had done. He gave me this casket of beautiful jewels before he died."

When they all trooped to the Tapestry Chamber to look at Sir Simon's skeleton which lay chained to the wall, one of the twins suddenly shouted: "Look, that withered almond tree is flowering!"

So it was that the Canterville Ghost was laid to rest at last. It was Virginia who placed the wreath made of white and pink almond blossoms on his coffin. As she did so, the moon came out from behind a cloud and flooded the graveyard with a silvery light. And faraway in the pine woods, a nightingale began to sing.

—A story by Oscar Wilde retold.

"I am so lonely. I want to go to sleep but I cannot. I haven't slept for 300 years."

"Poor, poor ghost," she said, her heart melting. "Don't you have a place where you can sleep?"

"Far away beyond the pine woods there is a little garden," said the ghost in a low voice. "There the grass grows long and deep, the nightingale sings below a cold moon and the yew tree spreads its branches over the sleepers."

"You mean the Garden of Death," whispered Virginia, her eyes filling with tears.

"Yes," said the ghost. "Death must be so beautiful. Have you read the prophecy above the library window?"

"Yes, but I don't know what it means:

'When a golden girl can win

Prayer from out the lips of sin,

When the barren almond bears,

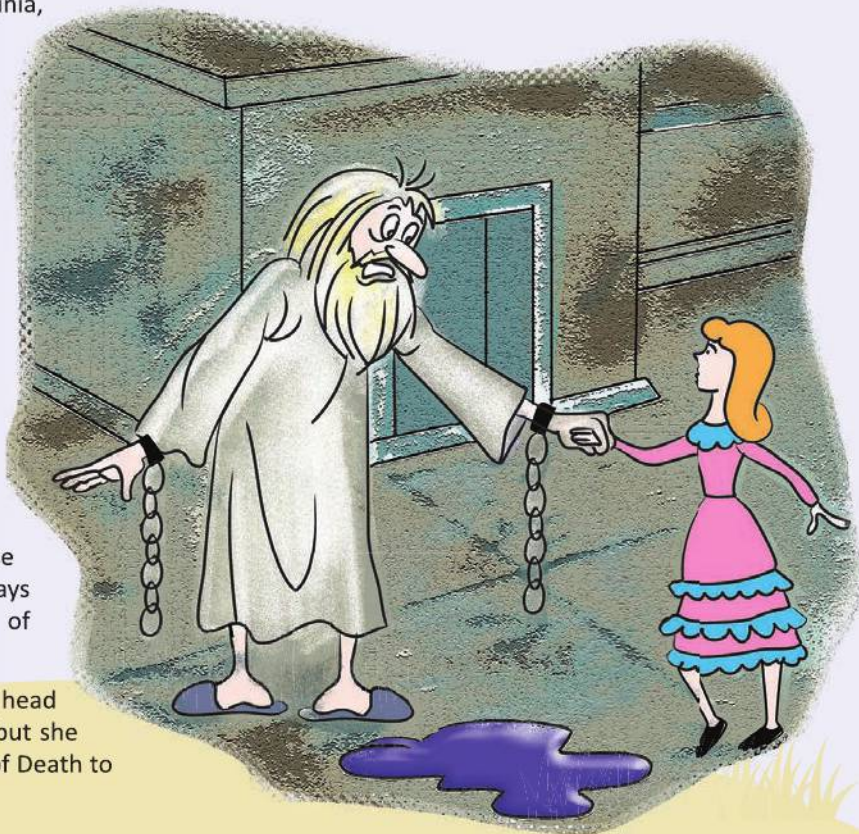
And a little child give away its tears,

Then shall the house be still

And peace come to Canterville.'"

"It means that you have to weep for my sins, because I have no tears; pray for my soul because I have no faith," said the ghost. "If you have always been sweet, and good and gentle, the Angel of Death will have mercy on me."

Virginia did not reply but knelt with her golden head bowed. Then she looked up. Her face was pale but she said firmly, "I am not afraid. I will ask the Angel of Death to have mercy on you."



# Hairy Adornments

THE Victorian era was known for its strange fads. One of the pet hobbies of Victorians was making jewellery out of hair!

Husbands proudly wore watch fobs fashioned from their wives' hair. Locks of hair taken from departed loved ones were mounted on rings and brooches and preserved in lockets (After her husband, Prince Albert, died in 1861, Queen Victoria wore a locket of Albert's hair around her neck).

Autograph books were filled with snips of hair from friends. Wreaths, necklaces, pendants and bracelets were woven out of human hair. Women swapped locks of hair as love tokens the way young girls today exchange friendship bracelets. Mothers

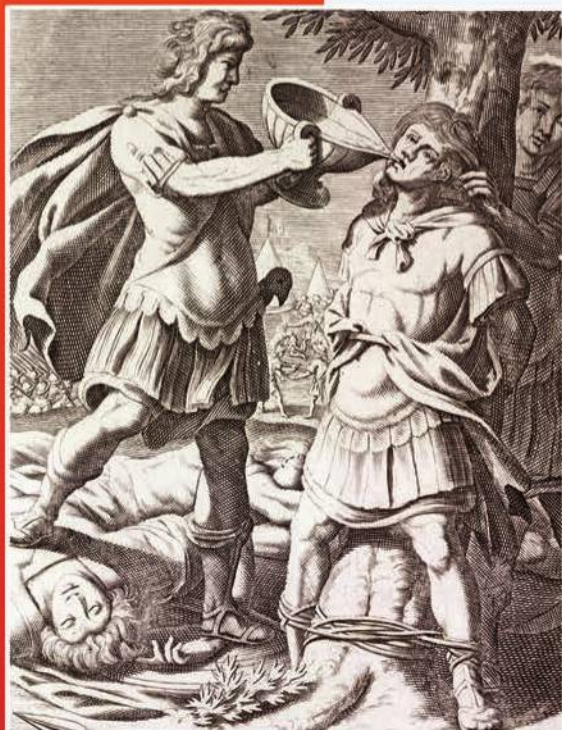
framed their children's hair after the first cut, or wore some of it as jewellery.

From Europe, the trend travelled to the US, where women made elaborate wreaths of hair and wire. The hair was of different colours since it was sourced from every member of the family. Women's magazines and stores carried patterns for hair wreaths. Entire dioramas were created out of hair.

At Leila's Hair Museum in Independence, Missouri there are 159 wreaths and 2,000 pieces of jewellery made of hair on display. You can even take a class on hair jewellery crafting at the Morbid Anatomy Museum in Brooklyn, New York. You just have to bring clippings of either your own hair or hair sourced from salons or wigmakers!



# Death by Gold



HISTORICALLY, execution by pouring a small amount of molten metal—gold or silver—down the throat of the condemned person was a common practice.

Marcus Crassus, a powerful and wealthy man and one of the Triumvirate in ancient Rome, led his final military campaign against Parthia, a region in modern Iran. Crassus and his legion were routed. According to legend, Crassus was executed by the Parthian king Orodes II by having molten gold poured down his throat—a symbolic reference to his greed for wealth.

In 1599, the Spanish governor of the colonial settlement of Logrono in Ecuador cheated the local Jivaro tribe while trading with them for gold. The tribe attacked Logrono, massacred 25,000 Spaniards and burned down the settlement. The Jivaro reserved a special punishment for the governor. They bound him to a stake and then poured a crucible of molten gold down his throat.

In 2003, scientists did an experiment to test if it was the hot metal or the steam it produced when it touched wet flesh that killed the victim. They used an animal larynx obtained from an abattoir and poured molten lead into it. The metal solidified within ten seconds but it was the steam that was the real killer.

# Rise and Rise of a 15-YEAR-OLD PRODIGY

*Vaibhav Sooryavanshi – The Future of Indian Cricket*

**V**aibhav Sooryavanshi's innings of 94 from 29 balls against Sri Lanka A in the final of the Tri-Nation Series at Dambulla on 21 June 2026 has added another significant entry to one of the most remarkable early careers witnessed in Indian cricket. During the course of that innings, the 15-year-old reached his half-century in just eleven deliveries, establishing a new world record for the fastest fifty in List A cricket.



Very few school students find their names in the record books of world sport. Fewer do so in cricket, a game followed passionately by hundreds of millions across continents. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has achieved precisely that distinction. At fifteen, the Bihar-born left-handed batter has already compiled a cricketing record that includes a first-class debut, record-breaking centuries in the Indian Premier League, a memorable innings in an Under-19 World Cup final, representation for India A, selection for India's senior T20 squad and the fastest fifty ever recorded in List A cricket. His innings of 94 from 29 balls against Sri Lanka A in the final of the Tri-Nation Series at Dambulla on 21 June 2026 placed his name at the top of another international record list and reinforced a view that has steadily gained acceptance across the cricketing world. Indian cricket is witnessing the emergence of a player of rare ability.

Born in Bihar in March 2011, Sooryavanshi entered organised cricket at a young age and moved rapidly through junior competition. Coaches recognised a batter whose technique was already well developed and whose approach reflected unusual self-belief. National attention first gathered around him in January 2024 when he made his first-class debut for Bihar. Participation in first-class cricket at such an age is rare. The selection reflected the confidence that coaches and selectors had developed in his game and introduced him to a standard of cricket where concentration and sound judgement are tested far more rigorously than in junior tournaments.

His appearances for India Under-19 soon strengthened his standing within the national structure. Facing strong international opposition, he produced a succession of innings marked by positive stroke-play and rapid scoring. A century against England Under-19 became one of the early landmarks of his career and confirmed his ability to score heavily against quality bowling. Consistent contributions across tournaments established him among the leading young batters in the country and increased interest in his future prospects.

The Indian Premier League brought a different examination. Rajasthan Royals invested in the young left-hander and introduced him to one of the most demanding franchise competitions in world cricket. The IPL requires players to compete against bowlers of international reputation while performing under constant public scrutiny. Sooryavanshi adapted impressively. He scored freely against both pace and spin and displayed a level of assurance rarely associated with players of his age.

His 35-ball century against Gujarat Titans in 2025 established him as the youngest centurion in IPL history and produced the fastest IPL hundred by an Indian batter. The innings immediately placed him among the most discussed young cricketers in the country. He followed that achievement with



another century during the 2026 season and emerged among the leading performers in the tournament. Across two seasons, he demonstrated an ability to influence matches against high-quality opposition and showed that success achieved in youth cricket could be reproduced against established professionals.

The ICC Under-19 World Cup in 2026 provided another major stage. India advanced confidently through the tournament and Sooryavanshi played an important role throughout the campaign. His most celebrated contribution came in the final against England, where he scored 175 from only 80 deliveries. The innings ranks among the finest produced in the history of the competition and played a decisive role in securing the title for India. Finals attract intense public attention and place considerable demands upon young players. His response in such circumstances strengthened a reputation that had already begun attracting notice beyond age-group cricket.

Selection for India A followed naturally. India A cricket occupies an important place within the pathway to senior international representation because it exposes players to stronger opposition and more demanding match situations. Sooryavanshi responded with the same assurance that had marked his earlier appearances. His record-breaking innings against Sri Lanka A at Dambulla became the most widely discussed performance of his India A career. During that



innings he reached his half-century in eleven deliveries, establishing a new world record for the fastest fifty in List A cricket. The achievement placed his name alongside some of the most explosive batting performances recorded in the format.

The performances in Sri Lanka came shortly after another important development in his career. National selectors included Sooryavanshi in India's T20 squad for the forthcoming tours of Ireland and England, bringing him to the threshold of senior international cricket. The selection represented a significant vote of confidence in a player who had already distinguished himself at domestic, age-group and representative levels. His performances for India A following that announcement strengthened the belief that he possesses the qualities required for the international game. A senior India debut now appears to be a question of opportunity and timing rather than distant possibility.

Those who have followed his career closely frequently point to the simplicity of his batting. He possesses a wide range of strokes and appears comfortable against different styles of bowling. Coaches have often spoken about the seriousness with which he approaches practice and his readiness to absorb guidance from senior players. Modern cricket demands constant adjustment because opponents study strengths and prepare detailed plans. Natural talent may open the first door, but continued learning often determines how far a player advances.

The attention surrounding Sooryavanshi is not based solely on records or statistics. Indian cricket has witnessed gifted young players before, but sustained success at progressively higher levels remains the true measure of potential. First-class cricket, international age-group competition, the IPL and India A cricket have each presented a different examination. His performances across those environments have strengthened confidence in his ability to compete at the highest level. Selectors, coaches and former players have repeatedly pointed to the speed with which he has adapted to stronger opposition and greater expectations, qualities that have become increasingly important in modern cricket.

At fifteen, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has assembled a record that would be impressive for a much older player. A first-class debut at an exceptionally young age, influential performances for India Under-19, record-breaking centuries in the Indian Premier League, a commanding innings in an Under-19 World Cup final, success for India A, selection for India's senior T20 squad and the fastest fifty in the history of List A cricket have established him among the most accomplished young cricketers of his generation. The years ahead will bring stronger opposition and closer examination, but the evidence available so far points to a player with the skill, discipline and temperament required for the highest level of the game.



# The Secret of the Casket

— Adapted from a Chinese tale

ON her 75th birthday, Ah-ling distributed her wealth among her four sons and announced that she would spend three months of the year with each son, in turn.

The arrangement worked well for a while and then the old woman found that the welcome she received at each son's house was becoming less and less cordial. Finally she began to feel positively unwanted. Now she saw her sons in their true colours. Money meant everything to them; people came second.

One day, Ah-ling's friend, Jing-mei, came to see her. Jing-mei was distressed to find her friend in such an unhappy state and advised her on what she should do. Afterwards, Jing-mei tearfully embraced her friend, and left.

A few days later, towards sundown, Ah-ling went out without telling anyone where she was going and returned an hour later, her clothes covered in mud.

"Where did you go?" asked her son, and then seeing that she was holding a small ornamental chest, hurried to her, his gaze riveted on the casket.

"What is that?"

"Something that could change all our lives for the better, in different ways," said his mother.

"What does it contain?"

"You'll find out when I'm dead and gone."

The young man lost no time in informing his brothers about the casket.

"It is obvious she has not given us all her wealth," said the eldest. "She must have kept back some of her more valuable gems. God alone knows how many caskets the wily woman has buried."

They questioned their mother but she refused to tell what the casket contained, or even if there were more caskets hidden elsewhere. Many a time, the brothers tried to open the casket in her absence but it was securely locked and they could never find the key.

But now Ah-ling no longer felt unwanted. Her sons and daughters-in-law fussed over her and went out of their way to make her feel welcome. In fact, now each son tried to persuade her to stay longer than the three months, but she never extended her stay, not wishing to show a preference for any son.

She passed away in her sleep, a few days before her 84th birthday. Her friend, Jing-mei came for the funeral rites and before departing handed over a key to the dead woman's eldest son in the presence of his brothers.

"This is the key to the casket," she said and left.

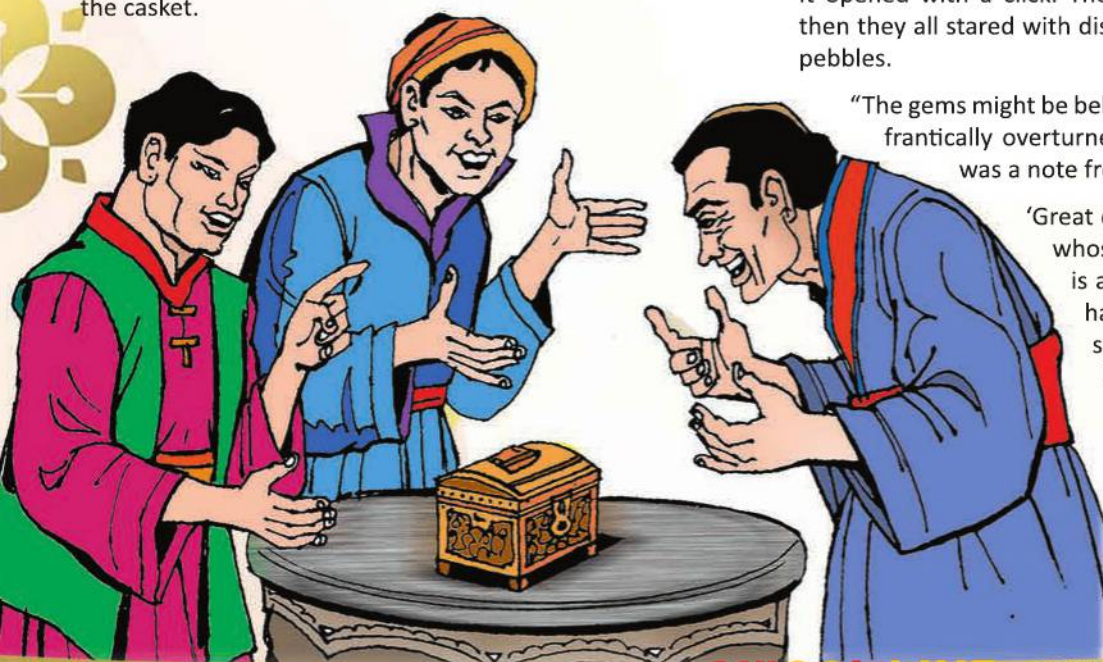
The sons and their wives hurried to the old woman's chamber in great excitement. This was the day they had been waiting for, for weeks and months and years. They bolted the door from the inside and huddled around the casket. With trembling hands, the oldest brother fitted the key into the lock and turned it.

It opened with a click. The man flicked open the lid and then they all stared with disbelief at the contents: ordinary pebbles.

"The gems might be below," said the oldest brother and frantically overturned the contents. All they found was a note from their mother. It read:

'Great disappointment awaits all those whose lives centre around money. It is a sad thing when an old woman has to resort to trickery to get her sons to look after her. It shows lack of character not only in her sons but in the mother too. You at least have time to change yourselves and my last message to you is: try to do so.'

—L.M. Fernandes



# Water Wars



*The monsoon replenishes that most precious resource on Earth—water. But with unequal distribution, rocketing demand and dwindling supply, water is fast becoming a resource that triggers wars.*

## Nor any Drop to Drink

THE famous line from Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is an uncomfortable echo of the truth. Earth is 70 per cent water, lending it the evocative name 'Blue Planet', but sadly 97 per cent of this water is salty. Only 3 per cent is freshwater and 77 per cent of that is frozen in glaciers and ice caps. The water cycle ensures that the amount of water on Earth has remained the same for two billion years.

## Where is the Water?

Most of the Earth's freshwater is stored in underground aquifers—amounting to around 10 million cubic kilometres. This includes freshwater that was created millions of years ago. Called paleowater, it is trapped in 37 major aquifers all over the world. After petroleum, it is the most precious non-renewable fossil resource.

The biggest of these fossil water aquifers is the Nubian Sandstone aquifer system in North Africa. Other aquifers are the Ogallala aquifer in the Great Plains of the US, the North China Plain aquifer, the Arabian aquifer system that supplies Saudi Arabia and Yemen and the Indus Basin aquifer that sustains India and Pakistan.

The rest comes from rainfall and glacial melt. This is the water that supplies rivers, lakes and man-made reservoirs, but a considerable part of it is lost to evaporation and leakages.

## Waterless Future

So much water is being pumped out from aquifers that land is sinking and civil wars are breaking over ownership of the aquifers.

In China's capital Beijing, the ground is sinking at a rate of four inches a year in some areas as the water in the giant aquifer below is pumped.

Beijing isn't the only city experiencing soil collapse. Other metropolises, including parts of Shanghai, Mexico City and the US state of California are also sinking.

The UN has predicted a global water shortage by 2030.

## Eenie Meenie...

The freshwater is not evenly distributed, with more than half contained in just nine countries: the US, Canada, Colombia, Brazil, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Russia, India, China and Indonesia.

China, India and the US are the three biggest consumers of water and most of it goes not for household use, but for growing crops, livestock farming and industrial production. Middle Eastern countries use the least because they have fewer natural sources of freshwater.

Not only is the distribution unequal among countries, but there is also a big difference between consumption in urban and rural areas and within these between the rich and poor. In Mexico City, for example, 9 per cent of the population uses 75 per cent of the available water.

Industrialisation and an exploding population (currently 8.2 billion, expected to reach 11.2 billion by 2100) have led to pollution, shrinking the amount of clean and drinkable water available.

Currently, around 17 per cent of the world's population, about a billion people, don't have access to clean water.

Inequitable distribution of water means that conflicts—major and minor—have erupted over water scarcity and ownership around the world.

In India, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have had a long-standing dispute over the sharing of Cauvery waters which has often led to violence.



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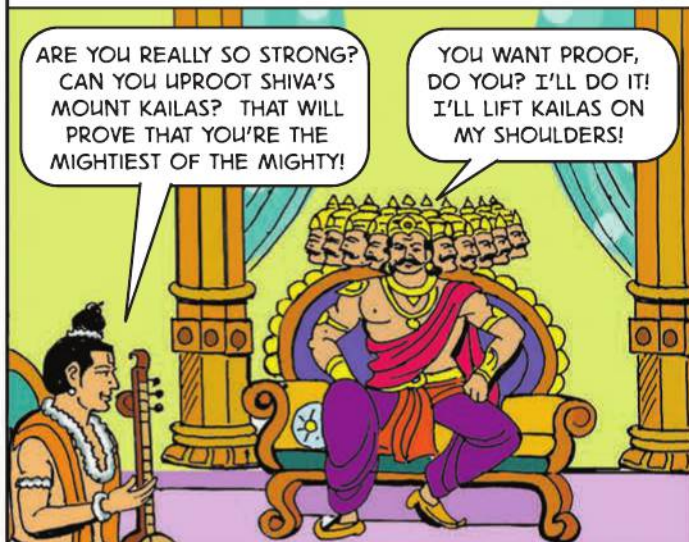
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# THE JYOTIRLINGAS OF SHIVA

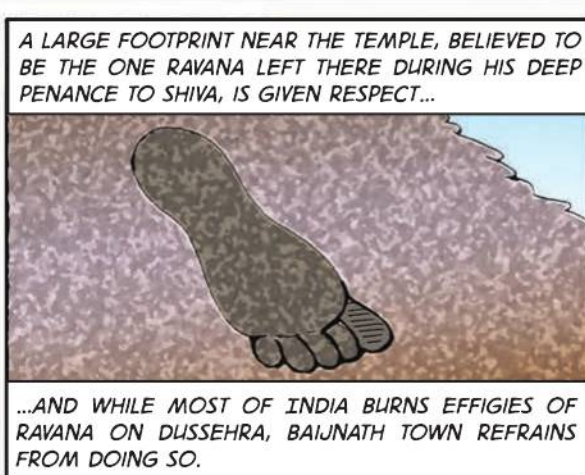
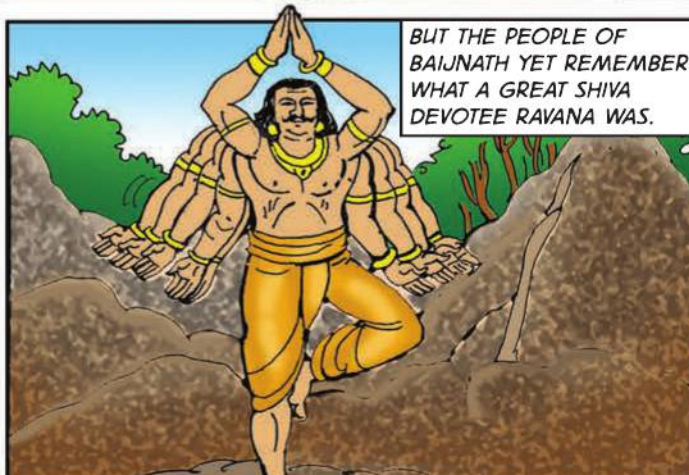
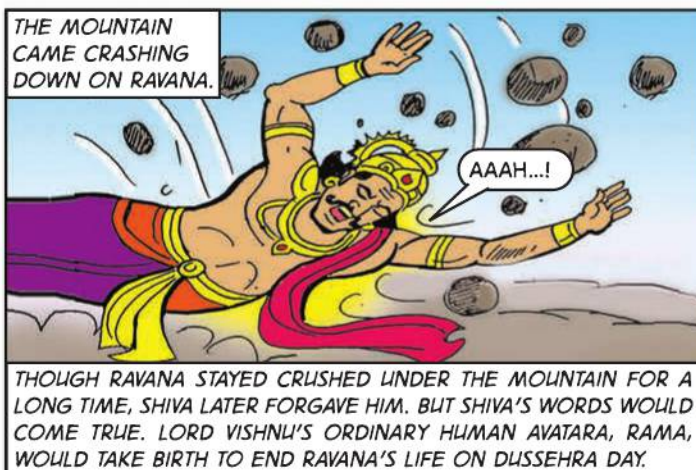
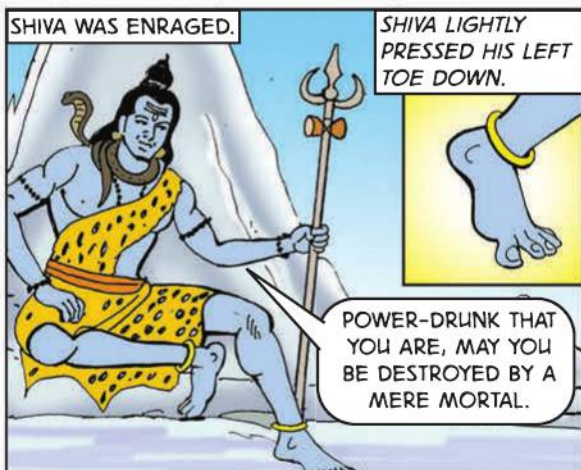
**STORY SO FAR:** THE BAIJNATH TEMPLE IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE STORY OF HOW RAVANA RECEIVED THE WISH-FULFILLING JYOTIRLINGA FROM SHIVA.

Script:  
Gayatri Madan Dutt  
Artwork:  
M. Mohandas

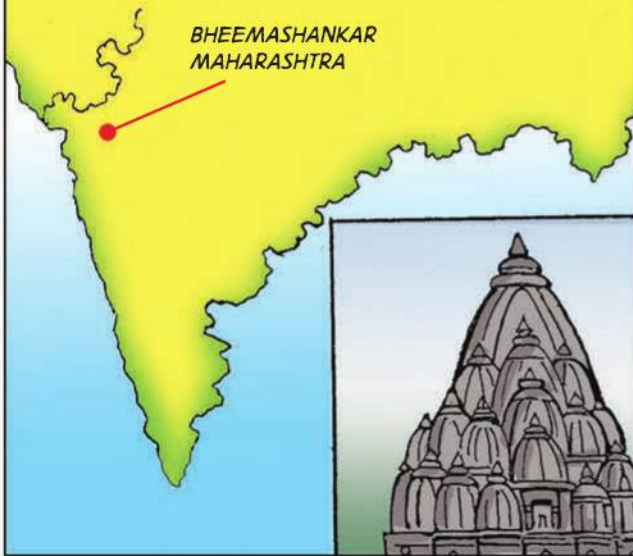
THE JYOTIRLINGA GRANTED RAVANA HIS DEAREST WISH. HE BECAME SO POWERFUL THAT EVEN THE GODS FELT AFRAID. THEY SENT THE MISCHIEF-MAKER, NARADA, TO TRICK HIM-



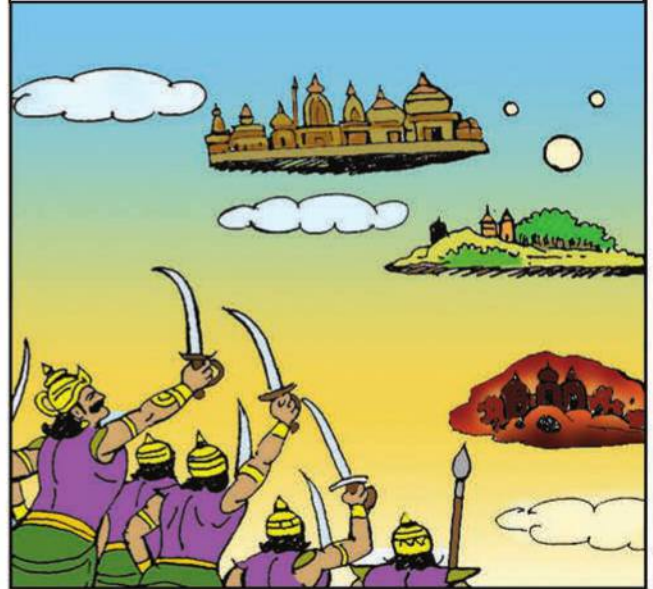
AND RAVANA WENT TO DO JUST THAT! HE ABSORBED HIS OTHER HEADS INTO HIMSELF TO GET PROPER BALANCE, AND-



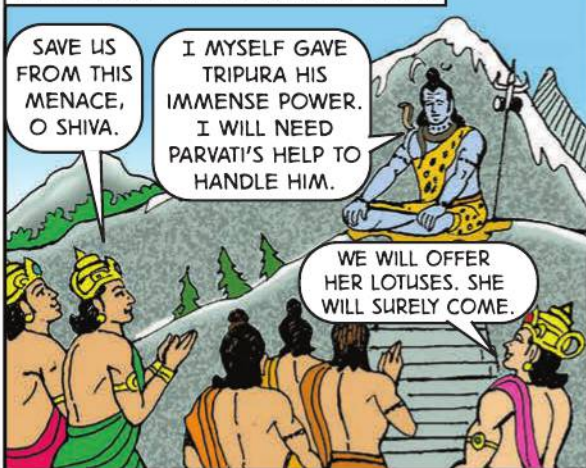
## The Bheemashankar Jyotirlinga



LONG, LONG AGO, AN ASURA NAMED TRIPURA, TRUE TO HIS NAME, BEGAN TO HARASS THE THREE WORLDS: HEAVEN, EARTH AND THE LOWER REGIONS.



THE GODS AND SAGES WENT TO KAILAS.



ONE OF THE LOTUSES OFFERED BY THE GODS OPENED WIDE, REVEALING NONE OTHER THAN PARVATI HERSELF.



SINCE SHE APPEARED TO HAVE TAKEN BIRTH FROM THE LOTUS, HER NAME IN THIS STORY IS KAMALAJAA: BORN FROM THE LOTUS.

KAMALAJAA STEPPED OUT OF THE LOTUS AND JOINED WITH SHIVA. AS THEY DANCED...



TO BE CONTINUED

# Hiding in Plain Sight

**Who doesn't enjoy a game of hide-and-seek? But the 'hide-and-seek' that nations play during war is far from fun.**

INVADERS aim to strike without warning, while defenders strive to stay alert and stop them before any damage is done. To catch invading warplanes, radar (radio detection and ranging) was invented in the late 1930s.

However, it also sparked a race to create aircraft and ships that could hide their signatures from radar. This marked the beginning of stealth technology.

## How Stealth Works

Radars can detect enemy planes and ships by identifying their 'signatures'—features like size, shape, heat, sound or visible trails that make them stand out. Stealth technology reduces the 'signature' of an object to a minimum, making it harder for sensors like radar, infrared or sonar to detect it.

In the 1960s, Russian physicist Pyotr Ufimtsev, known as the 'father of stealth', explained how electromagnetic waves bounced off objects. To evade radar, the area that reflected the signals—the object's Radar Cross Section (RCS)—had to be as small as possible.

In the 1970s, engineers began designing aircraft with shapes that deflected signals away from radar

and using materials that absorbed radar waves. The goal? To shrink the RCS to less than 0.1 sq. m—about the size of a small bird—making the object nearly impossible to detect! This breakthrough led to the development of the first stealth aircraft.

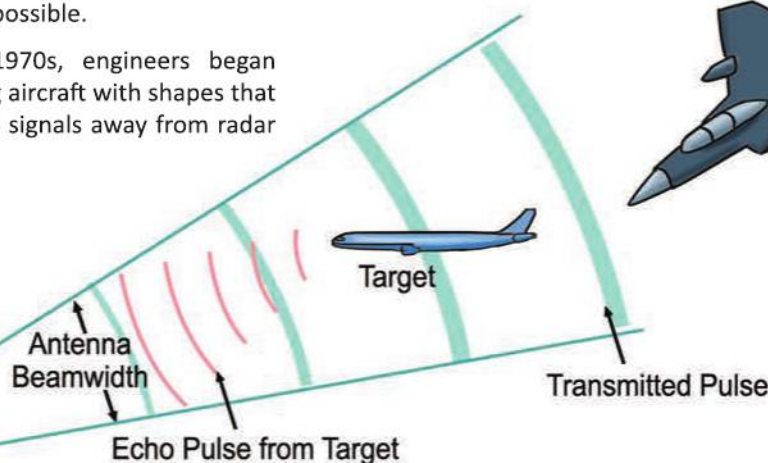
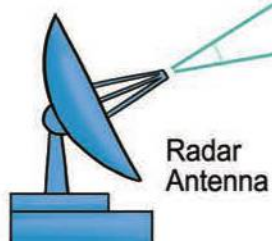
## Take Off

The world's first stealth fighter, the F-117 Nighthawk, was based on a concept plane called Have Blue, which had facets like a diamond. It was nicknamed 'Hopeless Diamond' (a playful jab at its appearance and shaky performance in the air).

In 1981, the F-117A Nighthawk stealth fighter made its debut. It was first used in combat during the 1989 Panama invasion and later during the 1991 Gulf War. Around the same time, the B-2 Spirit stealth bomber, with its bat-winged, boomerang shape and even smaller RCS, also entered service.



Pyotr Ufimtsev



Radar originated from Hertz's 1800s discovery that radio waves reflect off metal. In 1904, Christian Hülsmeyer built the first practical device to prevent ship collisions in fog. Full radar systems emerged over the next 20 years.

B-21 Raider



## Early Challenges

Stealth technology initially restricted the speed and aerodynamics of these aircraft. They could only fly at subsonic speeds (below Mach 1) because supersonic flight would produce a sonic boom and a significant thermal signature from their engines.

Their unconventional shapes made the planes aerodynamically unstable. However, advancements in computer technology helped pilots control them more effectively during combat.

Stealth aircraft were also coated with radar-absorbent paint to hide them, but this added weight and required costly maintenance after each mission.

## Modern Stealth

Today's stealth jets—the American F-22 Raptor (with an RCS comparable to a bumblebee), F-35 Lightning II, and the upcoming B-21 Raider—are smaller, lighter and more advanced. With sophisticated onboard systems and superior radar-absorbent coatings, they can fly at twice the speed of sound (Mach 2) and beyond.

## Spy vs. Spy

As stealth technology improves, so does anti-stealth technology:

- ◆ Radar systems using longer wavelengths that traditional stealth paint cannot absorb.
- ◆ Networks of multiple radar transmitters and receivers positioned in different locations.
- ◆ Infrared search and track (IRST) systems that detect heat signatures.
- ◆ Laser radar (LIDAR), which uses laser pulses to locate stealth craft.

In the future, quantum radar—a cutting-edge technology based on quantum mechanics—may outperform conventional radar in detecting and tracking stealth aircraft.



F-22 Raptor

## Tech made in India

India is also advancing in stealth technology:

- ◆ Researchers at IIT Kanpur developed a 'meta-material surface cloaking system' called Anālakhya for stealth applications.
- ◆ In December 2024, the Indian Navy launched INS Tushil, a stealth-guided missile frigate built with Russian collaboration.

## Silent Sentinels

Stealth submarines are designed to avoid detection by sonar. Their smooth, teardrop-shaped hulls reduce turbulence, while X-shaped rudders minimize noisy bubbles. Electric motors and shrouded propellers further dampen noise. The exterior is covered with rubber tiles, and interiors are lined with acoustic foam to reduce sound.

## DidYou Know?

In the 1940s, Jack Northrop designed the tailless YB-49 flying wing with smooth surfaces aimed to improve aerodynamics and fuel efficiency. Though not intended for stealth, these features incidentally helped it to evade radars. The project was shelved due to stability issues and limited interest in stealth at the time.

# Howzzat!

Cricket umpiring as a career...



CRICKET is an unofficial religion in India, and the swarming masses worship at the altars of their favourite cricketers. There are some people, though, who stand on the cricket ground ignored by the adulating fans, but are essential for the game. These are the umpires.

Umpiring is a high-profile, demanding but rewarding career for sports enthusiasts. The job calls for motivated individuals who take pains to study the cricketing laws and the finer points of the game, and are willing to go out and stand in the heat and dust to officiate.

Umpires are the final bosses on the field and ensure everyone plays fairly and the game runs smoothly. They maintain order, oversee the game and have the last word in any dispute. Before the game starts, they inspect the equipment and examine all the players. They keep track of the time and signal the start and stop of the game. They make sure everyone complies with the rules and regulations and make players aware of any infractions.

Cricketing experience is not a prerequisite for umpiring but it certainly helps. Having a strong background at a club or state level is an advantage. There are no strict educational criteria, but a degree in Physical Education helps build a foundation.

Candidates have to register with the local State Cricket Association for the umpire enrolment and certification programme. They must then clear the practical, oral and theory exams after a time of training. This assessment tests them thoroughly on their knowledge of the 42 Laws of Cricket. They can then be assigned to officiate local, school, district and junior level domestic matches.

After a few years of experience, they can then enrol for courses organised by the national governing body of cricket in India, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), or any other recognised cricket association. The examinations include an advanced Level 1 theory test as well as Level 2 practical, viva and on-field assessments during live matches. A high score of over 90 per cent is required to be inducted into the official BCCI Umpire Panel.

Women have increasingly broken barriers, moving from solely officiating in women's cricket matches to presiding over even

## MEANING OF DIFFERENT SIGNALS BY UMPIRE



men's domestic and international events. Major tournaments like the Women's ODI World Cup has even had all-female panels of match officials.

Earnings are on a per-match basis, starting from tens of thousands rupees for domestic matches to lakhs of rupees per game for high-profile tournaments like the IPL. Third (TV) umpires are paid slightly less than those on the field.

The job is usually part-time at an amateur or local level. State or domestic level umpires have regular contracts and umpiring serves as their primary occupation, though many umpires take on secondary jobs during the off-season. International elite umpires sign yearly contracts with the cricket governing body.

Umpires need good concentration, exceptional patience, excellent communication skills, conflict management abilities and the capacity to make spontaneous, high-pressure decisions. Fluency in English to be able to read and understand the Laws of Cricket as well as communicate with players is required. Officiating matches is physically demanding and requires sharp eyesight and high physical stamina. The job involves working in indoor and outdoor locations and exposure to all types of weather conditions. It requires travelling to various venues and working on weekends and holidays.

**Duration:** 2–10 years

**Job Opportunities:** Sporting clubs, local tournament organisers, private leagues, state and national governing boards.

### Did You Know?

The third umpire made his debut in the 1992–93 series between India and South Africa. He sees television slow motion replays to make decisions that the umpires on the field are doubtful about. These include runouts, stumpings, whether the ball has crossed the boundary, LBW, bat-pad catches and caught behind appeals by players. The first person to be given out LBW by a third umpire decision was Pakistan's Shoaib Malik.

## LEARN A WORD

Pluviophile is pronounced as ploo - vee - oh - file.

It means a person who loves the rain and enjoys its sights and sounds.

### Example:

Shweta always takes a walk in the first rains of the year like a true pluviophile.

The word comes from the Latin pluvial meaning 'rain' and the Greek philo which means 'to love'.



## WHAT'S THE OPPOSITE?

If enormous is huge, what's its opposite?

Hint: It's a four letter word that begins with 't'.

Answer: tiny

## FUN WITH IDIOMS

The word 'row' has multiple meanings. It refers to things arranged in a line (as in a row of students), and to propel a vessel (such as a boat) using an oar.



'Row' also means a noisy dispute or quarrel. How is the word pronounced when used in this sense?

i. roh ii. rou

Answer: rou

## SPELL CHECK

Which is right?

- a. phenemonon b. phenomenon  
c. phenemenon

Answer: b



## REBUS MAGIC

Identify the familiar phrase in the picture given here:

26194SAFETY58379

Answer: Safety in numbers.

The phrase 'There's safety in numbers' is used to emphasise that being part of a group makes us feel safer and more confident.

E.g. When it comes to taking tricky decisions, politicians always feel there is safety in numbers.

## FUN WITH IDIOMS

Did you hear about ...

... the burglars who did not know the password to the safe?

*They took a shot in the dark ... and got caught!*

A shot (or stab) in the dark is a wild guess or attempt that has very little chance of success.

Burglars who take a guess at passwords are most likely to get caught!



... the supervisor who found a crack in the tunnel wall?

He *took a dark view* of the matter.

When you hold a negative or pessimistic opinion about something, you are said to take a dark (or dim) view of that thing.



... the FBI agent who joined the mafia?

He *crossed over to the dark side*.

To cross over to the dark side is to engage in behaviour that is undesirable, immoral or evil.

The phrase has its origins in the Star Wars universe where the 'Dark Side' of the Force represents a destructive influence.



# Bali Beats

*Our adventure began on Bali's sunny western coast where the beaches of Kuta, Seminyak and Canggu are known for their soft white sands and clear blue waters. A hotspot of people, colourful shops and yummy food, Bali is a fascinating experience!*



The Kecak fire dance at the Uluwatu temple is a traditional Balinese dance in which elegant female dancers dressed in elaborate costumes enact the Ramayana, accompanied by the rhythmic chants of a male choir.



Snorkelling at the Manta Bay truly is a once-in-a-lifetime experience—you swim alongside multicoloured fish, vibrant coral reefs and, if you get lucky, manta rays!

Nusa Penida, an island off the east coast of Bali, is a hidden treasure with amazing beaches and tall cliffs. Its biggest star is the Kelingking Beach, known for its cliff that looks like a giant T-Rex!



Uluwatu, located on the southern tip of Bali, is known for its mesmerising sunsets—the sky turns into exotic shades of pink and orange every evening, just like in a painting. The Uluwatu Temple is built on a cliff with amazing views of the Indian Ocean.



Set in the central highlands of Bali, Ubud boasts lush green landscapes surrounded by terraced rice paddies and dense rainforest packed with wildlife, especially monkeys.



Mount Batur (1,700 m) is an active volcano, popular for its stunning sunrises. After trekking up to the summit, we were rewarded with hot banana pancakes and coffee with a side of breathtaking panoramic views. The descent was as unforgettably beautiful, with views of Lake Batur and a walk through a pine forest.



Bali is a dream destination for food lovers. We indulged in the most delicious clams, shrimp and fresh fish we've ever tasted. Vegans can also enjoy creative and delicious plant-based dishes.

Candi bentar gates are iconic split gateways seen at the entrance of Balinese temples and palaces. These intricately carved gates showcase Balinese architecture featuring motifs of gods, demons and mythical creatures.



Photographs and text  
by **Moha and Isha Paranjpe**



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# HYDERABAD TO HOST SECOND SEASON OF ARCHERY PREMIER LEAGUE **THIS OCTOBER;** **WORLD'S TOP ARCHERS TO COMPETE**

**The 11-Day Archery Spectacle Featuring the World's Best Archers to Light Up Hyderabad's People's Plaza, Necklace Road, from October 8–18**

**N**ational, June 10, 2026: Hyderabad is set to become the center of the archery world this October as the Archery Premier League (APL) arrives in the City of Pearls for its second season. From October 8 to 18, People's Plaza on Necklace Road will host eleven days of elite competition, bringing together six franchise teams and many of the world's finest archers for a sporting spectacle.

Initiated by the Archery Association of India (AAI), and backed by the Government of Telangana, Season 2 builds on the success of a landmark inaugural edition in New Delhi last year. The league will once again bring Olympic champions, world champions, world number ones, and some of the biggest names in archery to Indian shores, as Hyderabad prepares to host a world-class sporting spectacle. Leading Indian archers include former World No. 1 and four-time Olympian Deepika Kumari, four-time Olympian Atanu Das, 2023 Compound World Champion Gold Medallist Ojas Deotale, top Compound archers Jyoti Surekha, Abhishek Verma and Olympian Ankita Bhakat, alongside an elite field of international stars.

Launched in 2025 with the objective of strengthening India's Olympic medal prospects in archery, the Archery Premier League (APL) was conceived as a platform that enables Indian archers to compete in a high-performance environment.

The league for the first time brings together recurve and compound archers both men and women shooting together in competitive conditions while introducing a unique 15-second shot clock, five seconds shorter than

the 20-second limit used in Olympic and World Archery competitions—placing an added premium on speed, composure and decision-making under pressure. APL is currently the world's only franchise based archery league and enjoys the support of World Archery and World Archery Asia.

**With the advent of season 2 on the horizon, Mr. Anil Kamineni, Director, APL, said,** “We are delighted to bring the Archery Premier League to Hyderabad for Season 2 and are grateful to the Government of Telangana for its support in making this possible. The city has a rich sporting culture, a deep appreciation for excellence, and the energy to host an event of this scale. The inaugural season demonstrated not only the immense potential of archery as a spectator sport but also the value of creating a platform where Indian archers can compete alongside the world's best. As we build on that foundation, our focus remains on strengthening India's archery ecosystem, providing world-class competitive opportunities for athletes, and inspiring the next generation of talent. We are confident that Hyderabad will provide the perfect stage for a memorable second season.”

The 11-day tournament will feature six franchises, Mighty Marathas, Rajputana Royals, Prithviraaj Yodhas, Kakatiya Knights, Chero Archers and Chola Chiefs — with a total of 48 Indian and international archers competing across recurve and compound disciplines. Each team will field a mixed squad of eight archers, with the competition following a double round-robin format. The top four teams at the end of



the league stage will advance to the semi-finals, culminating in the final on October 18.

**Speaking on the occasion, Shri Virendra Sachdeva, Secretary General, AAI and Director, APL, said,** “APL was conceived with a larger vision of strengthening India's pathway to Olympic success in archery. For our athletes to consistently compete for medals on the world's biggest stages, they need regular exposure to the highest standards of competition, and that is what the league seeks to provide. At the same time, APL has created a unique model for the sport globally by combining elite international participation with a franchise-based format that brings archery closer to fans. We believe the league is not only helping raise the competitive standards of Indian archery but is also contributing to the evolution of how the sport is presented and experienced worldwide.”

Season 1 crowned Rajputana Royals as champions and featured several leading names from the sport, including Olympic gold medallist Mete Gazoz and Compound World Champion Ella Gibson. The league also attracted interest from prominent personalities, including actor and entrepreneur Ram Charan. The Hyderabad edition is

expected to feature another strong field of Indian and international archers as the competition enters its second season.

Further details on team squads, player signings, the match schedule and broadcast partners for the October 8–18 tournament will be announced in the coming weeks.

#### **About Archery Premier League (APL)**

The Archery Premier League (APL) is India's premier franchise-based archery league, initiated by the Archery Association of India (AAI). Launched in 2025, the league brings together leading Indian and international archers in a team-based competition designed to showcase the sport in an engaging and spectator-friendly format. Featuring six franchise teams named after Indian dynasties, APL combines recurve and compound archery both women and men shooting together for the first time in a unique 15-second shot clock that adds speed, strategy, and intensity to every contest. Through world-class competition and innovative presentation, APL aims to broaden the sport's appeal, strengthen India's archery ecosystem, and create greater opportunities for athletes and fans alike.

## PRESS RELEASE

# BWF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS NEW DELHI 2026 TICKETS GO ON SALE ON BOOKMYSHOW WITH EARLY BIRD OFFERS

**World's top shuttlers head to IG Indoor Stadium, August 17–23, as India hosts badminton's biggest stage for the first time in 17 years**

**New Delhi, June 23, 2026:** The Badminton Association of India has announced BookMyShow as the Official Ticketing partner for the BWF World Championships New Delhi 2026, with tickets now live on BMS from June 22. Over 6,000 seats will be available for the general public across multiple price categories, exclusively through BookMyShow, as the Championships return to India after 17 years at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium from August 17 to 23.

The field will feature badminton's biggest stars, including Lakshya Sen, PV Sindhu, and men's doubles pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who will compete at a BWF World Championships on home soil for the first time. Joining them will be icons of world badminton—women's singles leader An Se-young, Chinese men's contenders Shi Yu Qi and Li Shi Feng, and Indonesian pair Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Shohibul Fikri, among the most consistent performers on tour. Traditional South-East Asian powerhouses Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia will also be strongly represented.

Tickets to catch the action live start as cheap as INR 499 under the Early Bird offer, with six seating categories available in total. Fans can also avail a 15 per cent Early Bird discount across the remaining five categories for a limited period, with premium seating priced at INR 5,500 for a complete matchday experience. Ticket sales will open in phases, beginning with the opening four days of competition, with category pricing remaining consistent through to the Finals.

"The BWF World Championships coming to New Delhi is a landmark moment for Indian badminton and for the fans who have fuelled the sport's rise over the years," said Sanjay Mishra, General Secretary, Badminton Association of India. "Our ambition is not just to host a world-class tournament, but to deliver a fan experience that matches the occasion, accessible, seamless and worthy of an event of this stature. We're delighted to partner with BookMyShow to bring that vision to life and connect more fans with the sport's biggest stage."

"With over 15 million tickets sold monthly and more than 2 billion page views on BookMyShow which is India's leading live entertainment and culture platform, badminton has built an

incredibly passionate community in India and the World Championships is a special moment for that fanbase," said Anil Makhija, COO – Live Entertainment & Venues, BookMyShow. "We're excited to help bring fans closer to the action in New Delhi."

Organised by the Badminton Association of India under the aegis of the Badminton World Federation, the Championships are the sport's most prestigious title event. When India hosted the BWF World Championships in Hyderabad in 2009, it marked the beginning of a defining period for Indian badminton. Since 2011, India has won a medal at every edition, emerging and establishing itself as one of the sport's leading nations.



# Eyes Right!

MOST of us assume contact lenses are a modern-day invention but Italian artist-scientist Leonardo da Vinci actually made references to wearable lenses way back in 1508! Nearly four centuries later, Sir John Herschel, an English astronomer, suggested using the mould of the eye to create made-to-order contact lenses. Four decades later, in 1887, a German glassblower named Muller used Herschel's ideas to create the world's first glass contact lens.

These early lenses were very heavy and covered the entire eye. By the 1940's the glass was substituted with plastic

but these 'hard lenses' were still far from comfortable. In the late 1950s, Czechoslovakian chemist Otto Wichterle's experiments with a new type of softer plastic, paid off. Soft contact lenses were introduced by Bausch & Lomb in 1971. They are thinner and extremely comfortable to wear. The lenses are also available in many colours and types.



## Zany Ideas

YOU'VE seen loads of wacky keychains but we are quite sure you have never pocketed a tree before! Pet Trees is the latest fad sweeping Japan. Sure to appeal to wannabe horticulturists who don't relish the idea of mucking around with mud, these trees are real but they are so dinky they make a bonsai look gigantic! Each Pet Tree comes in a minuscule plastic jar with a key ring attachment. All you have to do to keep your mini-tree in great shape is to water in once a week by placing it in a bowl of water for a few minutes.



## Quiz



1. What is the only rock that floats?
2. When a solid directly changes into a gas what is it called?



Answer: 1. Pumice 2. Sublimation

# It's All in the Mind!

## KEY TO SUCCESS

IN the dynamic world of sports, mental resilience and split-second decisions often make the difference between winning and losing. At the highest level of sport, it is not enough to just train harder and longer—athletes need a 'combat mindset' to perform consistently, maintain focus and overcome challenging moments. This is where mental conditioning or performance coaches play a crucial role. These sports psychology professionals help athletes realise their potential and succeed at the highest level of competition.

A mental conditioning programme typically includes one-on-one sessions involving memory exercises, emotional training, positive self-talk, visualisation, and breathing and relaxation techniques to relieve anxiety and stress. It also equips participants with tools to handle distractions and bounce back from setbacks.

The core idea behind mental conditioning is simple: success depends not just on talent and hard work but also on mindset. Needless to say, this principle applies to every field, especially student life.



## When the going gets tough, the tough get going!



Paddy Upton

At the 2024 Paris Olympics, the Indian men's hockey team clinched the bronze medal. This was India's second bronze after winning one at Tokyo 2020.

The team owed their new-found confidence and resilience to mental toughness training.

As part of their programme, the team was taken to the Swiss Alps for daring activities on mountains and cliffs. These experiences helped players conquer fear, break out of their comfort zones, and build a stronger mindset. Paddy Upton, the team's mental conditioning coach, ensured that players stayed focused by keeping them away from distractions like phones and social media during this time. Upton, who has worked with over 100 athletes including the Indian cricket team, maintains that mental strength is often the key to success.

## Student Life — a Minefield of Challenges

Be it exams or peer pressure, or simply emotional changes brought on by adolescence, challenges are inevitable in student life. Many students experience moments of doubt, despair and distractions. Can mental conditioning help here? Absolutely!

Imagine that you are having a particularly rough time in school and you slump into a chair saying, "I've hit a wall."

Now picture the school counsellor stepping in, saying, "Then let's build a door!"

School counsellors are trained professionals who can provide mental conditioning to shift your mindset from "I can't" to "I'll figure it out." They are your mental fitness instructors, guiding you to build resilience, focus and self-discipline. Just as you build physical fitness in a gym, your mental fitness too can be improved with training.

School counsellors also work with parents and teachers to create supportive learning environments tailored to individual needs. They teach strategies for managing time and stress while fostering habits that will benefit students well into adulthood.

So the next time you feel stuck, remember: it's not about avoiding the wall. It's about conditioning your mind to climb over it.





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## WHY SATTUZ?



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**EASY TO  
DIGEST**

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**COOLING  
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BHARAT



RIGHT OR WRONG ?

## THE PLANTS ON THE CART

“It is not that the needy are always deserving,” he said, his voice even, that suggested the thought had been revisited many times before.

The car stood at the red signal, held in a pause that softened the city’s edges, where engines hummed and impatience hovered loudly into honks. Outside the window, a little girl stepped forward, thin, alert, and practiced, tapping first with a bit of apprehension, and then with growing insistence, her knuckles striking the glass in a rhythm; a habit formed through repetition. Her face carried no plea and no smile, but there was expectation, as though the outcome had already been decided somewhere beyond her control.

His daughter shifted in her seat, drawn toward the movement, uncomfortable with the persistence of the girl outside.

“But she is poor,” she said after pondering a little. “She is a victim of circumstances. None of this is her fault.”

The girl tapped again, her eyes already searching the face behind the wheel.

“What is the harm in giving her a hundred rupees?” the

daughter continued. “It hardly matters for us.”

He kept his gaze on the signal ahead, his posture unchanged.

“It matters for her,” he said, “and it matters in ways that will change her behaviour forever.”

She turned toward him, surprised. “How?”

“When money comes with no effort,” he said, choosing his words carefully, “it teaches a lesson before anyone realises teaching has begun. Easy becomes expectation. Expectation alters choices.”

“That sounds harsh,” she said. “She did not choose this life.”

“No,” he replied. “but behaviour adapts even when there is no choice.”

She folded her arms, her certainty giving way to discomfort.

“You are assuming she will remain like this.”

“I am saying habits grow roots,” he said. “Once they do, changing that becomes difficult. It demands more than intention.”

She watched the girl for a few seconds, then spoke again.

"Everyone cheats if no one is watching. Allow it, remove fear and consequence, and anyone can cross a line."

He allowed a small smile. "Which is why judgment matters."

The signal changed, and the car moved forward. In the rear view mirror, the girl blended back into the crowd, already tapping at another window with the same practiced persistence. The road opened, yet the conversation continued.

"So what should we do?" the daughter asked. "Look away?"

"No," he said. "Watch. Watch her. Watch yourself. Kindness is not the danger. Carelessness is. Help should build strength, not the weakness of dependence."

"How will I know who deserves help?" she asked. "I am still figuring things out myself. I am in Grade 9 only after all"

"You will learn," he said. "Pay attention to greed."

"Greed?" she asked.

"Yes," he said. "Need asks for enough. Greed asks for more than enough. Greed ignores limits. Greed is not guided by need. It has no limits." He repeated, then added, "neither wealth nor poverty protects anyone from it."

They drove on as sunlight filtered through the trees lining the road.

"Do you remember the plant seller who came home this morning?" he asked, a little later.

Her expression changed immediately into one of amused smile. "Yes. He looked devastated. What did you do to him?"

"I did nothing," he said. "He did it to himself."

That morning had unfolded at an unhurried pace. From the balcony, he had noticed the familiar cart moving down the street, leaves swaying, clay pots brushing against one another with soft, uneven sounds. The cart carried around forty-five plants. Some stood tall and balanced, others leaned awkwardly, smaller yet alive with potential that patient care could awaken.

An idea had occurred naturally in his mind. The new office terrace stood bare, open to sun and wind. A spread of green would transform it.

He asked the guard to let the seller in and he himself came down to the lawn, settling into a chair with the newspaper and coffee, observing every action.

The seller entered with a respectful nod. "Namaste, sir," he said.

"How many plants today?" he asked.

"About forty-five, sir," the seller replied, encouraged by the interest.

He examined the cart with attention. The difference between the plants was clear. Some were strong and full. Others would need care, manure, and time.

"How much for the entire cart?" he asked.

"Forty thousand rupees, sir," the seller said promptly, confidence firm in his voice.

The figure hung in the air. Even the guard shifted with discomfort.

"That is high," he said. "You are sure?"

"Yes, sir," the seller replied. "These are premium plants."

"Then I can't buy the entire cart," he said.

He nodded, then leaned forward and began pointing, one plant at a time. He nodded again at the guard. The Guard was expected to take them out of the cart one by one.

"That one. And that. Yes, that one too."

The guard followed his direction carefully, lifting each indicated pot and placing it aside. Twelve plants were removed, many, but not all, among the healthiest and best on the cart. The buyer was looking at the plants so taken out, with satisfaction as the seller watched him closely. With every plant moved aside, his expectation had grown. By the twelfth, his confidence had sharpened into certainty. In his mind, the best had already been chosen.

"These are the best ones sir," the seller said, seizing the opportunity

"These twelve alone are worth thirty-five thousand rupees." It was a little preemptive, which even the guard understood.

The shift was subtle yet unmistakable. Earlier, forty-five plants had cost forty thousand. Now, twelve were being priced at nearly the same value.

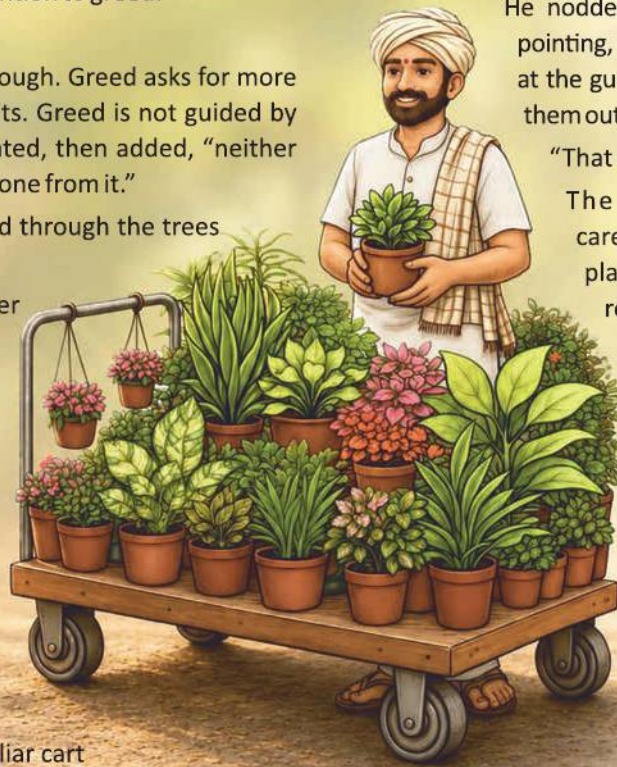
He listened patiently, not questioning the plant seller or his logic.

He turned to the guard after pondering over the offer for a while.

"The plants you removed," he said evenly, "are the ones that I do not want."

It took a while for the words to sink in. Then the seller froze.

"Take the remaining thirty-three plants," he continued. "Pay



him five thousand rupees.”

He folded his newspaper and stood, ending the exchange, and walked away.

For a moment, the seller remained motionless. Confusion replaced confidence. The logic was his own, yet its outcome stunned him. The remaining plants also included rare varieties. Selling them for five thousand felt absurd. Yet no bargaining had occurred. His own valuation had simply returned in another form.

Later, the daughter noticed the seller pleading at the gate, his voice strained, the twelve rejected plants being placed back onto the cart as the rest were carried away.

“I would have bought everything,” the father said afterward. “We pay fairly. We do not exploit people who struggle. But he mistook generosity for ignorance.”

The daughter listened attentively.

“He believed opportunity meant advantage,” he continued. “In that belief, judgment slipped. Where did I negotiate with him? I only paid what he asked for, isn’t it?”

“But greed feels natural,” she said.

“Need asks for enough. Greed asks for more than enough. Greed ignores limits. Greed is not guided by need. It has no limits.” He repeated, then added, “neither wealth nor poverty protects anyone from it.”

“Yes,” he replied. “Which is why it needs to be checked at times.”

They drove in silence for a while.

“So the lesson is never help?” she asked.

“No,” he said. “The lesson is to help with care. To give in ways that preserve

dignity. To support effort and growth.”

“And the girl at the signal?” she asked, her voice softer now.

He thought for a while before answering. “There are times when holding back is a more responsible behaviour. Being in need does not automatically mean deserving. Needy are not always deserving”

She looked out of the window again. The city appeared layered, filled with meanings that had earlier gone unnoticed.

She did not speak again. “The world is complex” she surmised. And within that complexity, she understood the beginning of discernment, a subtle form of responsibility that would guide her long after the traffic lights changed and the plant-cart and the girl at the traffic signal disappeared from her mind’s view.

June 25, 1975 : This Date, Fifty One Years Ago !

## A Date with History: The Emergency in India

The Constitution of India contains provisions that enable the Union Government to exercise extraordinary powers under exceptional national circumstances. These provisions were incorporated by the framers of the Constitution to ensure that the State could respond effectively to situations beyond the scope of ordinary governance. Such powers were intended for rare and exceptional conditions, where the security or stability of the nation was believed to be under serious threat.

On the night of 25 June 1975, a National Emergency was proclaimed across the country. It remained in force until 21 March 1977, spanning twenty-one months. During this period, the constitutional framework remained in place, but several features of democratic governance functioned under extraordinary conditions.

The authority of the Central Government expanded substantially. Preventive detention laws were invoked to detain many political leaders, journalists, activists and others without the usual criminal trial process. Newspapers and magazines came under pre-publication censorship, requiring official approval for many reports before they could be published. Public meetings, demonstrations and organised protests were subjected to strict restrictions. In many cases, citizens were unable to obtain judicial enforcement of certain Fundamental Rights that ordinarily enjoyed constitutional protection.

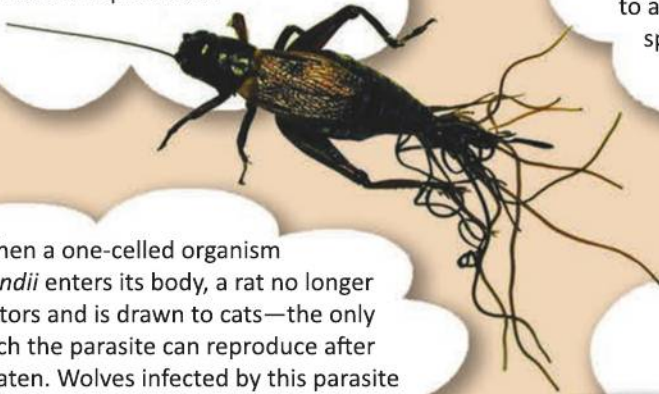
The period also witnessed a number of administrative and economic initiatives. Measures were introduced to improve governmental efficiency, control inflation, strengthen public discipline, increase industrial production and accelerate developmental programmes. Supporters viewed these initiatives as examples of decisive administration, while critics questioned the extent to which constitutional freedoms and institutional independence had been curtailed.

In January 1977, fresh general elections were announced. The elections were conducted in March, producing a change of government through the ballot box. Executive authority passed peacefully to the newly elected government, demonstrating the continuity of India's constitutional system. Independent India has experienced National Emergencies arising from external aggression. The proclamation of 25 June 1975, however, remains the only Internal Emergency declared under the Constitution. Owing to its far-reaching constitutional, legal and administrative consequences, the period occupies a distinctive place in the history of the Republic. It is examined extensively in constitutional law, political science, modern Indian history and public administration as an important case study in the exercise of extraordinary constitutional powers and their effect on democratic institutions, civil liberties and the functioning of the State.

# MIND CONTROL

**In nature, many parasitic creatures turn their hosts into zombies to do their bidding.**

The horsehair worm enters the body of a cricket or a grasshopper through its food. Once in, it controls the insect, luring it to jump into water where it may drown. The worm then emerges from the host and enters the water where it lives and reproduces.



When a one-celled organism called *T. gondii* enters its body, a rat no longer fears predators and is drawn to cats—the only host in which the parasite can reproduce after the rat gets eaten. Wolves infected by this parasite are more likely to become pack leaders as they become bolder.

The *Glyptapanteles* wasp is able to make the *Thyrintina leucocerae* caterpillar serve as its bodyguard! The infected caterpillar host wraps the wasp's larvae in its silk to protect them and vigorously guards them from predators by violently swinging its head at them.



An ant infected by the zombie-ant fungus (*Ophiocordyceps unilateralis*), isolates itself from the ant colony in humid conditions suitable for the fungus' growth and attaches itself to a leaf until it dies. The fungus then sends out a spore-bearing fruit which explodes, infecting other unsuspecting ants.

The ichneumon wasp lays its eggs on an orb-weaver spider's body. Under the influence of the larvae, the spider weaves a cocoon for the parasite, which then feeds on the spider. The larvae live in the cocoon until they emerge as adult wasps.



The sacculina is a barnacle that invades the body of a green crab. It destroys the female's reproductive system and lays eggs inside it. It can trigger hormonal imbalance in an infected male, making it act like a female! Even if the parasite is removed, the male can develop female reproductive organs.





# THE DAWN OF LEADERSHIP

Investiture Ceremony 2026–27 at Lotus Valley International School, Gurugram

**G**urugram, May 2026: Lotus Valley International School, Gurugram hosted its Investiture Ceremony for the academic session 2026–27 with great enthusiasm and dignity,



marking the formal induction of the newly elected Student Council. The event reflected the school's commitment to nurturing responsible and visionary young leaders.

The ceremony was graced by Shri Raghav Chandra, Professor at Indian Institute of Management Calcutta and former IAS officer, along with Ms. Sureena Uppal, Member Managing Committee. In her address, Director-Principal Ms. Anita Malhotra congratulated the council members and encouraged them to lead with humility, integrity, and purpose, emphasizing that true leadership lies in inspiring others.

A highlight of the event was the ceremonial march of the Student Council, followed by the conferring of badges and oath-taking. The school choir's rendition of Aarambh Hai Prachand added energy to the occasion. Shri Raghav Chandra's keynote address inspired students to embrace discipline, honesty, compassion, and resilience in leadership.

The newly elected leaders—President, Vice-President, Head Boy, and Head Girl—delivered confident speeches outlining their vision. A graceful dance performance titled "A Sky Full of Stars" showcased student talent and creativity. The ceremony concluded with the National Anthem, leaving the audience inspired and proud.

# Lotus Valley Learners Participate In Indo-japan Educational Exchange Programme



**Students from Lotus Valley and Shibaura Institute**



**L**otus Valley International School, Gurugram participated in the Indo-Japan Educational Exchange Programme in collaboration with Shibaura Institute of Technology Junior and Senior High School, Tokyo, from 26th May to 2nd June 2026.

The immersive programme provided students with a unique opportunity to experience Japanese culture, education, and daily life through interactions with host families and participation in school activities. Learners explored prominent cultural landmarks, including Asakusa Temple, Shibuya, Odaiba Seaside Park, and the Miraikan Museum, while also engaging in meaningful academic exchanges.

The programme fostered global perspectives, cultural understanding, and lasting friendships, strengthening educational ties between India and Japan and enriching students with invaluable international learning experiences.

# The Mango Showdown

ALPHONSO is the king of mangoes!" Rohan declared, picking up a golden-yellow fruit. His newly-wed wife Priya rolled her eyes.

"You Goans and your Alphonso obsession! Langra has the perfect balance of sweetness and tanginess," she countered, reaching for a green mango.

The elderly shopkeeper, Sharmaji, watched with amusement as the young couple—still wearing matching T-shirts from their software company's retreat—launched into what was clearly not their first mango debate.

"Alphonso has that velvety texture that melts in your mouth," Rohan insisted. "The aroma is like a marriage of sunshine and honey!"

Priya scoffed. "Langra's flesh is fibre-free with a divine fragrance that Alphonso can't match. In Faridabad, we'd wait all year for the Langra season."

"That's because you hadn't tried Alphonso yet. In Goa, we know mangoes!"

"Oh, and we in UP don't? We have mango orchards older than your entire state's tourism industry!"

Sharmaji cleared his throat. The couple, suddenly aware they were creating a spectacle, paused.

"I've heard this debate for forty years," the shopkeeper said with a twinkle in his eye. "Perhaps a blind tasting could give you an answer?"

The couple agreed eagerly.

The shopkeeper's granddaughter, Meera, tied blindfolds around their eyes while Sharmaji sliced both varieties. With a mischievous smile, he switched the plates before serving them.

"Mmm... the sweetness is perfect," Rohan mumbled through a mouthful.

"Such incredible texture," Priya sighed contentedly.

After they finished, Meera removed their blindfolds.

"So, who won?" Rohan asked.

"Well, young man from Goa, you just finished praising Langra. And madam from Faridabad, you've been enjoying Alphonso all along."

The couple stared at each other before bursting into laughter.

"I guess we're both right," Priya conceded.

"And both wrong," Rohan added, hugging his wife.

## Mango Mania Across India

Every June, mango festivals light up India. Goa's annual Alphonso Festival transforms beaches into mango marketplaces, with contests for the largest fruit and sweetest pulp. Meanwhile, Saharanpur and other places in Uttar Pradesh host the grand Mango Mahotsav, where orchards compete for the 'Perfect Langra' title.



HADDIRAJ



Ashwin &amp; Abhijeet



# IT'S A BOO-TIFUL WORLD!

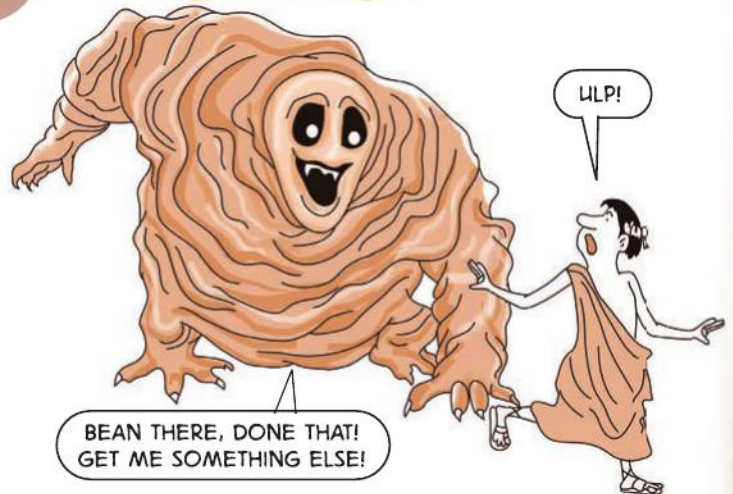
*You think vampires and werewolves are scary? Wait till you meet these creatures from the deepest, darkest recesses of folklore.*

### Once Upon ATime In Rome...

LEMURES, also known as larvae, were evil spirits that Ancient Romans believed in. Their belief was so strong that they even had a whole festival dedicated to them!

The lemure is the angry, mean spirit of someone who hasn't been given a proper funeral. It can take fearsome forms and appear out of the darkness to haunt its relatives or cause them harm. To protect themselves from these spirits, Romans performed a ritual called Lemuria annually, usually on certain nights in the month of May.

For the ritual, the father of the house would get up at midnight, throw black beans over his shoulder and recite requests for the lemures to leave his house alone. He would keep his gaze averted the entire time, so that the lemures could gather and feed on those black beans in peace. If the



lemures were not happy with the offerings made by the head of the family, then the man would bang bronze pots loudly to scare them away.

### Highland Fiend

ACCORDING to Scottish legends, a kelpie is a water demon that mainly inhabits lakes. Its actual form is that of a horse, but it can shape-shift into a human when it pleases. But, even then, its feet remain horse-y. So, if you spot a person with hooved feet, gallop the other way!

Kelpies are known to lure people into the lakes and drown them (or eat them—whatever they feel like). In its horse avatar, a kelpie can elongate its back so as to carry several riders into the water in one go. And once they all reach the deep end ... there's no one who can help-ie!



### Desi Ghost

THIS one's completely 'Made in India'. 'Besho' comes from the Bengali word *baash*, which means bamboo. And *bhoot* is the word for 'ghost'. So *besho bhoot* is a spirit that haunts bamboo gardens.

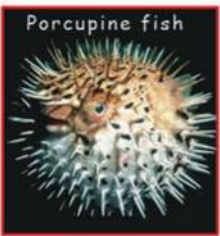
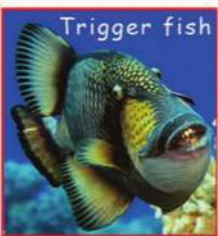
Folks in Bengal and in Bangladesh believe that it is unsafe to walk past these areas after dark. The spirits lay down a bamboo or make it lean low, so that passersby may try to cross it. When they do, the ghosts pull the bamboo back really hard, causing grave injury or even death. Maybe, that's what bamboo really means... 'bam', the whacking sound of the wood and 'boo', the sound of the *bhoot* hooting at its prey!



POT POURRI

Spot Them!

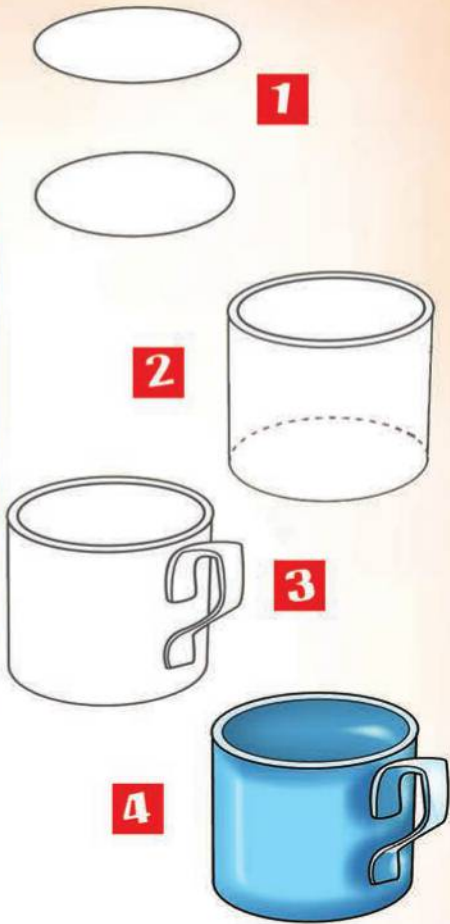
A seahorse, a butterfly fish, a triggerfish, a porcupine fish and a clownfish lived in a coral reef. One day a shark came prowling around and all of them hid in a hurry. Can you spot where they are hiding?



Answer:

Easy Draw

Draw a mug in four easy steps.



Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every horizontal row, vertical column and 2x3 box has the digits from 1-6 without repeating them in the same row, column or box.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 4 |   |   | 3 |   |
| 2 |   |   | 5 |   | 1 |
|   |   | 4 |   |   |   |
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| 5 |   | 1 |   |   |   |

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| 2 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| 4 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 3 |
| 6 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 |
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Answer:

**Bhootnath and Vetala**

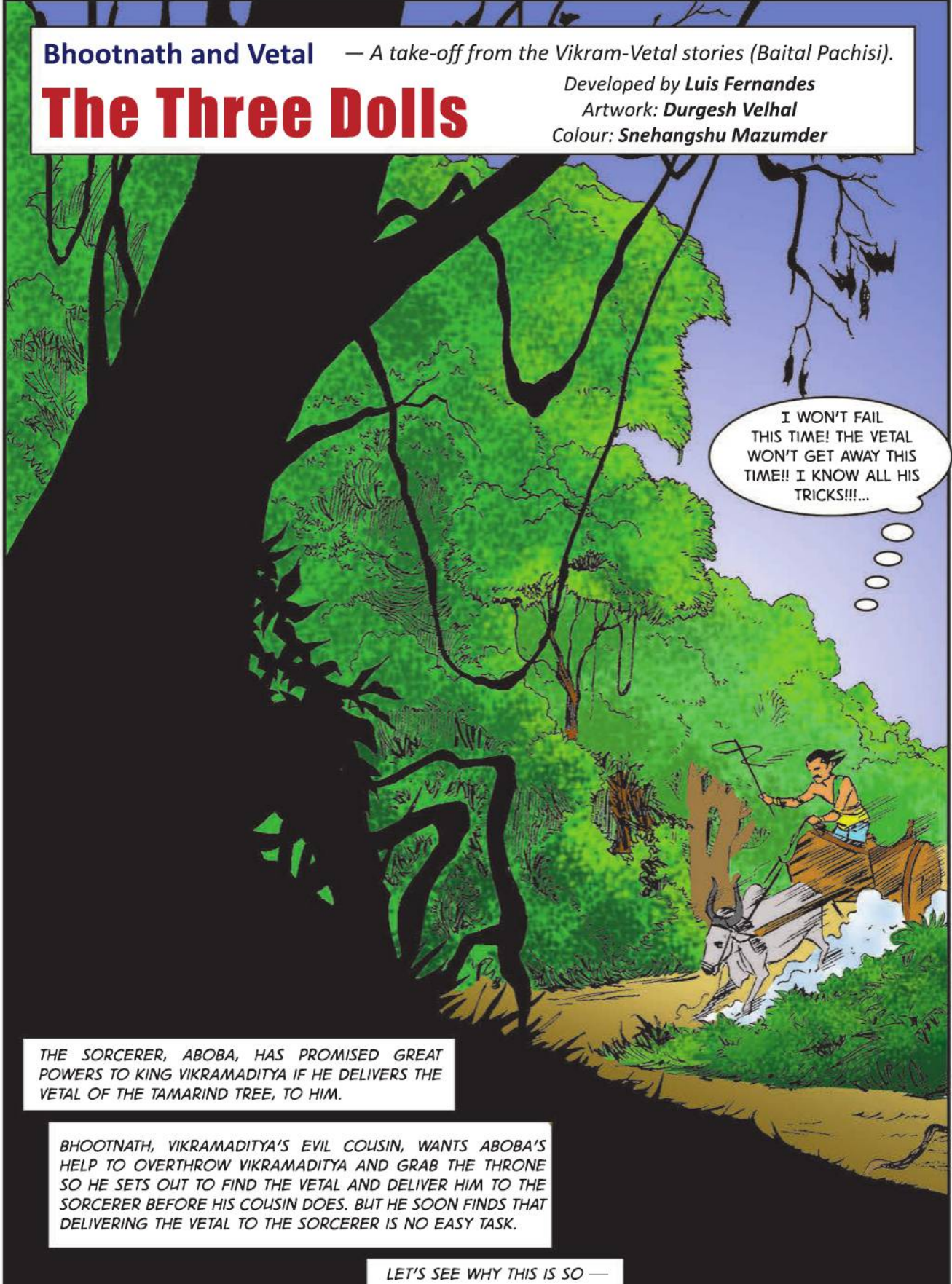
— A take-off from the Vikram-Vetala stories (Baital Pachisi).

# The Three Dolls

Developed by **Luis Fernandes**

Artwork: **Durgesh Velhal**

Colour: **Snehangshu Mazumder**

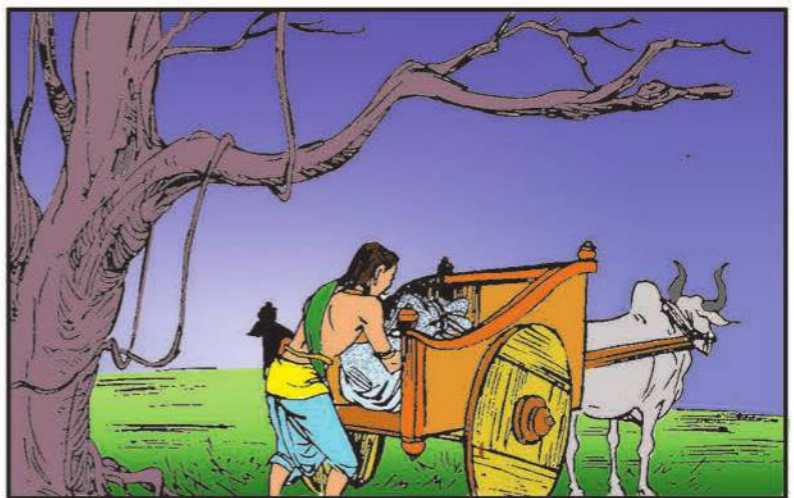
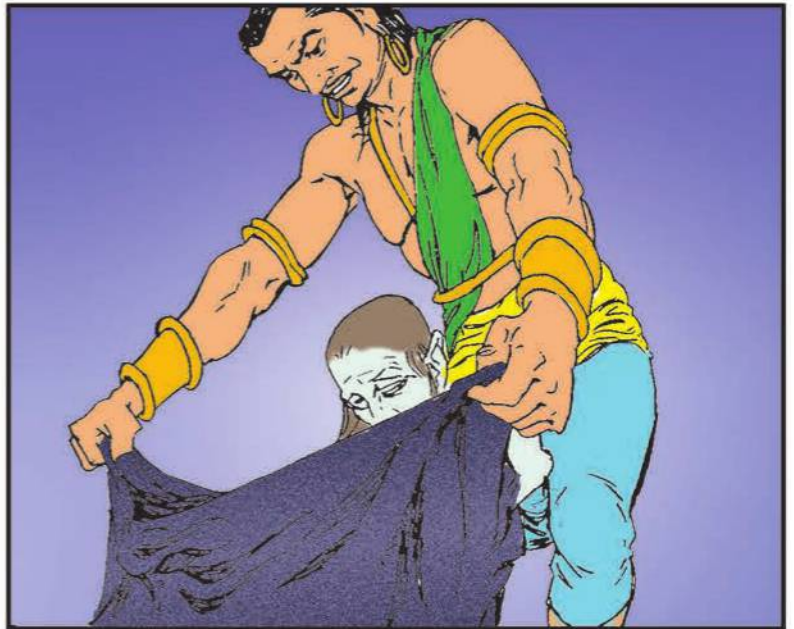
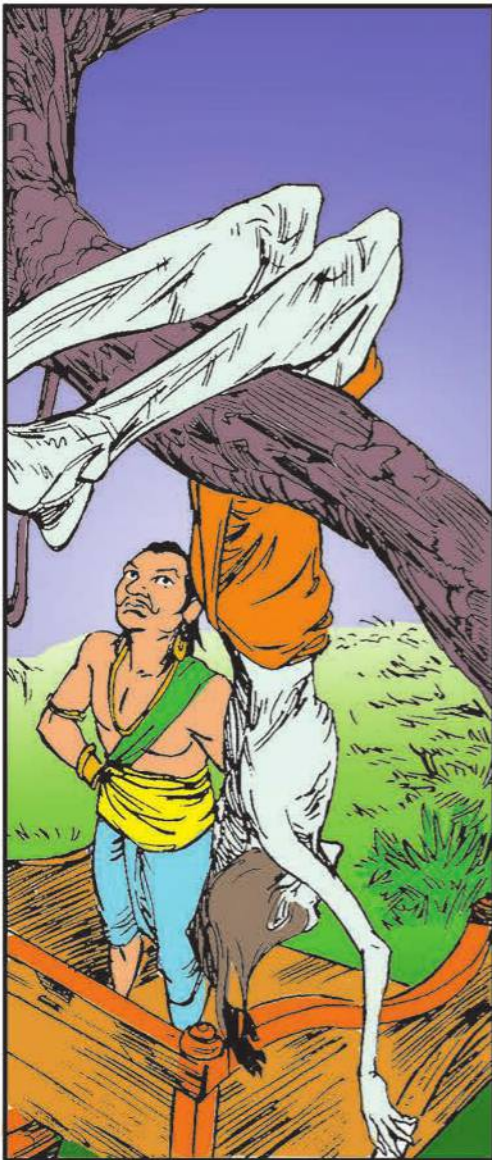
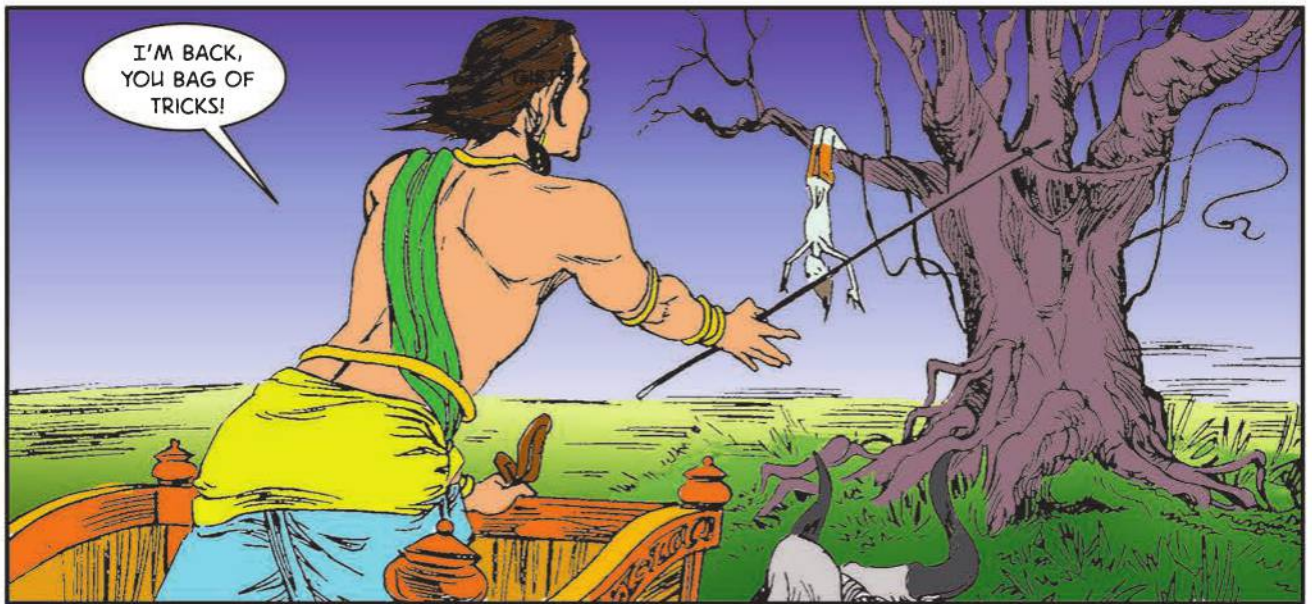


I WON'T FAIL  
THIS TIME! THE VETALA  
WON'T GET AWAY THIS  
TIME!! I KNOW ALL HIS  
TRICKS!!!...

THE SORCERER, ABOBA, HAS PROMISED GREAT POWERS TO KING VIKRAMADITYA IF HE DELIVERS THE VETALA OF THE TAMARIND TREE, TO HIM.

BHOOTNATH, VIKRAMADITYA'S EVIL COUSIN, WANTS ABOBA'S HELP TO OVERTHROW VIKRAMADITYA AND GRAB THE THRONE SO HE SETS OUT TO FIND THE VETALA AND DELIVER HIM TO THE SORCERER BEFORE HIS COUSIN DOES. BUT HE SOON FINDS THAT DELIVERING THE VETALA TO THE SORCERER IS NO EASY TASK.

LET'S SEE WHY THIS IS SO —



TO BE CONTINUED

**SIMPLY DELICIOUS!**

# Dahi Vadas

## -With a difference!



### What you need:

Two slices of wheat bread, curd, tomato sauce and some chopped coriander leaves.

### To make the vadas:

- ◆ Remove the crust from the slices.
- ◆ Place the slices in a plate and cover them with curd.
- ◆ Pour tomato sauce on top.
- ◆ Decorate with kothmir or coriander leaves.

### To make it crunchy:

Add chopped onions and sev before you decorate the dahi vada with coriander leaves.

# Mango Fluff

**You need:** Two fleshy ripe alphonso mangoes; a large cup of cold milk, vanilla ice cream and 2 teaspoons gelatin.

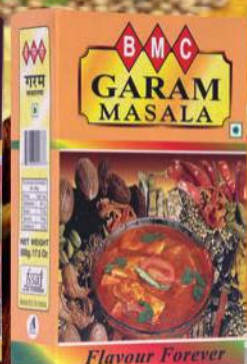
### Method:

- ◆ Peel the mangoes and extract the pulp. Beat it vigorously with a spoon and keep aside.
- ◆ Mix 2 tsp gelatin in cold milk till it dissolves. Add this to the mango pulp and mix well.
- ◆ Refrigerate for about two to three hours or until it sets.
- ◆ Just before serving beat the vanilla ice cream gently and spread it on top of the mango mixture.
- ◆ Decorate with mango pieces and enjoy the dish!





*The Taste of  
Tradition*



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# The Lighter Side

**Teacher:** Ravi, if two and two is four, how much is four and four?

**Ravi:** That's not fair! You always do the easy ones and leave the hard ones for me.



**Doctor:** You need new glasses.

**Patient:** How do you know? I haven't told you what's wrong with me yet.

**Doctor:** I could tell as soon as you walked in through the window!



Two friends hopped into a train that was leaving Gorakhpur for Delhi. The compartment was crowded. So, one of them, who had carried a snake in his bag, released the reptile into the compartment, yelling, "Snake! Snake!"

There was panic as people tried to jump out of the compartment. The two friends were pleased. They stretched out on the empty seats, and were soon fast asleep. When they woke up in the morning, they found that the train had stopped at some station.

"Which station is this?" one of them asked a passerby.

"Gorakhpur," replied the man.

"But didn't the train leave for Delhi last night?" said the surprised friend.

"It did, leaving this bogie behind as someone had seen a snake inside," replied the man.



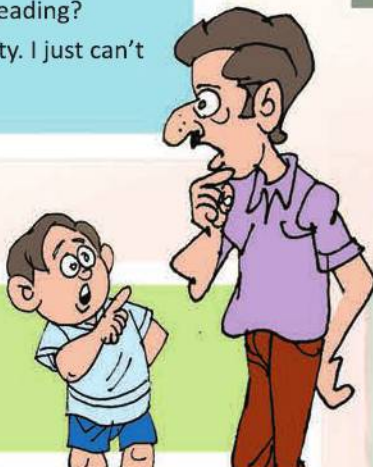
**Tinku:** What book are you reading?

**Pinku:** A book on anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.



**Father:** I hear you skipped school to play football.

**Son:** No I didn't, and I have the movie ticket to prove it!



Tinku had gone for a wedding reception. When dinner was served at seven, he rushed to help himself to the meal. Two hours later, a friend was surprised to see that he was still eating.

"Tinku, haven't you finished yet?" he asked. "How long do you plan to eat?"

"Didn't you read the invitation card?" sighed Tinku. "Dinner: 7-12."





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