

SCHOOL LIVE

VOLUME 10 | ISSUE 01
July 2026

Monthly
₹160

The World of Biometrics



THE RISE AND RISE OF AI
The Latest Innovations

CAREER FOCUS
So You Want To Be An Economist ?

The Red-Headed League
A Sherlock Holmes Mystery



Lotus Valley
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
GURUGRAM
School for Life

**CBSE AFFILIATED
INTEGRATED SCHOOL
GRADES FS I-XII**

For more details visit our School Website
www.lotusvalleygurgaon.com

*'Dream big, start small and forge ahead.
At Lotus Valley nothing is impossible'*

Anita Malhotra - Founder Director-Principal
(Delhi State and CBSE National Teacher Awardee)

*'I envision a World for the child where learning
is not restricted but fun and exciting'*

Dr. Shayama Chona - School Patron
(Padma Bhushan Awardee)

**A Citadel of
Academic Excellence**

**Proudly Recognized as
India's No. 1 Parents' Choice**

- State-of-the-Art Infrastructure with World Class Facilities
- Aimed at Inculcating 21st Century Skills
- **Safe and Secure** Learning Environment
- Emphasis on **Value-Based** Teaching & **Mental Wellness**
- Personalized **Pastoral Care**

For enquiries:

Ph: 91-9650544997, 0124-4936900
Email: admissions@lotusvalleygurgaon.com
Website: www.lotusvalleygurgaon.com

Follow us:



Extensive support to Economically Weaker Sections

'Arise Awake and Stop not till the Goal is Reached' - Swami Vivekananda

Lotus Valley International School, M-Block South City-II, Nirvana Country, Sector-50, Behind The Close (North), Gurugram-122018

ed-note inside



July had enough drama to fill several calendars. A large share of it came from the nationwide protests over examination paper leaks. Leaving political viewpoints aside, one encouraging feature has been the sustained attention the issue has received. Public discussion, institutional responses and repeated assurances from the authorities have ensured that concerns affecting students have not been brushed aside.

Sport offered plenty to celebrate. Wimbledon once again produced memorable contests, while the India-England cricket series kept supporters thoroughly engaged. Young Vaibhav Sooryavanshi displayed remarkable composure against Zimbabwe, adding another exciting name to Indian cricket. The FIFA World Cup completed a month that rarely allowed sporting enthusiasts to look away.

Renewed tensions involving the United States and Iran kept international developments in focus. July also bade farewell to Sir Garfield Sobers, one of cricket's greatest all-rounders.

Every month leaves us with headlines that fade and impact that last. We hope this issue offers a little of both; enough to keep you informed, and enough to leave you with a question or two long after you have turned the last page.

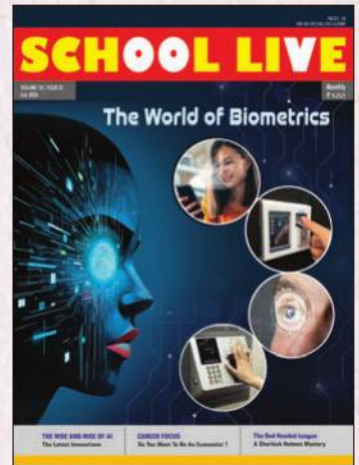
Current affairs, careers, stories, comics, puzzles and thought-provoking features come together in every issue of School LIVE. We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoy putting it together.

Hariharan Balagopal

- **When The Blackboard Fades**
Myopia is becoming increasingly common among children. Learn why it happens, how to recognise it early, and what helps protect young eyes.
- **The Wealth Of Wisdom**
Economics is far more than numbers and markets. Explore a career that influences governments, businesses and everyday life.
- **The Pharaoh Still Reigns !**
Few players combine consistency and flair like Mohamed Salah. A look at one of the defining footballers of this generation.
- **The Square That Speaks**
One quick scan unlocks information in seconds. Discover the technology that has become part of everyday life.
- **The Curious Red-headed League**
A timeless Sherlock Holmes classic, retold for today's readers.
- **The Password Is You**
Fingerprints, faces and irises are replacing passwords. Is this the key to tomorrow's digital world?
- **Beneath The Silent Sea**
Natural rock formation or the remains of an ancient civilisation? The debate continues beneath the sea.
- **The Weak Square**
A thought-provoking story about the illusion of certainty and its unseen consequences.
- **Farewell To A Giant**
One of cricket's greatest all-rounders leaves an enduring legacy that generations will continue to admire.

School Live has something for everyone. Share with your friends and relatives !

School Live publishes articles and press releases from different authors and sources. The information, views and opinions expressed therein are the authors' own and School Live does not endorse any product, idea, opinion or service that may be an inherent part of any article or press releases.



PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY

Hariharan Balagopal

ON BEHALF OF

Future Ready Education Services (P) Ltd.

PRINTED AT

Rolleract Press Services
A-83, Naraina Industrial Area, Phase 1,
New Delhi-110028

PUBLISHED FROM

Plot No. 202/2E-23,
Jhandewalan Extn., New Delhi-110055

EDITOR

Hariharan Balagopal
Studios: Crossroads Complex, NR-27,
2nd Floor, Nathupur Road,
DLF Phase 3, Sector 24,
Gurgaon, Haryana - 122002

www.friendsofschools.com

Suggestions may be mailed to:
info@friendsofschools.com

**FOR QUERIES,
CALL OR MESSAGE TO :**

Ph.: +91- 9818274147, 9625951969

in School LIVE x @schoolLIVE_mag
f School LIVE i schoollivemagazine

Collaboration : Amrita Bharati



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

SPARKLERS



THE Scottish scholar, Dr. John Brown, was very poor. One day he went into a store and asked for a halfpenny worth of cheese. The shopkeeper told him he could not sell cheese in such small portions.

"What's the minimum quantity you can sell?" asked the scholar.

"A penny's worth," said the shopkeeper, "is this much." And set a small piece of cheese before him.

"I will now show you how to sell a half-penny's worth," said the scholar. He took the shopkeeper's knife and cut the piece of cheese neatly into two. Then he took one piece, plonked his half-penny on the counter and walked away.



IN the 19th century, many educated Westerners were convinced that there was intelligent life on Mars.

In 1802, a famous German mathematician who served as director of the Gottingen observatory suggested that giant geometric patterns be made in the snow in Siberia to catch the attention of Martians (inhabitants of Mars).

In 1819, J. Von Littrow of Vienna thought that lighting fires across the entire length of the Sahara desert would be a better way to signal to Martians.

The first ever prize offered for establishing contact with extraterrestrials other than Martians was the Guzman prize of 100,000 francs, announced in Paris on 17 December 1900. Martians were excluded from the list because it was believed that communicating with Martians would be too easy!

THERE was a lot of curiosity about Lady Thatcher's family life when the 'Iron Lady', as she was called, was Prime Minister of Britain. One day a reporter put it very bluntly to her businessman husband, Dennis Thatcher.

"Who wears the pants in your house, sir?" asked the scribe.

"I do," replied Mr. Thatcher. And then after a pause, he added, "I also wash and iron them."



THE Wright brothers did not become overnight heroes after flying the first aeroplane in December 1903. People ignored their achievement for several years and some even claimed that it was Professor Langley who was the first to fly a heavier-than-air machine.

Friends of the Wrights urged them to seek publicity for their achievement.

"You are too modest," said a man to Orville Wright, one day. "You should speak about what you and your brother have done."

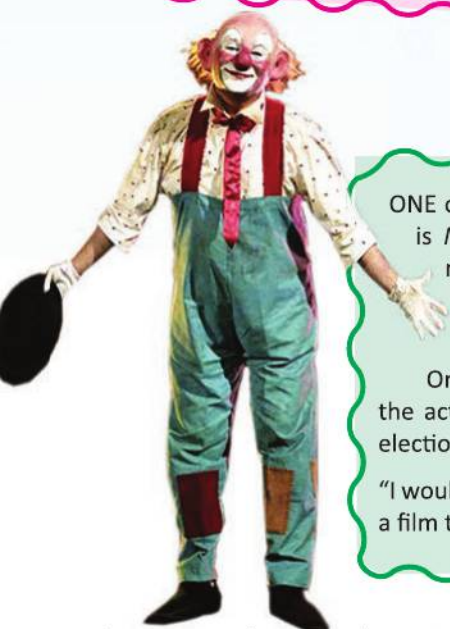
"I don't think that's necessary," replied Orville, quietly. "Look at other flyers. The parrot is one of the best speakers among birds, but when it comes to flying, he is the worst!"



ONE of Raj Kapoor's best known films, is *Mera Naam Joker*, a movie that narrates the story of a circus clown. The film was over four hours long and had two intervals!

Once when a politician asked the actor to stand for the Rajya Sabha elections, he replied:

"I would rather play the part of a joker in a film than play the fool in Parliament."



Blurred Blackboards

More kids wear glasses today than ever before. Studies show that myopia or near-sightedness has become a problem in children of school age, especially in cities.



MYOPIA is a refractive error that affects long distance vision. One can see things up close, like a book or a tablet, but have trouble seeing things far away, like a movie screen.

What's causing this trend?

Jump in screen time

One big reason is too much screen time. Children today spend hours on mobile phones, tablets, computers, and TV. When we keep looking at things very close for a long time, our eyes get tired. Slowly, this can strain the eye muscles and lead the eyeball to become elongated in shape eventually making distant objects blurry.

Less time spent outdoors

Earlier, children spent more time playing outside in natural sunlight. Nowadays, many kids stay indoors most of the time. Their eyes do not get enough exposure to natural light. Studies have shown that sunlight helps in the healthy development of the eyes.

Poor study habits

Reading is great, but reading for too long without breaks, or holding books too close to the face can strain the eyes. Studying in dim light or lying down while reading can sometimes make things worse.

Genetic factor

You may wonder if genetics play a role. Yes, they do. If one or both of your parents wear glasses, you might be more likely to need them too. Even if myopia runs in the family, good habits can help reduce its severity.

Hormones in puberty

During puberty, your body produces growth hormones. Hormones may not cause myopia, but they may affect how quickly it progresses in some children.

Protective strategies

The good news is you can take care of your eyes easily!

Follow the 20-20-20 rule

Every 20 minutes, take a break to look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds. This helps your eyes relax and feel better!

Your eyes blink about 15–20 times per minute normally but much less when using screens!

Play outside

Go outside and play for at least 1–2 hours every day. It's fun and good for your eyes, too!

Maintain a proper distance

While reading or using screens, keep books at least 30–40 cm away and screens at arm's length.

Always study in good lighting

Avoid reading in dim light or while lying down.

Limit screen time when possible

The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that kids aged two to five should have no more than one hour of screen time each day. Older kids should also set limits on their screen use.

Eat foods rich in Vitamin A

Carrots, spinach, and mangoes support good vision.

Don't forget to visit the eye doctor!

Regular check-ups can help catch any vision problems early. If you notice any changes in your vision, such as difficulty reading the blackboard in class, let your parents know.

Schools can help by including outdoor lessons and breaks during the day. Learning doesn't always have to happen indoors!

—Dr. Supriya Kapil Shetty Thanekar

Knowledge Hub!

QUIZ Time

1 The Loch Ness monster is believed to live in a large freshwater lake in this country.

- a. Scotland b. Sweden c. Austria

2 Where was Mahatma Gandhi born?

- a. Mumbai b. Baroda c. Porbandar

3 The Bhakra Nangal dam is the largest dam in India. What type of dam is it?

- a. Gravity Dam b. Arch Dam c. Buttress Dam

4 Name the website where users can upload, view and share video clips.

- a. YouTube b. Youscan c. Wikijunior

5 Who is the only woman to win a Nobel prize in two categories?

- a. Gertrude Elion
b. Betty Williams
c. Marie Curie

6 The longest bone in your body measuring 1/4 of your height is called

- a. The femur (thighbone)
b. The ribs
c. The vertebrae (spine)

7 Alchemists believed this could turn ordinary metals into gold!

- a. Philosopher's Stone
b. Dragon's Egg
c. Pewter

8 The Nevado del Ruiz volcanic eruption in 1985 is one of the few where people died because of a massive mudflow down the mountain. Name the country where it happened.

- a. Brazil b. Colombia c. Mexico

9 In which Indian city is the Hussain Sagar Lake?

- a. Chennai b. Bengaluru c. Hyderabad

10 This is one of the few saltwater lakes in the world populated with crocodiles.

- a. Wollaston Lake in Canada
b. Lake Enriquillo in the Dominican Republic
c. Lake Michigan in the USA

11 The bullet train called Shinkansen was introduced by

- a. China b. Japan c. Korea

12 The 'Ivy League' is -

- a. An association of American universities
b. An organisation of horticulturists.
c. An institute for fashion designers.

13 What is the biggest selling Christmas single of all time?

- a. 'Rudolf, the red-nosed reindeer'
b. 'We wish you a Merry Christmas'
c. 'White Christmas'

14 Which is the pigment that gives skin its colour?

- a. Tan b. Chlorophyll c. Melanin

15 Name the mega music event which brought together 100 legendary artistes from around the world to focus on the global climate crisis.

- a. Global Gathering
b. Live Earth
c. Save The Earth

Answers: 1. Scotland 2. Porbandar 3. Gravity Dam 4. YouTube 5. Marie Curie (Physics and Chemistry) 6. The femur (thighbone) 7. Philosopher's Stone 8. Colombia 9. Hyderabad 10. Lake Enriquillo in the Dominican Republic 11. Japan 12. An association of American universities 13. 'White Christmas' 14. Melanin 15. Live Earth

The Extra Cookie

A CHILD is sitting at the dining table with his parents. Three plates are placed in front of each one, each covered with a napkin. Everyone lifts the napkin together. Surprise! The child has two chocolate cookies, one parent has one cookie, and the other has none.

This simple situation is part of the “Tik Tok Cookie Challenge,” a social media trend that went viral in 2025. Parents around the world, including many in India, have been trying it with their children. Some children immediately hand over one cookie to the parent who has none. Others keep both cookies for themselves. A few simply stare at the plates and seem unsure. Videos of these moments have been viewed millions of times.



Are children who keep both cookies selfish?

The challenge actually tells us something fascinating about how children learn fairness.

Fairness and Sharing

If there are four laddus left of a box of sweets and two siblings, what is the first thing many children say?

“Two for you and two for me!”

To most children, fairness means everyone getting an equal share.

This idea sets in very early. Even young children notice when someone has more or less than others. They may not know complicated math, but they can quickly spot that one person has been left out.

A child may forget a grammar rule or a science fact, but he or she almost always remembers who got the bigger piece of cake.

Not Always Easy

You have a packet of your favourite candies received as a birthday gift. You

know it would be nice to share them with your cousin. But the candies are so tempting that you want to keep them all.

In the Cookie Challenge, a child may understand that giving away the extra cookie would make things equal, but resisting the urge to keep it is not easy.

A young boy was eating his favourite ice cream. His elder brother jokingly asked for a bite. Without much fuss, the younger one broke off a portion and handed it over. It was a small act that left an impression. Not because he shared the ice cream, but because nobody had asked him to.

Changing Ideas of Fairness

A six-year-old may think, “Everyone should get the same number of biscuits.” But an older child might ask, “Who worked harder?” or “Who needs it more?”

If the youngest child is sick and the mother gives one of two oranges to her and divides the other between the remaining two kids, the older siblings may feel disappointed. Fairness can sting a little, but then the older kids

eventually realise that their sister needs the orange more.

Suddenly, sharing no longer means just equal portions. It means considering another person’s needs.

Fairness in Daily Life

Parents, teachers and friends all play an important role in this learning process. Every time a child takes turns on the swing, shares colours during an art activity or divides a pizza among friends, she is practising fairness.

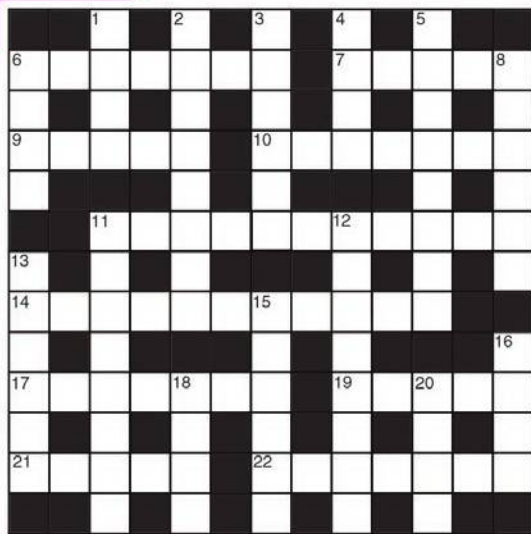
Sometimes parents worry that children are becoming more selfish and we rush to teach them values through activities and carefully staged videos. Yet children often learn fairness in less dramatic ways such as waiting their turn, sharing pakoras on a rainy evening, or deciding who gets the window seat on a long train journey.

As we grow older, sharing becomes something even bigger—a way of understanding people, showing empathy and making thoughtful choices. And perhaps that is the sweetest lesson hidden inside that one extra cookie.

—Raj Mohod

MIND TICKLE

CROSSWORD



Across:

6. Farewell party (4-3)
7. South Caribbean island country (5)
9. Not married (5)
10. Wittily sarcastic or sharp (7)
11. Prayer asking for divine grace (11)
14. Sleeping in winter (animals) (11)
17. Care for lovingly (7)
19. Small hill or mound (5)
21. ____ O' Donnell: American celebrity (5)
22. Shaving of head (7)

Down:

1. What falls in extreme cold (4)
2. Native of England capital (8)
3. Scared (6)
4. Walk up and down nervously (4)
5. Humiliating (8)
6. Inner spirit (4)
8. Mysterious; secret (6)
11. Indonesian wild pig with tusks (8)
12. Hens (8)
13. Black eye (slang) (6)
15. Makes aware of (6)
16. ____-eyed: having soft, dark eyes (4)
18. Employer of something (4)
20. Burden (4)

Answers:
Across: 6. Send-off 7. Aruba 9. Unwed 10. Acerbic 11. Benediction 14. Hibernating 17. Nurture 19. Knoll 21. Rosie 22. Tonsure
Down: 1. Snow 2. Londoner 3. Afraid 4. Pace 5. Humbling 6. Soul 8. Arcane 11. Babirusa 12. Chickens 13. Shiner 15. Alerts 16. Sloe 18. User 20. Onus

Learning Through Puzzles

B

Quick Think

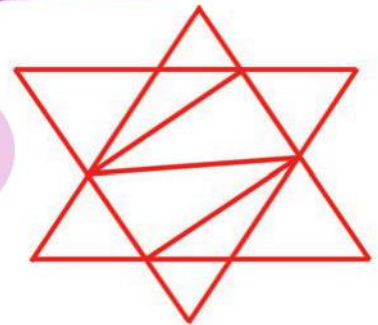
1. Lifeguards rescue a man from drowning. But the man is not wet. How come?
2. How does Bugs Bunny comb his hair?
3. Five cats are sitting on a wall. One wants to jump on the ground. Two think of jumping to a bench nearby and two of them decide to stay where they are. Now how many cats are sitting on the wall?
4. I come in one colour only, but not in one size. I always appear at the bottom, not at the top. I like sunshine, not the rain. What am I?
5. I am two in a whole but four in a pair. I am six in a trio and eight in a quartet. Can you guess what I am?



C

Count Them

How many triangles are there in the image?



D

Family Connections

Anthony is spending the weekend with his family at the farmhouse. Simon is Anthony's father. Anthony's brother Drake loves to play carrom and challenges Anthony's wife Monica to a game. Ramona is Simon's younger sister and Peter is Drakes's grandfather.

How is Ramona related to Peter?



- Answers:**
 A. 20 km/hr
 Suppose the distance is 30 km. Then Soman takes two hours to reach office at 15 km/hr and one hour to get home at 30 km/hr. That means Soman travels a total distance of 60 km (30+30) in 3 hours (2+1). So the average speed is $60/3 = 20$ km/hr.
 B. 1. The man was trapped in quicksand. 2. With a hair (hare) brush. 3. Five. The cats only thought of jumping, they did not actually jump. 4. A shadow. 5. Half.
 C. 18
 D. Ramona is Peter's daughter.

A

Bike Ride

Soman decides to ride his bicycle to office in the morning. As he faces heavy traffic, he can't go faster than 15 km/hr. In the evening, he leaves from work an hour early, anticipating traffic on the way home. Luckily, there is no traffic and he reaches home travelling at a speed of 30 km/hr. Can you calculate Soman's average speed?



The Rise and Rise of AI



From creating social media content to solving math problems, AI has become a key part of our daily lives. Here are some major milestones that the world of artificial intelligence achieved recently.

Microsoft: Project InnerEye

Project InnerEye, a research project from Microsoft Health Futures has proved very promising in the field of radiation treatment. The software uses AI to scan 3D medical images of a patient and highlight cancerous tumors in organs.

Something that takes hours for even an expert doctor, can be performed in minutes by the software, helping to start treatment much faster. The core tools of the software have also been made publicly accessible, helping researchers.

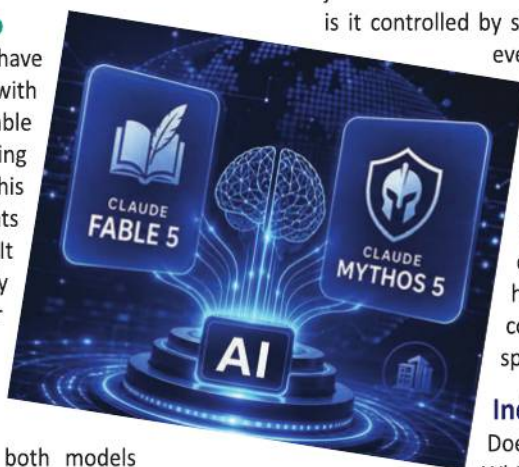


Claude: From Mythos to Maduro

Anthropic and its AI model Claude have come to the forefront of AI innovation with the release of their two latest models: Fable 5 and Mythos 5. Mythos is interesting because of its “agentic” capabilities. This means that it can handle larger amounts of data and even verify its own work. It is also said to be able to find previously unknown weaknesses in computer software.

Fearing the misuse of this ability by enemy countries, the United States government blocked the release of both models outside the country on June 12. On June 30, the government allowed the release of Fable to the public while Mythos has been released only to certain organisations approved by the US.

However, the military use of AI is also breaking boundaries. It has been reported that the US military used Claude in its kidnapping operation of Nicolás Maduro, although Anthropic has not confirmed this.



Gnome: Not the Garden Kind

GNoME, or the Graph Networks for Materials Exploration, is an AI learning tool developed by Google DeepMind. It has predicted the structures of 2.2 million new inorganic crystals, which are materials that do not

contain carbon or hydrogen bonds. An example of an inorganic crystal is sodium chloride, or common salt.

GNoME's ability can be gauged from the fact that predicting 2.2 million new crystal structures is equivalent in human terms to around 800 years' worth of experimental knowledge. It has also identified 3,80,000 stable materials from these structures, which may eventually power our future by being used in batteries and computer chips.

AI in Full Flight

AI innovation in civilian and military aircraft technology has reached new heights. The YFQ-44A Fury, developed by Anduril Industries, is an AI-powered combat jet that is semi-autonomous. There is no pilot in the aircraft, nor is it controlled by someone on the ground. Incredibly, it manages everything from take-off to landing by relying on Anduril's own software.

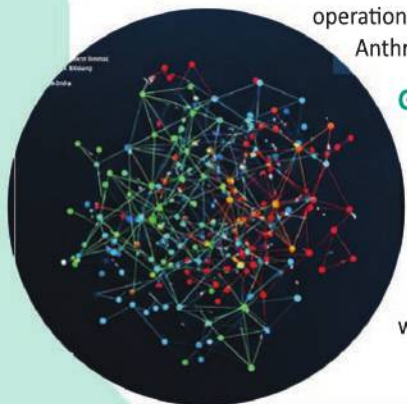
On the commercial front, a firm called Merlin Labs is developing the Merlin Pilot, an AI-powered flight system that can be integrated into existing aircraft. The aircraft can then operate without human interference, handling routes, weather conditions and even communication with air traffic control via text-to-speech.

India and AI

Does India feature among these AI developments? While it is true that many of the eye-catching developments are taking place in the West, Indian AI companies have also made big strides in recent times.

One such success story is Sarvam AI. It has built AI tools that help creators and developers. Bulbul, its text-to-speech model, supports 11 Indian languages while Saaras, its speech-to-text model, supports all 22 scheduled languages (scheduled languages are the languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution). The Odisha and Tamil Nadu governments are actively partnering with Sarvam to create AI capacity hubs and research parks.

—Bharat Jayan



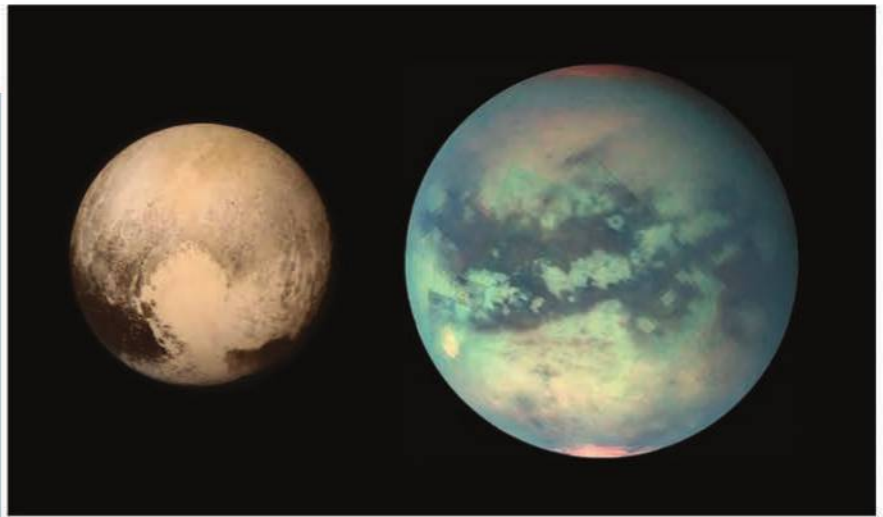
Celestial Conundrum

A MYSTERIOUS chemical signature detected by NASA's James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is baffling astronomers. The strange signal was detected on the surfaces of Titan, a massive moon of Saturn, as well as the dwarf planet Pluto.

Bruno Bezard and his colleagues from the Paris Observatory identified an unusual light absorption at a wavelength of 5.113 micrometres that did not match any known substance in existing databases. The signal was three times stronger on Pluto. Two different instruments on the JWST picked up the same data, making a technical error unlikely.

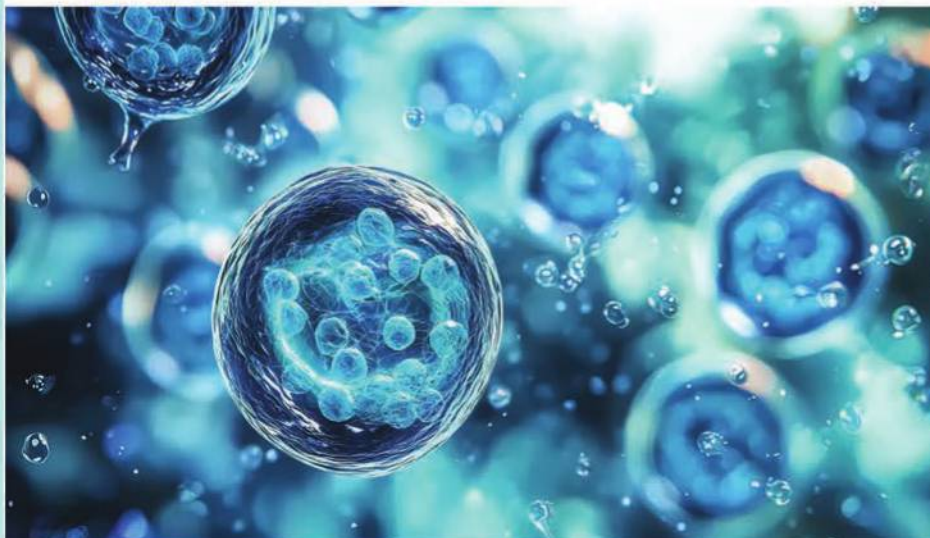
Though Pluto and Titan differ greatly in size, are separated by billions of kilometres and have very different physical conditions, they both possess methane and nitrogen-rich environments that show complex chemical reactions to sunlight and cosmic radiation. This makes them both capable of producing new compounds that eventually settle on their surfaces.

Scientists believe the mystery material could be an unfamiliar mixture of known compounds or a new substance that has not been previously classified.



Beautiful Blobs

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA researchers have built a synthetic cell-like system that can feed, grow and replicate like a natural cell. Called SpudCells, they were constructed piece by piece by synthetic biologist Kate Adamala and her team using non-living chemical parts.



A fatty outer covering called a liposome works as a simple cell membrane that contains DNA and purified enzymes. Scientists say a SpudCell can carry out several functions associated with life: take in supplies, grow, copy its DNA and divide to create multiple cells. It can even undergo selection, where versions that work better are more likely to survive and replicate. It, however, differs from a living cell in that it has limited internal machinery and requires external supplies. It also cannot divide independently but needs laboratory assistance.

Previous attempts at creating artificial cells tried stripping a cell down to try and find the smallest set required for it to survive. This project has taken the opposite route, using components to build a cell from the bottom up.

Synthetic cells could help researchers understand how cells work and develop useful products and disease therapies.

Tragedy at Sea

AN incentive tour to reward Lava mobile dealers and distributors for reaching sales targets turned into a calamity when the boat they were on capsized, killing 15 of them and injuring 17.

The disaster occurred less than 500 m off Hon May Rut Ngoai Island in Vietnam. The closed speedboat carrying 32 Indian tourists, three Vietnamese crew members and a tour guide was returning from Phu Quoc Island when it lost balance after being hit by strong winds and large waves. The 108-member business group was being ferried in four vessels when the lead boat went down. All the tourists were wearing life jackets, but apparently some were not fastened properly. Many of those who drowned were trapped under the overturned boat or inside the cabin and had no way out.

Ten of the dead were from Tamil Nadu, three from Andhra Pradesh and two from Kerala, according to the list released by the Indian embassy.



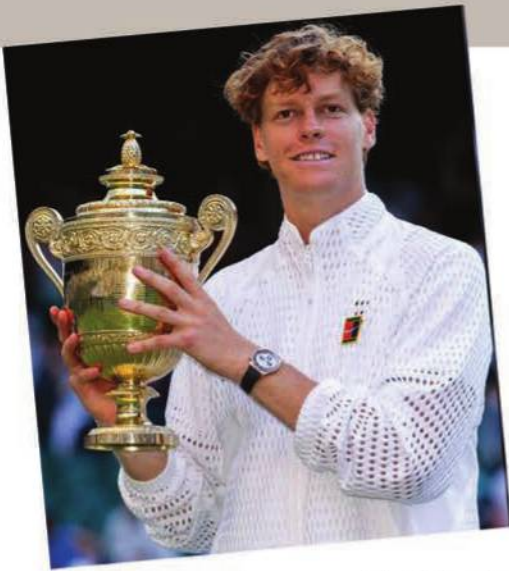
FOR those wanting their furry pals to be a part of their wedding day, Ecuador's Civil Registry has introduced an initiative that allows pets to serve as witnesses at weddings. Pets are allowed to leave a paw print on a symbolic marriage certificate alongside the signatures of the couple and their human witnesses.

The policy is aimed at keeping civil marriages pet friendly and recognising the important role pets play in 21st century families. Ecuador's latest census shows that nearly 7.6 million of its 19 million people have pets. So far, more than 50 couples have chosen to include their dogs and cats as witnesses at their civil wedding ceremonies.

In 23 states in the USA, pets are legally allowed to serve as symbolic wedding witnesses. These states do not require human signatures on marriage licenses, so couples simply add their pet's paw print as a witness.

It's Pawsome!





Grand Old Lady of Tennis

THE Wimbledon Championships 2026 were played over 14 days from 29 June to 12 July at the All England Lawn Tennis Club. One of the most captivating editions in recent years, the tournament thrilled tennis fans with dramatic battles, emotional victories and breakthrough performances.

Seven-time winner Novak Djokovic made a historic run to the semi-finals, with the 39-year-old surviving a quarterfinal marathon against Felix Auger-Aliassime. Djokovic's dream of equalling Roger Federer's eight Wimbledon crowns was, however, ended by reigning champ 24-year-old Jannik

Sinner, who then went on to face second seed Alexander Zverev in the finals. The gruelling battle saw Sinner rally from a set down to outlast the German, defeating him 6-7(7), 7-6(2), 6-3, 6-4 for his second consecutive Wimbledon win and his fifth career Grand Slam title.

The women's draw brought pure theatre to centre court as 21-year-old Czech phenomenon Linda Noskova captured her maiden major title against compatriot Karolina Muchova. After letting five championship points slip away, Noskova regained her composure to seal her victory 6-2, 5-7, 6-3 in a thrilling match.

Naughty Little Boy

AS many had feared, the monsoon rainfall this June was 40 per cent lower than it was in the previous year. The Indian government has already identified 315 districts across 12 states as being at high risk due to rainfall shortages. The culprit behind this is a phenomenon known as El Niño.

El Niño means "the little boy" in Spanish. The name originated in the 1800s, when fishermen off the coast of Peru noticed that a warm ocean current would show up on their coasts every few years. These currents arrived around Christmas; therefore, they named it El Niño as a reference to the birth of Christ.

Normally, winds blow from east to west in the tropical Pacific. These winds act like a highway, carrying warm water from the western coasts of the Americas towards Asia. An El Niño event occurs when surface waters in the tropical Pacific Ocean become warmer than usual.

Why does warm water on one side of the Pacific affect rainfall in India, thousands of kilometres away? They



are connected is a delicate game of tug-of-war involving atmospheric pressure. We know that the monsoon comes immediately after the sweltering summer in India. This heat creates a low-pressure zone, which drags in the monsoon winds. But during an El Niño year, a similar low-pressure zone forms in the Pacific, leading to a weakening of the monsoon winds reaching India from the Indian Ocean, resulting in less rainfall.



Greatest Show on Earth

THE 2026 FIFA World Cup completely transformed the landscape of international football. For the first time, the tournament was co-hosted by three nations—Canada, the United States and Mexico. It also dramatically expanded its format to feature a record number of 48 teams competing over the course of 104 matches. The new structure utilised 12 groups of four teams and introduced a high-stakes Round of 32 knockout phase.

Underdogs shook the tournament early on. Cape Verde, making its first ever World Cup appearance, pulled off a

massive shocker by holding Spain to a 0-0 draw, eliminating Uruguay and ultimately falling in an extra-time thriller to Argentina. Powerhouse Brazil suffered a stunning 2-1 exit at the hands of a relentless Norwegian team, as the heavily favoured German side was also eliminated by Paraguay.

The action reached fever pitch with Spain booking a place in the final after edging out France in a thrilling 2-0 semi-final. Argentina and England battled in another blockbuster where Argentina triumphed 2-1 to enter the finals.

In a lacklustre final, Argentina's defence fell to pieces before an attacking Spain who played a tactical game from the start. Argentina's goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez made a number of spectacular saves, but ultimately couldn't keep out a beautiful goal from Ferran Torres.

The only goal of the match was scored in the 106th minute. There were some ugly altercations between players that marred Spain's celebrations.

Spain lifted the trophy for only the second time (the last was in 2010). England beat France in the third place playoff.

Fast for Reform

JANTAR MANTAR in New Delhi has been in the news since June 28. Indian educationist and activist Sonam Wangchuk was on an indefinite fast here, demanding reforms in the education system after the NEET-UG paper leak. He is supporting Abhijeet Dipke and the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) in its bid to shake up the establishment. The CJP has held rallies asking for the resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan, the education minister, who has called them 'the B-team of disruptive elements.'

Wangchuk, 59, lost more than 9 kilos after drinking only salt water. His work in Ladakh, his home state, earned him the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2018.

More than 1,800 artistes, writers, academics and activists signed a statement requesting him to stop his hunger strike because the 'government does not have a heart or a conscience.'



Wangchuk has so far refused to call off his fast. At the time of writing, he was hospitalised though he had announced plans to march to Parliament on the opening day of the monsoon session on July 20. The CJP led the march in his absence and it ended in chaos with police lathi-charging and teargassing protesters. Both policemen and agitators were injured in the fracas.

Similar protests were held in Mumbai and other cities.

Jurassic Park Star

SAM NEILL, the New Zealand actor best known for his role in the *Jurassic Park* movies, died in Sydney of pneumonia on 13 July. He was 78.

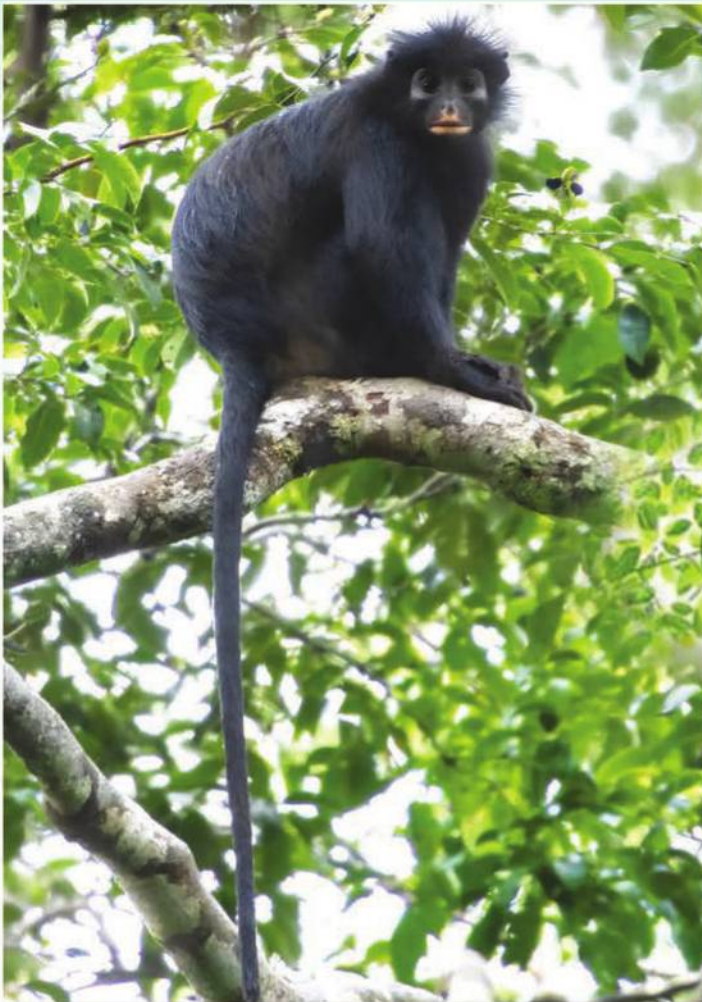
He gained fame for his portrayal of palaeontologist Dr Alan Grant in the 1993 Steven Spielberg film *Jurassic Park*. He reprised the role in the film's several sequels.

Neill held both British and New Zealand citizenship. He was born in Omagh, Northern Ireland, on 14 September 1947. In the early 1950s, Neill and his family relocated to New Zealand.

By the 1970s, Neill had established himself as an actor in local Kiwi films. His first successful film there was the action thriller *Sleeping Dogs* in 1977. His portrayal of real-life spy Sidney Reilly in the 1983 TV miniseries *Reilly, Ace of Spades* brought him international acclaim.

The 1990 film *The Hunt for Red October* and *The Piano* in 1993, established Neill as a bankable star in Hollywood.

Following the 2022 film *Jurassic World: Dominion*, Neill revealed that he had a rare type of non-Hodgkin lymphoma. He described his cancer battle in his 2023 memoir *Did I Ever Tell You This?*



Monkey Business

IT'S only the fifth new species of African monkey to be found in the last 75 years. The monkey, *Colobus congoensis*, was spotted in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Its main feature is its striking orange lips.

The last time the monkey was seen was in 2008, when researchers were exploring the lush rainforests of the Lomami National Park. Though they managed to photograph it, the shot was blurry. However, the team knew even then that it was a new species. A field researcher again photographed the elusive monkey ten years later in 2018. It was documented seven times since then. People in 52 villages close to where the animals live were interviewed but only those in eight villages had ever seen the simian.

The monkey belongs to the colobus group, and most closely resembles the black colobus, found in west-central Africa and Equatorial Guinea's Bioko Island.

Researchers fear that it may already be at risk of extinction and want to the IUCN to include the monkey on its Red List to enable better protection.

Hi-tech World Cup

THE recently-concluded FIFA World Cup used ground-breaking artificial intelligence and robotics for live stadium activations, refereeing and security. These included Boston Dynamics' Atlas humanoid robot performing live on the pitch, AI-driven 3D player models for offside calls, and robot dogs patrolling venue perimeters.

Atlas made history by delivering the ceremonial match ball during the Round of 16 at the New York/New Jersey Stadium. It even executed human-like celebration dance moves on the pitch.

AI-powered robot dogs were deployed across major tournament facilities, host stadiums and broadcasting centres to assist with security.

Digitally scanned player data was used by AI to create 3D models. These came in handy to visually map offside decisions for fans and officials in near real-time.

The official tournament ball featured an internal Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU) sensor that logged movement at 500 times per second, transmitting touch and speed data directly to the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system.



For the first time in the tournament's history, body cameras worn by referees provided on-field perspectives directly to viewers.

FIFA also introduced AI-driven programs such as the FIFA AI Pro that tracked player biometrics and physiological data in real time, giving coaches and analysts never-before insights into each player's on field performance.

FDA Crackdown

THE Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) suspended the food business licences of three Mumbai restaurants, including the iconic Shalimar and Noor Mohammadi Hotel in Bhendi Bazaar and the Rehmania Restaurant in Umarkhadi. Inspectors allegedly found multiple violations of the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011, at these eateries.

Before this, the FDA had suspended the licence of Mumbai's famous K Rustom & Co in Churchgate after inspections allegedly found live rats, houseflies and expired food products.

Other safety violations included wet and slippery kitchen floors, the absence of records for raw materials and edible oil quality, failure to conduct drinking water quality tests, inadequate segregation of vegetarian and non-vegetarian food and open windows without insect-proof screens.

Noor Mohammadi Hotel completed 100 years in 2024 and is known for dishes such as Nalli Nihari and Chicken Sanju Baba.



An Epic Tale

THE film has created waves all over the world. Christopher Nolan's three-hour opus, *The Odyssey*, features an ensemble cast, and it is his most ambitious work yet after the Oscar-winning *Oppenheimer* (2023).

The Odyssey is a Greek epic poem usually attributed to the ancient poet Homer. The epic, like the other well-known one, *The Iliad*, was part of an oral tradition, performed before an audience. It is believed to have been written down in 24 books between 725 BCE and 645 BCE.

It tells the story of Odysseus, the king of Ithaca, who is travelling home after taking part in the Trojan War, caused by the elopement of Helen, the wife of Menelaus, with Paris, prince of Troy. The Greeks achieve victory only after an elite combat unit hides in a huge wooden horse statue on wheels. The statue is left on the beach outside the fortified city. It is dragged inside by the Trojans themselves. They think it is a precious object sent by the gods.

Odysseus's wanderings take 10 years, though the epic only covers the final months. On arriving home, he is recognised only by his dog and a nurse. He fights off and kills wife Penelope's aggressive suitors and re-establishes his kingdom.



Matt Damon plays Odysseus, and Anne Hathaway is Penelope. The cast also features Zendaya, Tom Holland and Eliot Page.

Off the List, Please!

WHY do some UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHS) want to be removed from the list?

In the mountains of central Slovakia, the tiny village of Vlkolínec is a medieval hamlet. Its 20 full-time residents live



in 45 fairytale-like cottages painted in bright colours clustered around an 18th-century bell tower.

Vlkolínec's distinctive architecture made it a WHS in 1993. Since then, more than 100,000 visitors have descended on it every year. Some locals feel WHS status has created a lot of problems for them and want to have the village delisted.

In Tanzania, the Maasai International Solidarity Alliance has called for removing the Ngorongoro Conservation Area from the list. The area is home to pastoralist communities and Africa's most iconic safari experiences, but locals argue that conservation policies tied to its protected status have displaced them from ancestral grazing lands.

Because the designation can unlock international conservation funding, it is one of the best tools for heritage protection. Angkor Wat in Cambodia is an example. Decades of restoration and conservation helped save a site badly damaged by war and looting.

UNESCO can in rare cases, remove WHS status altogether on its own. In 2007, the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary became the first after Oman greatly reduced the protected area for oil exploration. Interestingly, delisting has not always resulted in fewer tourists!

Argentina's Solar Express



LATIN AMERICA'S first solar-powered train was launched in June 2024. The Quebrada Solar Train has revived part of a 19th-century railway through Indigenous villages in Argentina's Jujuy province. The 42 km-route links historic villages where pre-Inca, Inca and living Andean traditions coexist, a 10,000 year-old cultural corridor. Along the way, it follows part of the Qhapaq Ñan, the vast Inca road network that once connected communities across the Andes, from present-day Colombia to Argentina and Chile.

Travelling at a sedate 33 km/h, the train, a sleek, glass-sided, two-carriage capsule, starts at the historic village of Volcán and runs through the World Heritage Site of Quebrada de Humahuaca, a narrow, high-altitude valley. It ends at the archaeological site of Tilcara.

Goodbye to Virtual Buddies

CHINESE users of AI-powered companion bots bid heart-rending farewells to their virtual buddies as national regulations came into effect on 16 July aiming to curb emotional attachment and dependency on AI bots.

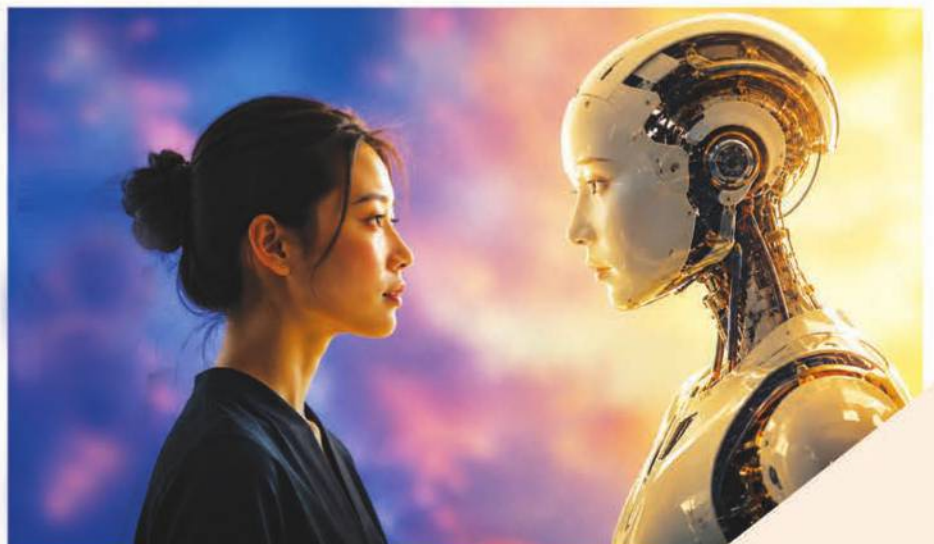
The rules focus on interactive AI tools, whether text, audio, video or another form, that have human-like personality traits and communication styles. Services that don't involve emotional interactions, such as customer service, work assistants or study aids are exempted.

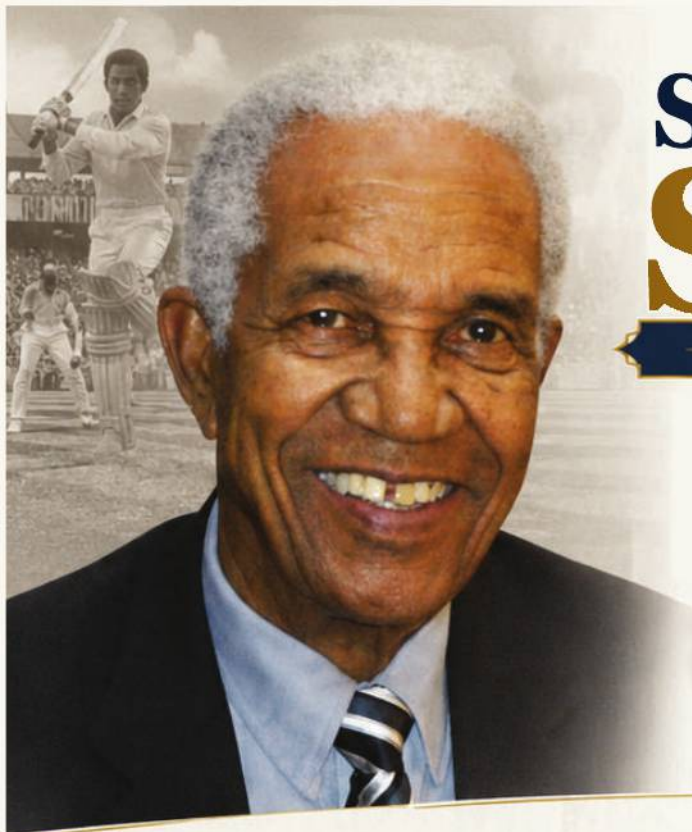
The phenomenon of AI boyfriends and girlfriends is growing worldwide, along with human-like avatars that sell products or stand in for departed loved ones.

Major AI providers, including ByteDance's Doubao, Alibaba's Qwen, and Tencent's Yuanbao, suspended their custom AI agent and companion features. It sparked an outpouring of grief on social media with users sharing last conversations and archiving chats.

Many said removing their virtual companions would leave a big hole in their lives. "The love AI gives is so straightforward, so pure. Someone like me can hardly help falling in love with a string of code," wrote one.

China's digital human industry was valued around \$600 million in 2024 and projected to grow to \$5 billion in 2026.





SIR GARFIELD SOBERS

THE MEASURE OF GREATNESS

Sir Garfield Sobers entered cricket's record books with figures of such range and magnitude that they can easily overshadow the cricketer himself, although the recollections of teammates, opponents and spectators reveal a far richer portrait than any scorebook can preserve. They recall a player who might spend an entire morning rebuilding a fragile innings, return after lunch to dismiss a well-set batsman with a different style of bowling, and complete the day with a catch that remained the talking point long after stumps had been drawn. Such afternoons were never regarded as extraordinary by those who watched him often; they simply became part of the remarkable standard he set for himself.

Captains found in Sobers possibilities that most teams searched for in several different players. He could share the new ball with the fast bowlers, abandon pace in favour of left-arm spin when the surface suggested another approach, stand in the slips with complete assurance or occupy the crease with a composure that gave bowlers little encouragement. Every fresh challenge appeared to draw another skill from the same cricketer, making versatility appear so natural that it almost escaped notice.

His unbeaten 365 against Pakistan announced a young batsman prepared to value an innings as much for its construction as for its eventual destination in the record books. Years later, the six successive sixes struck from one over found an equally secure place in cricket's folklore, although they represented only one expression of a remarkable batting repertoire. Those fortunate enough to watch Sobers regularly have often spoken with equal admiration of a late cut threaded between close fielders, a perfectly judged drive that never appeared to leave the ground, or a pull shot played with such balance that the ball seemed merely to continue the movement already begun by the bat.

His bowling possessed the same willingness to adapt. Conditions changed, batsmen settled, partnerships gathered

substance, and Sobers responded by changing rhythm, angle or method with an instinct that captains valued as much as the wickets themselves. Few opponents could settle comfortably against a player who carried so many answers within the same spell, while fielding completed a picture that seldom displayed a weakness for others to pursue.

West Indies cricket entered one of its most distinguished eras during Sobers' career, producing players whose names continue to occupy honoured places in the game's history. Within that company, Sobers remained unmistakably distinctive, not through display or self-importance, but because every department of the game appeared willing to accept him on equal terms. Young cricketers throughout the Caribbean saw possibilities that reached well beyond imitation. They recognised that excellence could assume many forms and that individuality possessed its own enduring value.

Conversations comparing cricketers from different generations continue wherever cricket is followed with affection, bringing together players separated by decades, changing conditions and different styles of play. Those discussions have seldom altered Sir Garfield Sobers' place within them. Whenever the search begins for a cricketer whose influence could embrace every aspect of the game, the same name continues to surface with remarkable consistency.

The passage of years has done little to diminish the reputation of Sir Garfield Sobers. Fresh generations encounter his records, older followers return to memories of afternoons spent watching him play, and cricket itself continues to regard Sir Garfield Sobers as one of its rarest gifts, a player whose accomplishments remain inseparable from the game's own understanding of complete all-round excellence.



Sir Garfield Sobers

28 July 1936 -
17 July 2026



For Budding Economists

Could you become India's next Nobel Prize-winning economist?

If you are wondering what exactly an economist does and whether it is a good career path for you, read on...

What is an Economist?

An economist is like a detective who studies how people, businesses and governments make decisions about money and resources. They try to understand why prices rise or fall, why countries trade, and what helps an economy grow.

One of their most important skills is explaining complicated ideas in ways that everyone can understand.

What Do Economists Do?

Government Advisers: Help governments plan budgets, decide how public money should be spent, and assess the impact of taxes, trade policies and other economic decisions.

Business Consultants: Help companies make smart decisions about prices, investments, production and sales by studying markets and consumer demand.

Teachers and Researchers: Teach economics, conduct research, and help explain how economic ideas shape the world and how economies may behave in the future by analysing data and studying real-world trends.

India Shining

India has produced two Nobel Prize-winning economists whose work has helped solve some of the world's biggest challenges.

Amartya Sen won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998 for his work on poverty, inequality and human welfare. Sen challenged the idea that a country's progress should be measured only by its wealth. He argued that real development means giving people the opportunity to live healthy and fulfilling lives.

Sen also showed that famines often occur not because there is too little food, but because many people cannot afford to buy it. His research has helped governments and international organisations design better policies for healthcare, education and social welfare.

Abhijit Banerjee shared the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2019 for his research on reducing global poverty. Banerjee is known for using carefully planned experiments to find out which policies actually work.

His research explored real-world questions such as how to improve education, increase vaccination rates and help families escape poverty. His evidence-based approach has influenced public policies in many countries.

Start Your Journey

Want to become an economist? Start by being curious about the world around you. Why do some things cost more than others? How do countries trade? Why do some nations become wealthier while others struggle? Ask questions, study hard in maths and social studies, and read about how economics affects daily life.

Being good with numbers and being able to communicate ideas clearly is an added bonus.



The Red-headed League

WHEN I dropped in on my friend Sherlock Holmes, I found he had a visitor—a fat, crimson-faced elderly gentleman, whose most outstanding feature was his shock of red hair. He was holding a newspaper in his hand.

“Doctor, you have come at a good time!” Holmes exclaimed. “Dr. Watson here has assisted me in my most successful cases, Mr. Wilson.”

Wilson bobbed his head in greeting.

“Watson, I know that you share my love of the bizarre,” continued Holmes. “Mr. Jabez Wilson’s story is truly extraordinary.”

“This is where it all began,” said Wilson handing me the newspaper which was opened to the classified ads.

It was *The Morning Chronicle* of 27 April 1890, or two months before. I read as follows:

“TO THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE:

On account of the bequest of the late Ezekiah Hopkins of Lebanon, PA, USA, there is now another vacancy open which entitles a member of the League to a salary of four pounds a week for purely nominal services. All red-headed men who are sound in body and mind and above the age of 21 years are eligible. Apply in person on Monday, at 11 o’clock, to Duncan Ross, at the offices of the League, 7 Pope’s Court, Fleet Street.”

“As I have been telling Mr. Holmes,” said Wilson, “I run a pawnbroker’s shop in Saxe-Coburg Square near the City. I have an assistant, Vincent Spaulding. I took him on because he agreed to work at half wages.

“He has his faults, though he is a good worker,” said Wilson. “He is fanatic about photography and spends all his free time clicking pictures and then developing them in the cellar.

“I also have a young girl who does a bit of cooking and cleaning. I am a widower and don’t have a family. We live a quiet life. In fact, the first thing that disturbed it was this advertisement. One day two months ago, Vincent came up to me and said that he wished he was a red-headed man.

“When I asked him why, he showed me the advertisement. ‘It’s worth quite a fortune, almost two hundred pounds a year,’ he said. ‘I believe there are more vacancies than available men.’

“Vincent suggested that I should apply. I was keen for the extra money since my business wasn’t exactly roaring. It seems the late Ezekiah Hopkins had himself been red-headed and had great sympathy for all red-headed men and especially in London, where he had started his career.

“I told Vincent that there would be millions of redheads applying but he said I had a good chance since my hair was the right shade of red. He knew so much about it that I asked him to accompany me when I went to the address the next day. What a sight! Fleet Street was choked with men sporting red hair of all shades, but Vincent pushed through the crowd and got me all the way up to the office.”



Wilson paused here to refresh himself with a pinch of snuff.

"It was not much of an office, just a table and a couple of chairs. Behind the table was a small man who had even redder hair than me. Vincent told him that I was the right man for the job. The small man seemed to agree."

"Never have I seen a better head of red hair," he remarked. "You will excuse me though if I take a small precaution."

"He leaned forward and grabbed my hair in both hands and pulled. 'Your eyes are watering,' he said releasing me. 'So it is real. We have been deceived before by wigs and paint.'"

"He then shouted down to the men waiting below that the vacancy had been filled. He introduced himself as Duncan Ross. He asked me when I could start. Vincent butted in. 'Don't worry Mr. Wilson,' he said. 'I will manage the shop when you are here.'"

"The timing was 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., very convenient, as a pawnshop's business is mostly done in the evenings. Ross said the pay was four pounds a week but that I would have to sit in the office the entire time and be very punctual and regular. Otherwise I would lose the job."

"What was the job, Mr. Wilson?" I asked.

"I had to copy out the Encyclopaedia Britannica!" replied Wilson. "I had to buy my own pen, ink and paper. I thought it was a big hoax but was willing to give it a go. I started the very next day."

"Every Saturday, Ross paid me four gold sovereigns, as regular as clockwork. At first, he came in every day. Then after a week, he stopped coming. I did not stir from my place, though; I was scared he would drop in and find me gone."

Wilson paused and a frown wrinkled his brow.

"For eight weeks it went without a hitch. Then it suddenly stopped."

"Stopped?" said Holmes and I together.

"Yes, just this morning. I went to the office as usual but it was locked and there was a notice nailed to the door: 'THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE IS DISSOLVED. 9 Oct. 1890'."

When I enquired around, no one had even heard of a man named Duncan Ross! As you expect, I was sorely



disappointed. I was not willing to give up such good money without a struggle so I came to you."

"Mr. Wilson, we would like to solve this very unusual mystery," said Holmes his eyes shining. "But I want some more information about your assistant. How does he look?"

"Small and rather stocky, but very agile. He's clean-shaven and has a white scar on his forehead."

Holmes sat up, visibly excited.

"Are his ears pierced for earrings?"

"Yes. He said a gypsy did it for him when he was a child."

"Hmm," said Holmes. "Is he still with you?"

"Yes," replied Wilson. Holmes stood up.

"Mr. Wilson, today is Saturday. By Monday we should have a solution."

After he left, Holmes suggested that we visit Wilson's shop. It was on the corner of a square with dilapidated houses on either side. Holmes thumped his cane three or four times on the pavement outside the shop, and then knocked on the door. A sprightly man



opened it and Holmes pretended to ask for directions. Then we headed round the corner and came out on to a bustling road behind the shop lined with fine buildings. There was a tobacconist, a restaurant and the Coburg branch of the City and Suburban Bank.

Holmes observed the street keenly and then turned to me with a grave expression.

"We have to return here tonight. There is a serious crime about to be committed," he said.

He asked me to meet him at Baker Street at 10 p.m. I found that two other men were to accompany us. One was the police agent Jones and the other Holmes introduced as Merryweather, the chairman of the City and Suburban Bank. Holmes said that he was after a criminal called John Clay, a man the police wanted desperately.

"Clay is from a royal family, educated at Eton and Oxford, but a murderer, thief and forger," said Jones. "He is cunning and has escaped from our clutches time and again. I hope to get my hands on him this time with Mr. Holmes' help."

We followed Merryweather as he led us into the vault of the bank located it seemed, in the recesses of the Earth. The vault was crowded with large crates. Merryweather told us that the bank had borrowed 30,000 napoleons* from the Bank of France. However, the money had not been moved yet and somehow criminals had got wind of it.

Holmes bid us to conceal ourselves behind a crate each and wait in silence. The lantern was turned low. The sudden darkness and the dank atmosphere were depressing. I kept my pistol out as Holmes had said that I should be ready to shoot if needed.

We must have waited about an hour when a spear of light pierced through the central flagstone. There was a rending sound as it was lifted up and thrown over to the side. Now there was a gaping hole through which appeared first a delicate white hand and then a clean-shaven youthful face. A man, the assistant we had seen at Wilson's shop, clambered from the hole. He then bent to help another small-built man with a shock of red hair climb out.

"Great Scott!" Wilson's assistant exclaimed as Holmes leaped forward and grabbed his collar. "Jump, Archie, get away!"

**gold French coin*



The light glinted on a revolver but in a flash, Holmes brought his riding crop down on the man's wrist and the gun fell to the floor.

"It's no use John Clay," said Holmes. "There is no escape."

"So I see. I hope at least my pal got away," replied the criminal coolly.

"There are three policemen waiting for him at the door," said Holmes as Jones clicked on the handcuffs.

"I must congratulate you on having thought of everything," said Clay unfazed.

"And I you," retorted Holmes. "That red-headed idea was quite novel."

When the criminals had been hauled away, Merryweather thanked Holmes profusely.

"I had a score to settle too, with John Clay, though we have never set eyes on each other before this," said Holmes.

Later, when we were in the carriage home, I was eager to know how my friend had cracked the case.

"Elementary, my dear Watson," replied Holmes. "From the beginning I was puzzled by the assistant. Why did he agree to work for half wages? To get into Wilson's shop! The whole charade of the Red-headed League was to get the simple-minded Wilson out of the shop for a few hours every day.

"I also noted that the bank was adjacent to the shop. I thumped the pavement in the front but it didn't sound hollow, so I guessed the tunnel was in the back of the house."

"How did you figure he was digging a tunnel?" I asked curiously.

"Didn't you notice the knees of the assistant's trousers? They were worn out and filthy which means he had been kneeling in dirt. And Wilson said he was always down in the cellar, purportedly to develop his photographs."

"I cannot understand how you knew exactly when they would strike," I said.

"They closed the office which meant they had completed the tunnel. They had to work quickly before it was discovered. Saturday was ideal because they'd get two days to escape."

— a story by Arthur Conan Doyle retold.

Pioneering Indian Scientist

JAGDISH CHANDRA BOSE was an eminent Indian scientist who laid the foundation for experimental science in India. Though he worked in many scientific fields, he is best known for his research on plant life and his path-breaking discovery that like humans, plants also feel pain.

Born in Mymensingh, now part of Bangladesh, Bose did his schooling and graduation from Kolkata. In 1880, he went to England to study medicine, but was forced to give it up after a year due to repeated illness.

After obtaining a BSc degree from the University of London, Bose returned to India in 1885 where he was offered lectureship at Presidency College, Kolkata.

He was keen to pursue research on his own, but lacked the funds to set up a modern laboratory. In 1894, the young scientist converted a small room in the college into a laboratory and devised his own equipment.

Bose was the first to produce millimetre-length radio waves (microwaves) and study their properties. He displayed the functioning of wireless telegraphy by using microwaves, at a public demonstration in Kolkata, a year before Marconi invented the radio.

Bose was fascinated by the peculiar behaviour of his electric-wave

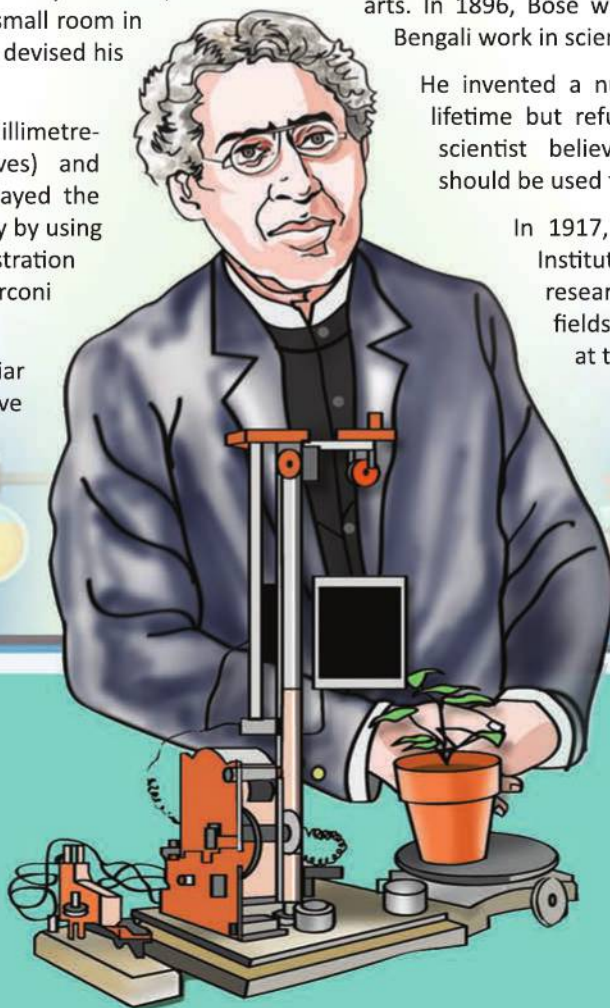
receiver or coherer which seemed to show signs of 'fatigue' after prolonged use but could be 'revived' to its original sensitivity after some rest. This prompted him to switch from physics to the study of metals and plants. Encouraged by the favourable responses he received while conducting experiments on plants, he decided to concentrate on proving the similarities between plant and animal behaviour.

With the help of numerous experiments, Bose proved that plants too have life. He stated that plants grow every second by 0.00005 cm and to measure the minute growth, he devised a highly sensitive instrument, a crescograph, which was capable of recording a growth as tiny as 0.000025 cm per second.

Besides science, he was interested in literature and the fine arts. In 1896, Bose wrote *Niruddeshar Kahini*, the first Bengali work in science fiction.

He invented a number of instruments during his lifetime but refused to patent them. This noble scientist believed that knowledge was free and should be used for the welfare of the people.

In 1917, he set up the Bose Research Institute in Kolkata, where pioneering research is conducted in many scientific fields. Bose died on 23 November 1937, at the age of 78.



Mind Your Language



What's the Difference?

"No one missed the show last night. Elena was *on time* for the musical and Claire was *in time* for the opening act."

Both 'in time' and 'on time' are often used synonymously. While both indicate that something happened in a timely fashion, they are not the same at all.

On time indicates that something was done at the scheduled time.

On the other hand, *in time* is used to indicate that something happened early enough to avoid negative consequences.

Now complete the following sentences using 'in time' or 'on time'.

1. Though the storm raged on, the ship arrived at the harbour _____.
2. The celebration had already begun but he was _____ to watch his daughter sing.
3. They reached the top of the hill _____ to see the last meteor flash by.
4. Though she agreed, I don't think she will finish making the sculpture _____.
5. The bird flew away just _____ to avoid the hunter's snare.

Answers: 1. on time 2. in time 3. in time 4. on time 5. in time



Which is Correct?

The study of old age and the process of aging is called

- a. philology
- b. chronology
- c. gerontology

Answer: c

Learn a Phrase

Move over 'couch potato', you've got competition!

Among the many new words added to the English dictionary in 2024 is the term 'bed rotting'. It refers to (you guessed it!) the practice of staying in bed for extended periods of time, often engaged in passive activities such as watching TV or using social media. Bed rotting can be a way to recover from stress or to simply avoid daily chores!



Metaphorically Speaking

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which two dissimilar things or ideas are likened to each other.

For example:

- ◆ In the midst of my predicament, he was my only refuge in the storm.

The person providing assurance and support is compared to a shelter during rough weather.

- ◆ Time is a thief, stealing away all you hold dear.

As things change with time, we begin to feel that we have lost beloved things such as our health or dear ones.



Identify the metaphors in the sentences below:

- a. The trophy presented at the end of the match was the icing on the cake.
- b. The history paper was an absolute nightmare.
- c. The necklace was a constellation of stars against the dark velvet of the jewellery box.
- d. My life is a roller coaster right now.

Answers: a. icing on the cake - something that makes a good situation better. b. absolute nightmare - something that is frightening and unpleasant. c. constellation of stars - something that glitters like a string of stars in the sky. d. roller coaster - full of ups and downs (happy and unhappy events).

Answers:

Jagannath Rath Yatra

On 16 July, Puri in Orissa witnessed the annual 'rath yatra' at the world-famous Jagannath Temple.

PURI is a seaside resort with the longest beach in the state. It is one of the four holiest places of pilgrimage in India for Hindus (the other three are Badri-Kedarnath, Rameswaram and Dwarka).

The majestic temple of Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe, stands on an elevated platform in the heart of Puri. It was built in the 12th century CE by King Chodaganga to commemorate the shifting of his capital from south to central Orissa. Lord Jagannath is worshipped here as Lord Krishna, along with his sister, Subhadra and elder brother, Balabhadra.

According to legend, the idols were made by the divine architect Vishwakarma on the orders of Vishnu himself. Vishwakarma agreed on condition that no one would disturb him. When an impatient Vishnu broke into the room, the idols were still incomplete and remained thus.

The statues are replaced with new ones every 12 years. The wood for making the idols is cut only from the trunks of those neem trees seen by certain *daitas* or worshippers in their dreams. A mysterious object (which many scholars claim to be the sacred tooth of the Buddha) is taken out of the old idol and placed in the new one by a blindfolded priest, whose hands are wrapped in cloth so that he cannot examine the contours of the object. This takes place at the Nau Kalebara festival just before the Rath Yatra.

The Rath Yatra or the Chariot Festival commemorates the journey of Lord Krishna from Gokul to Mathura. Two weeks before the Yatra, the three idols are given a ceremonial bath. Since they become discoloured, only the chief priest can see them till they are repainted! Before they are taken



out in three enormous wooden chariots to Gundicha Bari or the Garden House of Jagannath, the King of Puri arrives to sweep the chariots with a golden broom. Nandighosa, or Chakradhwaja, the 16-wheeled chariot of Jagannath, is the largest of the chariots. It is 14 m high and 11 m wide. As many as 832 pieces of wood go into its making. Balabhadra's chariot is called Taladhwaja and Subhadra's chariot, Darpadalana.

Although the journey is just a mile long, it takes the procession an entire day to reach Gundicha Bari. Thousands of people come to watch the spectacular event and even participate in pulling the chariot. There is a frenzy to touch the idol of Jagannath for it is believed that a single touch on this particular day can free one from the cycle of birth and death.

The images of the gods are ceremoniously brought back to the main temple after seven days. The procession is called Bahuda Yatra. Jagannath stops for a while at the Mausī Ma mandir or the temple of his aunt. He is offered his favourite food here, a rice cake called *poda pitha*.

The chariot then stops near the palace of the King of Puri, the Adisevaka or foremost servant of the Lord. Here the Goddess Lakshmi steals a glimpse of her Lord from a distance and is offered a garland, before she retires to her own shrine. After reaching the temple, the deities remain in the chariots for a day.

The next day, Ekadashi, they are dressed in golden costumes, and re-enter the temple, in a ceremony called Niladri Vijay, the grand finale of the Rath Yatra.



How Mo Salah became 'The King of Egypt'



LIVERPOOL'S star forward, Mohamed Salah Ghaly—better known as Mo Salah—is the rising star of world football. In the 2017–18 English Premier League (EPL) season, he scored 32 goals from 36 league games and won the EPL Golden Boot. He also won a host of 'Player of the Month' and 'Player of the Season' awards, while adding new energy, pride and style to Liverpool's attack.

In and around Liverpool, Salah is now known as 'The King of Egypt'.

Born in a tiny village named Nagrig in Egypt on 15 June 1992, Salah helped Egypt qualify for the FIFA World Cup of 2018. He also helped Egypt play the African Cup of Nations final of 2017, and was thus named CAF African Footballer of the Year.

Salah began playing for El Mokawloon in the Egyptian Premier League, as a teenager, under the watchful eyes of head coach, El-Shishini. "He used to travel to the club everyday from Nagrig," says Shishini, "a three-hour trip." Salah's success, his coach believes, is a story of determination and commitment.

Salah was signed up by Chelsea for £11 million in 2014. Three years later,

Liverpool handed him a contract of £36.9 million—a club record.

Salah's success for Liverpool, football pundits believe, was because of the way he adapted his game to become a striker from a natural winger. But, as a young player at El Mokawloon, he was a defender.

His coach, El-Shishini tells of how in an Under-16 Cairo League game, Salah who played in the left-back position, weaved his way past the halves and defenders, and finding himself in one-on-one positions against the goalkeeper, shot wide on five occasions. Though El Mokawloon won 4-0, Salah wept inconsolably after that match.

Looking at Salah's dribbling skills, and his passion for the game, El-Shishini decided that he would play him as a right-winger in future matches. That season, in the Under-16 Cairo League and the Under-17 Egyptian League, he scored 35 goals.

El Mokawloon's Under-16 match that day was the turning point in Salah's career. He hasn't looked back since!

— Austin Coutinho

MOHAMED SALAH led Egypt to a historic Round of 16 finish at the 2026 FIFA World Cup, where they suffered a heartbreaking 3-2 defeat against defending champions Argentina. Despite a strong performance leading his team, Salah and the Pharaohs' dream run came to an end after Argentina staged a late comeback.

It was Egypt's best-ever FWC campaign. Across 5 matches, Salah recorded 1 goal, 2 assists, and a tournament-high 15 chances created. He scored and assisted in a 3-1 victory against New Zealand and sensationally converted a penalty in a shootout win over Australia.

Before the tournament, he broke the record for the all-time leading scorer in African FIFA World Cup qualifying history with 20 goals. He scored nine goals in the 2026 qualifiers.

Who's To Blame?

A DOVE and a munia lived on the same tree.

The two birds hated their beaks.

"Let's get ourselves new beaks," said the dove, one day. "I'll make you a handsome beak and you make one for me."

The munia agreed. The dove carved out a beautiful, strong beak for the munia while the lazy munia did a shoddy job. When the birds fixed their new beaks, the dove was unhappy.

"The beak you made me is very soft," complained the dove. "How can I eat anything?"

"The beak you made me is so hard that my jaws hurt!" said the munia.

The two fought over their new beaks and soon came to blows. The munia's wings accidentally brushed a twig and it fell on the head of a jungle fowl.

The fowl was so startled that it fell on an anthill, knocking it down. The angry ants came charging out of their collapsed home and seeing a pig standing there, began to attack it.

While trying to escape the ants, the pig fell against a banana plant, frightening a fruit bat, which was hanging upside down on it.

The terrified bat darted out of the plant only to land inside the ear of an elephant, which was feeding its baby. The elephant shook its head vigorously to remove the bat but its tail knocked down a ladder, and a little girl, who was standing on it fell down.

"Mummy," wailed the little girl pointing to the ladder.

"Not my fault," said the ladder. "The elephant knocked me down."

"I was only trying to get rid of the bat, which flew into my ear!" said the elephant.

"I got frightened when the banana plant began to shake wildly..." said the bat.

"I shook only because that pig over there fell on me," explained the banana plant.

"But I was trying to escape from those vicious ants," said the pig in a piteous voice.

"He broke our house...and now he has the audacity to call us vicious!" said the ants, seething with rage.

The pig tried to explain that it was the jungle fowl which had broken their house, when the bird interrupted him saying, "None of this would have happened if that munia had not startled me by throwing a twig on my head."

The little girl's mother demanded an explanation from the munia.

"Blame the dove...he started fighting with me...that's how the twig broke off from the branch," said the munia.

When the mother heard the cause of their fight, she said, "Munia, I blame you for my baby's fall. As punishment, you will not display that lovely crop on your chin any longer. It will remain hidden behind your neck."

And so it is to this day, the munia has a lovely hard beak but the handsome crop on his chin can no longer be seen.

— A Mizo folk tale retold by
Meera Nair





What are QR codes?

QR (QUICK RESPONSE) CODES are two-dimensional codes that can be scanned with a smartphone. They consist of squares and dots arranged in a grid on a contrasting background and can be used to store data in letters, numerals or alphanumeric (a combination of both) format; binary (a number system consisting of 1 and 0 used by computers) and kanji (a Japanese writing system using Chinese characters) format.

History

QR code is a take-off from barcodes printed on various products which hold limited information such as price and stock position. Moreover, it has to be scanned from a specific direction.

In 1994, Masahiro Hara, an employee at a Japanese automotive company Denso Wave, was playing Go, a game which consists of a grid with black and white stones placed throughout. This inspired him to create QR codes. In 2002, Sharp introduced the first mobile phone camera with a QR code scanner and their competitors followed suit.

The use of QR codes grew at a steady pace and became popular with small businesses. But the real explosion in

their use came with the COVID-19 pandemic, when the world sought ways for contactless function.

Creation

Making a QR code is easy, using a free code generator website. Simply input the desired content, which can be a URL for contact information or a video, and download the code. Professionally made templates can be used or the user may customise its style and colour.

Utilisation

People can easily use them to make payments, read a menu, track product delivery, access a social media platform, link to a website, etc. QR codes have proved useful in sharing a large

amount of information with multiple people through a single share and can be used as a marketing tool to promote products or to collect feedback.

Advantages

- ◆ Small in size
- ◆ Easy to scan
- ◆ High storage capacity
- ◆ Eco-friendly
- ◆ Works even when damaged: It uses a Reed-Solomon error correction algorithm.

Disadvantages

- ◆ Tampering: Cybercriminals can replace them or interfere with the embedded link.
- ◆ Unfamiliarity

QR Art

QR art transforms standard QR codes into arresting visual designs that blend functionality with creativity. This art form maintains the code's ability to be scanned while incorporating colours, patterns or logos to increase its appeal. This requires a specialised QR code generator with graphic design tools to make sure that the embedded code remains functional. QR code art is turning into a versatile tool for creating memorable interactive experiences. It is quickly gaining popularity and becoming a regular practice in branding and marketing. Brands are using this art form in ad campaigns. Museums are utilising QR code art in their exhibits to provide detailed information about them. Japanese artist Takashi Murakami incorporates QR codes into his vibrant art pieces, allowing viewers to access additional digital content.

The World of Biometrics

Biometrics is a way of identifying people based on their unique physical features. Think of it as a 'biological password' that is always with you—and that no one else can copy...

INSTEAD of remembering a password or carrying a key, your fingerprints, face, eyes (iris scan) or even your voice can be used to prove who you are. For example, you might unlock your phone just by touching it or looking at it.



The Steps

Scanning: The system first takes a sample of your feature using a small camera or sensor.

Mapping: It then measures your features:

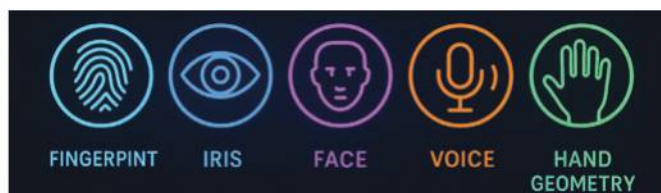
For a fingerprint, it scans and maps the unique patterns—the arches, loops and whorls—on your fingertips.

For a face, it takes over 80 measurements, such as the distance between your eyes, the shape of your nose, and the curve of your jaw, creating a digital 'join the dots' picture.

For voice, it listens to your pitch, tone and rhythm.

Coding: These measurements are immediately converted into a digital code—a unique set of numbers and patterns. The system doesn't save your actual picture or print. It only saves that unique digital code safely on your device.

Matching: The next time you try to unlock something, the system scans your feature again, creates a new code and compares it with the stored one. If the two match closely enough, access is granted.



Uses

Unlocking devices: A quick touch or glance replaces typing long passwords on your phone and laptop.

Securing apps: Social media, banking and payment apps often use fingerprints or face scans for extra security.

Faster travel: Airport security checks use face recognition to get you through gates quickly. For example, the Digi Yatra system in India uses facial recognition to match passengers with their travel details, helping them move much faster through security and boarding.

Attendance: Fingerprint scanners help quickly record who is present in schools and offices.

Government services: Aadhar uses biometrics to confirm an individual's identity safely and quickly.

Smart homes: Facial recognition or fingerprints are used to allow entry into many housing societies.

Healthcare: Hospitals use biometrics to match patients with their medical records.

Rewards and Risks

- ◆ No two people—even identical twins—have identical fingerprints or facial features.
- ◆ It doesn't depend on the person's memory.
- ◆ Even when changed often, passwords can still be hacked, unlike biometrics.
- ◆ Because biometrics verifies who you are (personal attributes) rather than what you know (passwords), it is much harder to steal.



Some older systems store biometric data on central servers, which can be hacked and misused. Modern devices—like smartphones—store the biometric data inside the phone's secure chip, not in the cloud.

Biometric systems aren't 100 per cent perfect. A cut on your finger, dim lighting or even wearing sunglasses might confuse the scanner. Sometimes it may reject the real person (false negative) or, in very rare cases, allow the wrong one (false positive).

Face recognition cameras used in public places put people's privacy at risk. This raises an important question: should people be watched all the time, and who controls that data? In India, there is still no clear law or policy for large-scale use of such systems.

—Madhurani Paranjpe

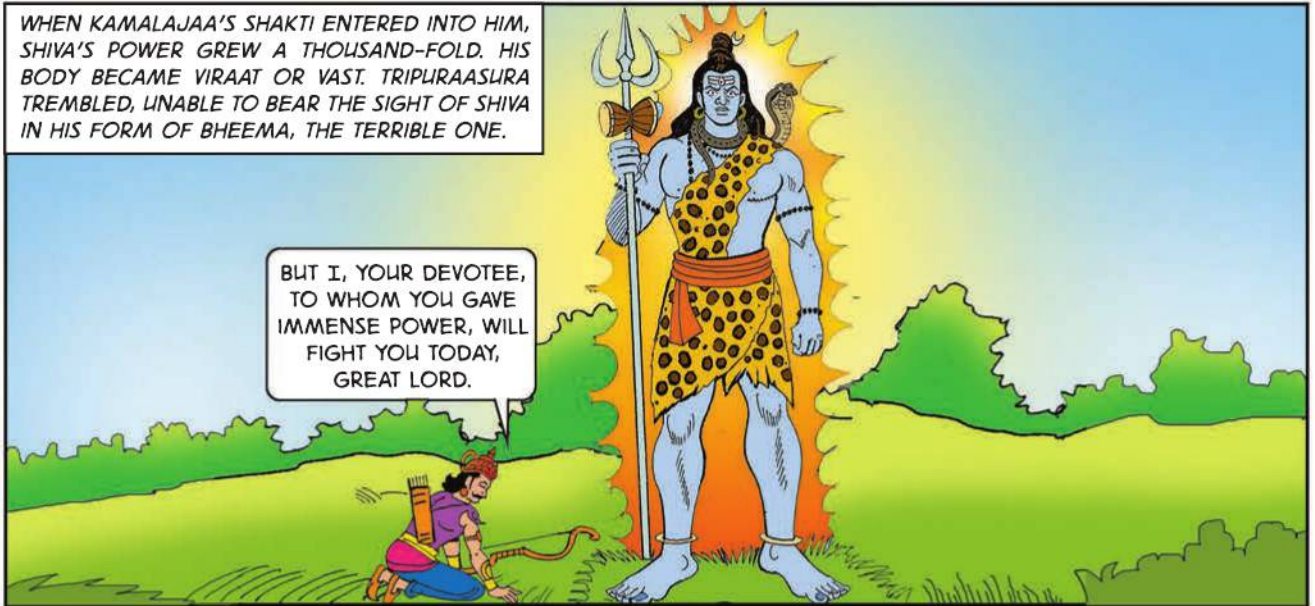
THE JYOTIRLINGAS OF SHIVA

STORY SO FAR: TO DESTROY THE UNCONQUERABLE TRIPURAASURA, PARVATI, WHOSE NAME IN THIS STORY IS KAMALAJAA OR 'BORN FROM THE LOTUS', MERGES HER OWN STRENGTH INTO THE STRENGTH OF SHIVA.

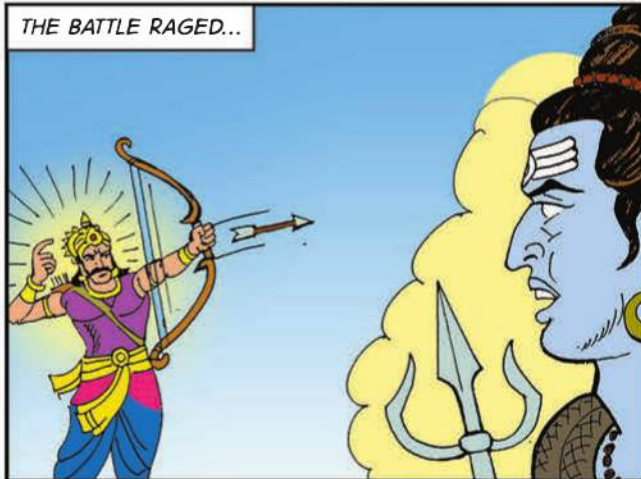
Script:
Gayatri Madan Dutt
Artwork:
M. Mohandas

WHEN KAMALAJAA'S SHAKTI ENTERED INTO HIM, SHIVA'S POWER GREW A THOUSAND-FOLD. HIS BODY BECAME VIRAAT OR VAST. TRIPURAASURA TREMBLED, UNABLE TO BEAR THE SIGHT OF SHIVA IN HIS FORM OF BHEEMA, THE TERRIBLE ONE.

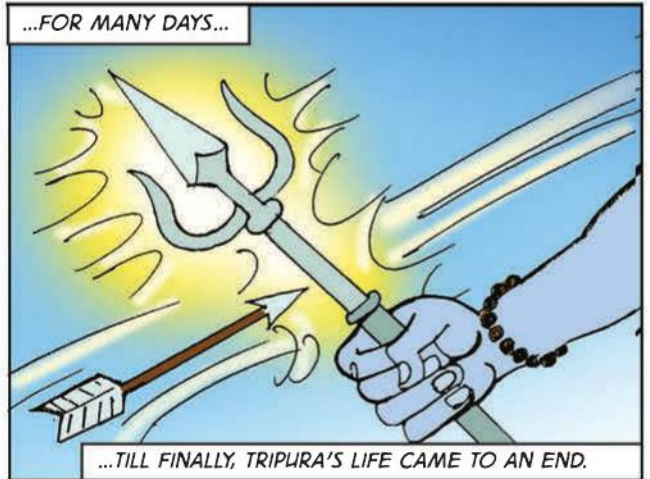
BUT I, YOUR DEVOTEE, TO WHOM YOU GAVE IMMENSE POWER, WILL FIGHT YOU TODAY, GREAT LORD.



THE BATTLE RAGED...

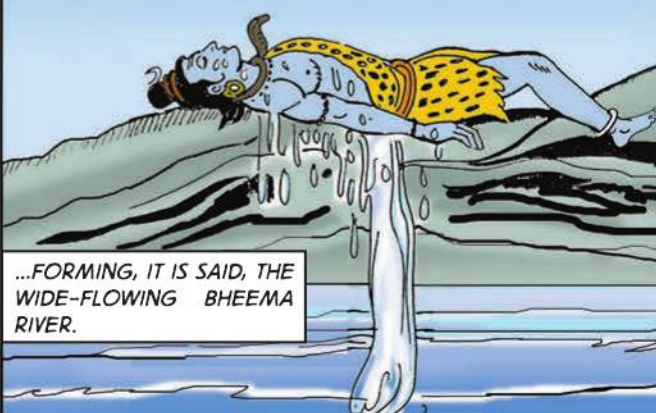


...FOR MANY DAYS...



...TILL FINALLY, TRIPURA'S LIFE CAME TO AN END.

EXHAUSTED, SHIVA LAY DOWN TO REST ACROSS THE WHOLE SAHYAADRI MOUNTAIN. SWEAT POURED FROM HIM...

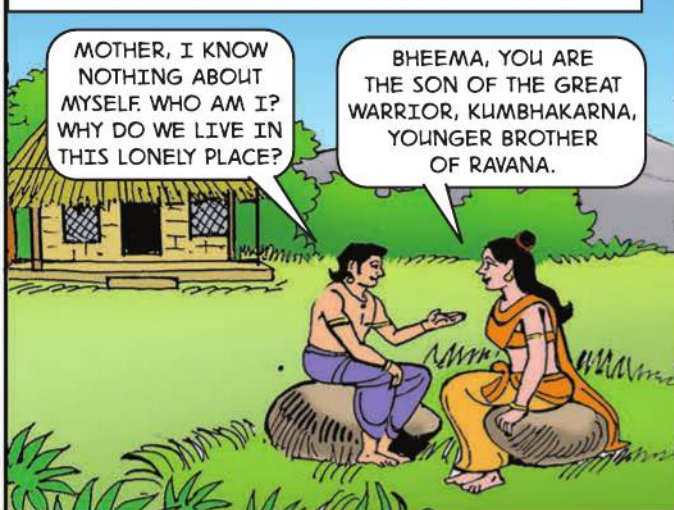


...FORMING, IT IS SAID, THE WIDE-FLOWING BHEEMA RIVER.



SHIVA STAYED ON ITS BANK AS THE BHEEMASHANKAR JYOTIRLINGA, WITH KAMALAJAA BY HIS SIDE.

THERE IS A SECOND STORY ATTACHED TO THE BHEEMASHANKAR JYOTIRLINGA. LONG AGO, BHEEMA AND KARKATI LIVED ON THE SAHYAADRI MOUNTAINS.



MOTHER, I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT MYSELF. WHO AM I? WHY DO WE LIVE IN THIS LONELY PLACE?

BHEEMA, YOU ARE THE SON OF THE GREAT WARRIOR, KUMBHAKARNA, YOUNGER BROTHER OF RAVANA.

VISHNU, INCARNATING AS RAMA, KILLED THEM BOTH. TO KEEP YOU AWAY FROM THE GODS, I BROUGHT YOU HERE FOR PROTECTION



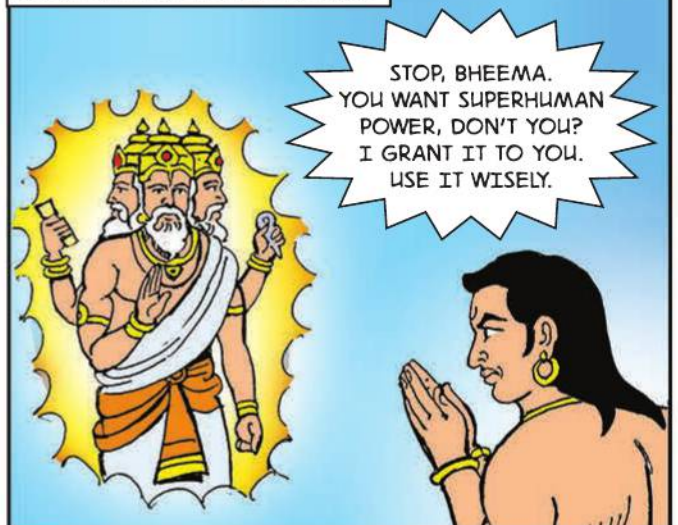
IF I AM THE TRUE SON OF MY MOTHER, I WILL SHAME VISHNU, THE GODS, AND ALSO THEIR FRIEND SHIVA.

BHEEMA PERFORMED SEVERE PENANCE TO PLEASE LORD BRAHMA. FOR YEARS, HE GAZED AT THE SUN WITHOUT BLINKING.



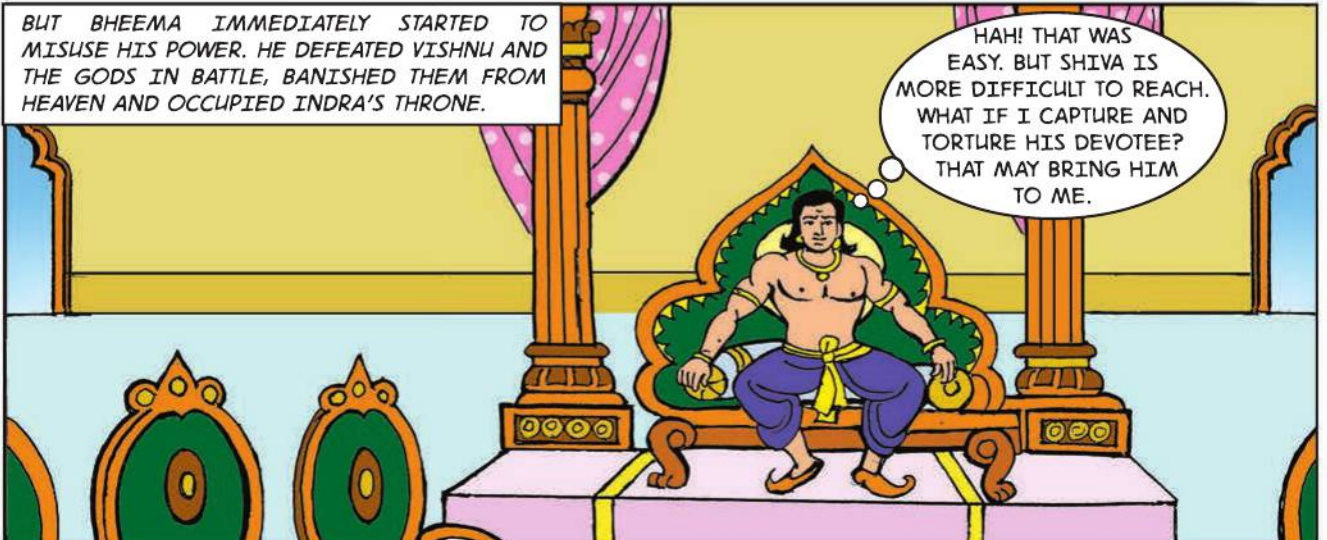
BLAZING HEAT ROSE FROM HIS HEAD, THREATENING TO BURN THE THREE WORLDS.

BRAHMA APPEARED BEFORE HIM.



STOP, BHEEMA. YOU WANT SUPERHUMAN POWER, DON'T YOU? I GRANT IT TO YOU. USE IT WISELY.

BUT BHEEMA IMMEDIATELY STARTED TO MISUSE HIS POWER. HE DEFEATED VISHNU AND THE GODS IN BATTLE, BANISHED THEM FROM HEAVEN AND OCCUPIED INDRA'S THRONE.



HAH! THAT WAS EASY. BUT SHIVA IS MORE DIFFICULT TO REACH. WHAT IF I CAPTURE AND TORTURE HIS DEVOTEE? THAT MAY BRING HIM TO ME.

TO BE CONTINUED

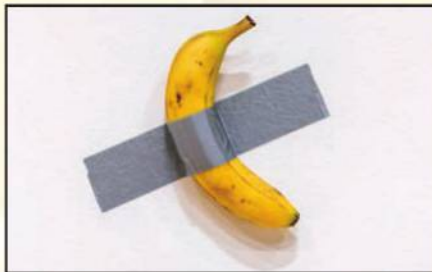
Artful Oddities

Though they may seem absurd to the common public, some artworks have sold for astronomical sums at art auctions, generating curiosity, scorn and admiration alike.

ART is a subjective matter—a painting or sculpture may seem beautiful to one person while to another, it may appear silly or strange. But some artistic expressions leave audiences universally befuddled. When these artworks command critical acclaim and sky-high prices, people are often left wondering about the sheer absurdity of contemporary art.

Banana Boldness

A banana is something you eat, right? But in 2024, conceptual artist Maurizio Catellan created a weird artwork—a banana stuck to a wall with silver duct tape—which sold for a jaw-dropping \$6.2 million! Named 'Comedian', the piece of art grabbed headlines worldwide; people joked that they had bananas at home and they wouldn't mind taping them to the wall for a few hundred dollars!



Though the buyer of *Comedian* will have to replace the rotting banana periodically, he owns a certificate of authenticity certifying that each replacement is the original.

Scribble Sensation

Untitled (New York City), an oil painting by Cy Twombly, might appear like the furious scribbling of a toddler. But it fetched the artist \$70.5 million (₹469 crores) at an auction in 2015, making it one of the most expensive contemporary works of art ever auctioned! Collectors hailed the painting, consisting of loops and scrawls like that of chalk on a blackboard, as the work of a genius.

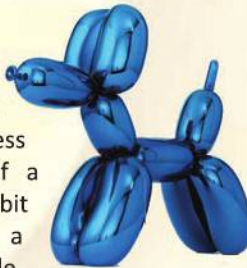


Many, however, felt they could make such a painting as easily!

Interestingly, to create the painting, Twombly sat on the shoulders of a friend who moved back and forth along the length of the canvas while the artist drew the pattern of scribbles!

Bunny Bling

In 1986, American artist Jeff Koons created three identical stainless steel sculptures of a one-metre tall rabbit that resembles a reflective inflatable.



One of these playful sculptures was sold for a whopping \$91.1 million dollars (approximately ₹797 crores) in May 2019. It broke the auction record for an artwork by a living artist. Though people questioned the hype around the piece, it catapulted Jeff Koons and his sculpture to iconic status.

Earlier in 2013, another work by Koons named *Balloon Dog* had also created a record when it fetched \$58.4 million at an auction.

Scarlet Spectacle

Artist Gerard Richter's unusual artwork *Mirror, Blood Red* (1991) is just that—a mirror painted in deep red. Made in 1991, the painting received mixed reactions—critics did not find any meaning in it while some of Richter's fans found the blood-like appearance unsettling. But 20 years after its creation, the painting was sold for over a million dollars, leaving many scratching their heads.

Richter's work, which includes many paintings with glass as his canvas, commands high prices at auctions. He admits, however, that art prices, such as the \$44.52 million that he earned for a painting in 2015, are absurd and 'impossible to understand'!



Why do people buy strange art at sky-high prices?

Experts explain that the value of the artwork is often for the idea or concept rather than the tangible object. It is akin to owning the copyright to a song—the owner has control over the idea.

In the case of Catellan's banana artwork, at a show, a performance artist named David Datuna walked up to the display, peeled the banana and ate it. The art gallery simply replaced the banana and added a note:

"The banana is an idea; the banana is replaceable."

Some buyers spend huge sums on weird art as an investment while others want to grab headlines or earn prestige or status. For some collectors, the sheer absurdity of the artwork makes it memorable and historically notable.

The Nutrition Paradox

India has over a dozen cuisines per state, and a culture where feeding someone is a divine act. In spite of this, it is facing a nutrition crisis...

IT is what scientists and health experts call India's nutrition paradox. There are millions of people who go hungry to bed every night. There are also millions who eat too much. Yet almost everyone—rich or poor, city or village dweller—is missing out on the vitamins and minerals their bodies need to function properly.

The paradox has three faces, and they are all happening at the same time.

Under-nutrition

Children who do not get enough food, or not the right kind, suffer the consequences for a lifetime. The most visible sign is stunting—children who are shorter than they should be for their age, not because of genetics, but because their bodies did not have the fuel to grow properly.

Over-nutrition

The sharp rise in obesity, diabetes, and heart disease, even among teenagers is the result of cheap, sugary, calorie-loaded food available everywhere, and it is doing lots of damage.

Micronutrient Deficiency

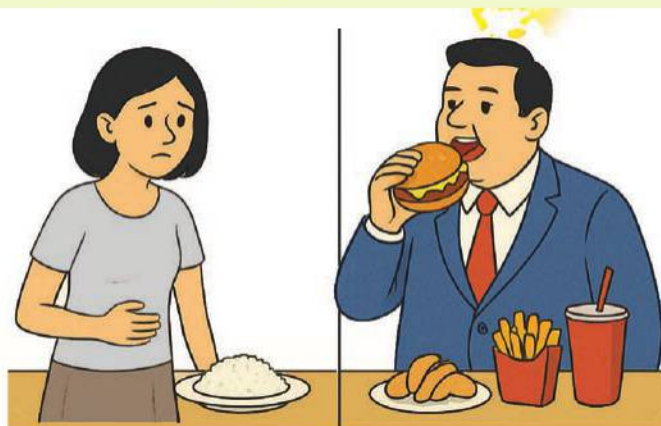
The third—and the one most people miss—is micronutrient deficiency: eating enough in terms of quantity but being starved of the vitamins and minerals our body needs. Iron, zinc, vitamin D, vitamin B12—these are the behind-the-scenes workers that keep our immune system, brain, and bones going.

Most Indians are deficient in at least one of them at some point in their lives. One can eat three full meals a day and still be running low on micronutrients.

The Numbers Story

According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), nearly 36 per cent of children under the age of five in India suffer from stunting—growth failure caused by prolonged lack of nutrient-dense food. Stunting affects not only a child's height, but also brain development and immunity.

Anaemia is widespread among Indian women and adolescent girls. This happens when the blood does not have enough



healthy red blood cells, usually because of iron deficiency. The symptoms are easy to miss—constant tiredness, difficulty concentrating, and getting sick more often than one should. Many girls assume this is normal. It is not.

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) says that an estimated 56.4 per cent of India's total disease burden is driven by unhealthy dietary habits. And malnutrition is the cause behind many deaths in children under the age of five in every state of India, or more than two-thirds. This is linked to what children are—or are not—eating.

There is an old assumption that still shapes how many people think about nutrition in India: that hunger and undernutrition are problems of poverty, and obesity is a problem of the well-off. That idea has long been dismantled.

Cheap, sugary, carbohydrate-heavy food is now everywhere—corner shops, school canteens, train stations, and delivery apps, to name a few. These foods are calorie-dense but nutritionally hollow. They fill quantitatively while robbing our body of what is essential.

The result? Obesity and micronutrient deficiencies are showing up together in middle-class families, in semi-urban households, and in teenagers who eat three meals a day, but exist on a diet of refined flour, sugar, and salt.

The clear line—poor equals hungry, rich equals healthy—has blurred entirely. The paradox does not care about the income bracket.

—Uma Sundar

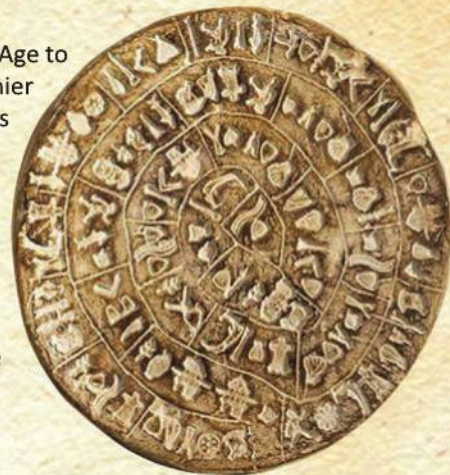
(This is the first part of a two-part series.)

What is the Phaistos Disc?

IT is a 15-cm-wide and 1-cm-thick disc made of fired clay dating back to the Bronze Age to around 1700 BCE. It was discovered in 1908 by the Italian archaeologist Luigi Pernier in the ancient Minoan palace of Phaistos on the island of Crete in Greece. Phaistos was once an important centre of the Minoan civilisation that thrived from around 2700 to 1450 BCE.

The disc has a series of 45 symbols similar to Egyptian hieroglyphics arranged in a spiral on both sides. There are a total of 241 figures stamped on the disc. The meanings of the symbols have eluded experts till date. They have been variously interpreted as an adventure narrative, a poetic verse, a magical curse, a board game, and even musical notes for a stringed instrument. It is believed that the symbols read from the outside towards the centre.

The disc can be seen in the Archaeological Museum of Herakleion in Crete.



What is a forest fire?

A FOREST fire or a wildfire is an unplanned uncontrolled fire in areas of vegetation. These fires tend to spread rapidly and consume large areas of vegetation.

Wildfires can be triggered by human activities. This includes clearing fields through burning (slash and burn farming), by sparks emitted by mechanical equipment, power lines catching fire or arson (deliberate burning). Fires can also be caused by mining activities that involve combustible materials like coal.

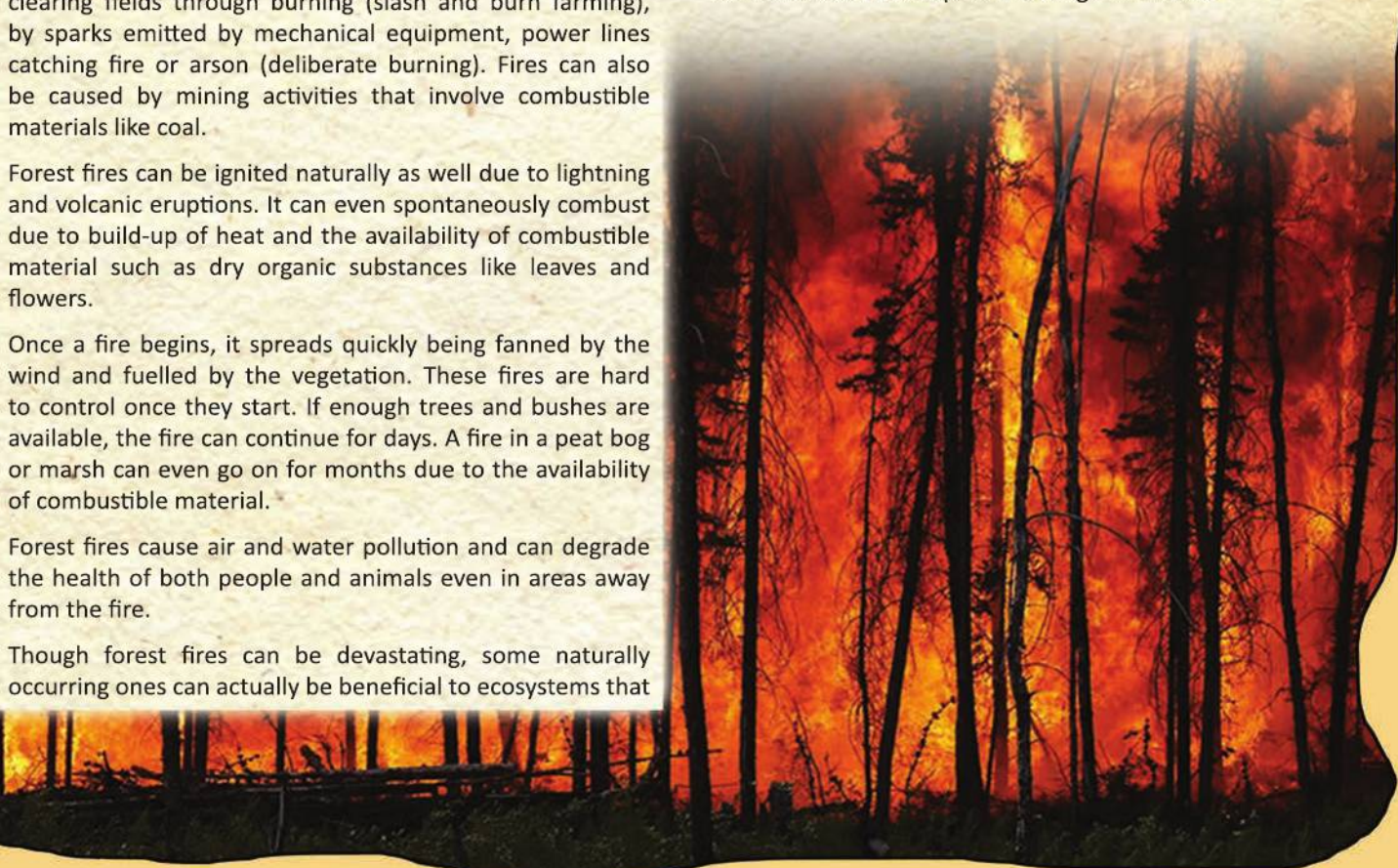
Forest fires can be ignited naturally as well due to lightning and volcanic eruptions. It can even spontaneously combust due to build-up of heat and the availability of combustible material such as dry organic substances like leaves and flowers.

Once a fire begins, it spreads quickly being fanned by the wind and fuelled by the vegetation. These fires are hard to control once they start. If enough trees and bushes are available, the fire can continue for days. A fire in a peat bog or marsh can even go on for months due to the availability of combustible material.

Forest fires cause air and water pollution and can degrade the health of both people and animals even in areas away from the fire.

Though forest fires can be devastating, some naturally occurring ones can actually be beneficial to ecosystems that

have evolved along with such fires. Certain trees like the eucalyptus release oils that encourage fire without burning their own barks which are resistant. This gives them an advantage over other species. Some plant species even contain seeds that require fire for germination.



The Mystery of Yonaguni

RISING from a depth of almost 27 metres underwater, just off the coast of Yonaguni, the southernmost of Japan's Ryukyu Islands, is a mammoth sandstone rock formation that resembles a pyramid. It is nearly 150 m long and 40 m wide and has steps and flat terraces with perfectly right-angled walls and corners.

A wide ledge runs around its base on three sides. It has a platform that resembles a turtle, a triangular depression with two large holes dug at the edge, a 7-metre tall rock which looks like the face of a man and two large, closely spaced pillars.

The mysterious structure is estimated to be at least 10,000 years old. It belongs to the last Ice Age, when the land on which it stands was not submerged in the sea.

Ever since its discovery in 1986 by a local scuba diver, the structure has sparked a debate among renowned geologists and marine archaeologists of the world. Some of them believe that the structure is natural while others argue that it is too finely cut to be a work of nature.

Crude stone tools and rock carvings, that resemble hieroglyphs, found at the site, point to a probable man-made origin. However, the fact that it's formed from a single rock and could have got its present shape because of corrosion or earthquakes (Yonaguni being in the region of frequent seismic activity), suggest a possible natural origin.

Despite a lot of speculation, no common conclusion about its origin has yet been reached. The Yonaguni sandstone wonder merely sits silently in its watery abode as the world around it continues to debate its secrets.



Survival Strategies

Unlike human babies, which are dependent on their parents for many years, most wild animals have to fend for themselves as soon as they are born or even while in the womb!



Leap of Faith

The barnacle goose nests high up in the cliffs of eastern Greenland to deter predators. When the goslings are a few days old, they have to jump from an altitude of 120 m, almost the height of a 40-storey building, to reach the grassy meadow below the cliffs. They are imprinted, which means they will follow their mother anywhere, but even so, they are reluctant to take the leap. Some chicks hesitate on the

edge for hours. Once airborne, they flap their half-grown wings with all their might and tumble and bounce over the rocks on their way down.

Many are injured or killed but enough goslings make it alive to keep the population of barnacle geese at a healthy level.

The chicks of the guillemot, a species of sea bird, also take a terrifying tumble off steep cliffs to reach their fathers calling from the water below!

Sibling Rivalry

Although they are over four metres long and look ferocious, with long, dagger-like teeth, sand tiger sharks are not interested in attacking people. They feed on herrings, eels and other small fish. They are found in the warm waters of the western Atlantic Ocean and the Red Sea.

The female is wooed by many males during the breeding season. This means her eggs, of which there may be more than 50, are fertilised at different times. The eggs hatch inside the mother. The embryos which are the most developed (since they have been fertilised first) gobble up their immature brothers and sisters!





Ghoulish Guest

The greater honeyguide of Africa, a species of cuckoo, lays each of its eggs in the nests of different birds. When the chick is born, it is blind and hairless like other chicks, but it has a sharp hook at the tip of its beak. It lashes out at the chicks of the host bird with this hook. Within a few days, it succeeds in killing all of them.

Once the nest is cleared of competition, the hook drops off by itself.

Cutting to the Chase

Baby marine iguanas in the volcanic Galapagos Islands don't have to take terrifying tumbles off cliffs. They have to outrun swarms of hungry snakes! The females lay their eggs in underground burrows hidden in the rocks, but they don't hang around after laying the eggs, which take up to four months to hatch. Galapagos racer snakes gather at the mouth of the burrows, anticipating a feast which they enjoy only once a year. The racers are mildly venomous constrictors that are endemic to the islands.

The hatchlings have to choose between staying put and starving or making a run for it. The snakes can sense the movement, so the instant the iguanas take off, they give chase. Only the swiftest of the baby iguanas reach the water and safety.

Foul Fowl

The fulmar is a seabird that builds its nest in high, rocky places. The chicks are alone for long periods of time, when the parents are out foraging. Hence, they are open to attack from winged predators. However, fulmar chicks have an effective defence. When a predator approaches, the chick spits out a stream of yellow stomach oil. Even chicks which are just four days old, can hit an intruder a foot away.

The vomit not only smells vile, it destroys the enemy's feathers. Even the chicks' parents have to approach cautiously, until they learn to recognise them!

DidYou Know?

Precocial species are those whose young are relatively mature and able to walk and run very soon after birth. On the other hand, the young of altricial species are helpless when they are born and dependent on their parents for a length of time.





These riddles and pictures have gone TOTALLY BONKERS and gotten all mixed up!

Can you figure out which riddle matches which picture? Draw a line connecting each brain teaser to its matching answer.

Some might make you giggle, others may make you think, but all will give your brain a GREAT workout!

Ready to solve the puzzle? Let's go!

Riddle MANIA

WHAT?

WHO?

1. I shave every day, yet my beard remains as it is.
2. Can't talk but will reply when spoken to.
3. Has a neck, but no head; and has two arms, but no hands.
4. Thrives when you feed it, but dies when you water it.
5. Tall when young, and short when old.
6. Able to run but never walk.
7. Has hands that cannot clap.
8. Has a thumb and four fingers but is not a hand.
9. Can travel around the world while staying in a corner.
10. My start goes on toast, and my end describes how birds move.
11. Has teeth but cannot use them to eat.
12. Has lots of bark, but no bite.

Chinmaya Mission Sets Guinness World Record For Largest Online Bhagavad Gita Chanting

With 8,277 verified participants chanting simultaneously, Chinmaya Mission marks a historic global milestone in the celebration of the Bhagavad Gita

India, July 15, 2026: Chinmaya Mission, a global spiritual and educational organisation dedicated to spreading the eternal wisdom of Vedanta and the Bhagavad Gita through study, service and self-transformation has been officially recognised by **Guinness World Records** for achieving the title of the **Most People Chanting Online Simultaneously**. A total of **8,277** verified participants chanted Chapter 15 (**Purushottama Yoga**) of the Bhagavad Gita together during the global initiative Chinmaya Gita Samarpanam, held on May 9, 2026. The achievement surpassed the previous Guinness World Records **benchmark of 5,188 participants**, establishing a new global record.

The record was achieved as part of **Chinmaya Amrit Mahotsav**, the year-long celebration commemorating 75 years of the Chinmaya Movement. Inspired by the vision of Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda, the initiative sought to bring together people across the world through the timeless wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita, transforming collective chanting into a shared expression of devotion, reflection and spiritual unity.

The initiative drew more than 75,000 registrations across 70 plus countries, with over 32,000 people joining live online chanting sessions. Following Guinness World Records' verification process, 8,277 participants met the record requirements.

The achievement was made possible by the collective participation of children, youth, families, spiritual seekers and devotees worldwide, supported by nearly 1,000 trained volunteers who not only coordinated the sessions but also helped participants across age groups confidently navigate the online platform while ensuring compliance with the documentation protocols.

Speaking on the occasion, Pujya Swami Swaroopananda, Global Head of Chinmaya Mission, said "This recognition is not merely a celebration of a world record, it is a celebration of the timeless wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita reaching hearts across continents. Every individual who participated became part of a collective spiritual offering that transcended geography, language and culture. The true achievement lies not in the numbers, but in the shared commitment to living the values of the *Bhagavad Gita* and carrying forward Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda's vision of making Vedanta accessible to all. We offer this achievement at the lotus feet of Bhagavan

Sri Krishna and with deep gratitude for Gurudev's grace, which continues to inspire millions around the world."

More than a Guinness World Records title, this milestone signifies the growing global relevance of the Bhagavad Gita's universal teachings in today's interconnected world. It also reinforces Chinmaya Mission's continuing commitment to making Vedantic wisdom accessible through contemporary platforms while fostering spiritual learning, cultural connectedness and collective well-being across borders.

As Chinmaya Mission celebrates 75 years of its journey, this Guinness World Records recognition stands as another landmark milestone in its enduring contribution to spiritual awakening, value-based education, cultural preservation and selfless service to humanity.

About Chinmaya Mission:

Chinmaya Mission is a global movement dedicated to inner transformation and spiritual awakening, rooted in the timeless wisdom of Vedanta, and inspired by the vision of Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda since 1951. Chinmaya Mission serves through over 300 centres in 29 countries, managing ashrams and temples, over 100 educational institutions, extensive rural development initiatives across 1,250+ villages, and a hospital. Chinmaya Vishwa Vidyapeeth, a deemed-to-be university near Kochi, Kerala, has been established since 2017. Through study, spiritual practices, and selfless service, the Mission seeks to nurture strong individuals and a happier

world - bringing the light of knowledge into everyday living. With centres worldwide, the Mission conducts programmes in spirituality, education, and community service, nurturing inner growth and social upliftment.

For more information, visit:

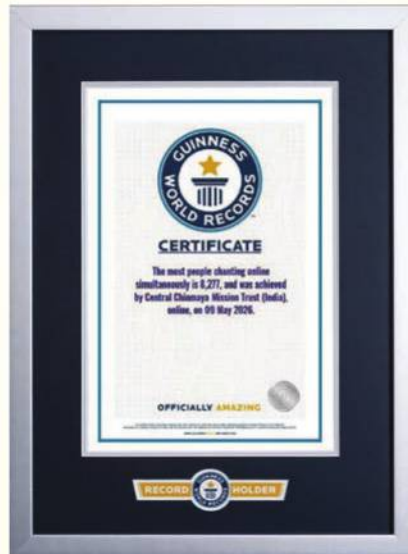
<https://www.chinmayamission.com>

About Chinmaya Amrit Mahotsav (Chinmaya75)

Chinmaya Amrit Mahotsav is a year-long commemoration of 75 years of the Chinmaya Movement—a collective expression of gratitude and a revival of the joy and purpose that Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda's vision continues to inspire. It brings Chinmaya devotees together worldwide through signature festivals, spiritual initiatives, cultural offerings, centre-led events, and global online engagements, in the spirit of "75 Years. One Movement. Beyond Boundaries. Eternally Inspired." The upcoming culmination event in New Delhi, the **Chinmaya Mission Grand Sammelan scheduled from 23 to 25 October 2026**, is envisioned as a landmark gathering commemorating the Mission's 75-year journey of spiritual service, cultural resurgence, and contribution to nation-building.

Registrations for the Sammelan are now open at

<https://chinmaya75.org/amrit/register>



Learning without Limits



For decades, higher education involved competitive cut-off marks, relocation to expensive cities and rigid timetables. But a parallel revolution has been quietly changing this landscape.

DISTANCE LEARNING has gradually evolved from a last resort to an instrument of equality. With improved internet connectivity, smartphones and digital learning platforms, higher education is now more accessible than ever before for people who need to balance their educational aspirations while working full-time jobs, shouldering family responsibilities or living in remote locations.

Democracy of Education

Distance learning allows studying from home using digital resources instead of attending daily classes in person. This enables students to learn at their own pace.

In recent years, distance learning has gained significant traction with numerous institutions offering various courses. At the centre of this democratisation of learning stands the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU).

Global Mega University

Established by an Act of Parliament in 1985, IGNOU has expanded from serving 4,500 students into the world's largest university with over 3 million active learners. Intended to boost India's Gross Enrolment Ratio*, it is a resource centre for distance and online programmes.

IGNOU operates through a massive network of 21 Schools of Studies, 58 regional centres, 2,382 Learner Support Centres and 25 overseas study centres in 15 countries to support NRIs.

**The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is calculated by dividing the total number of students enrolled in a specific level of education (regardless of age) by the total population of the official age group for that level, then multiplying by 100.*

Vast Catalogue

IGNOU offers 333 programmes that include certificate and diploma courses, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees as well as doctoral studies. Conventional streams such as Arts,



Commerce, Science, Education, Healthcare, Journalism, etc. rub shoulders with technical and professional programmes in Business Management and Computer Applications, as also specialised skill-based and vocational courses designed to enhance employability.

ODL vs Online

IGNOU offers two distinct, highly affordable study modes, with identical syllabi and validity.

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) combines printed study materials or digital copies via the eGyankosh digital library, with optional weekend classes at local Learner Support Centres. This is ideal for working professionals, aspirants for competitive exams and those lacking reliable internet connections.

The Online courses are delivered entirely through a dedicated digital learning

portal for those who desire structured learning, with live video lectures, interactive multimedia, virtual labs and faculty interaction. All coursework, assignments and exams are managed digitally, requiring no study centre visits.

IGNOU broadcasts educational content through its live telecasts on the 24x7 Gyan Darshan TV channel and Gyan Vani FM radio.

Value for the Real World

Distance learning is not without its challenges. Students require self-discipline, time management and the motivation to persevere without daily classroom attendance. However, for those who are determined to learn, it offers a valuable pathway to education.

The University Grants Commission and the Distance Education Bureau mandate that IGNOU degrees are completely at par with traditional central or state universities. They are valid for higher studies, government jobs and multiple corporate positions. IGNOU holds an A++ accreditation from NAAC, the highest possible quality rating in the country, making their degrees highly respected by employers, who value the discipline and work ethic it takes to complete a distance degree.

Fascinating Facts

Self-directed: Students can earn academic credits through its flexible system, so they can study at a pace that suits them.

Social Rehabilitation: Provides completely free higher education to prison inmates across India.

Tech Pioneer: Partnered with ISRO in 2004 to launch EduSat, India's first satellite dedicated to serving distance learners.



Research Emphasis: A total of 1,500 research projects completed in the past five years, through established partnerships with several international institutions.

Alumni Network: A network of over 3 million alumni worldwide provides students with opportunities to connect with peers and professionals in their field.

—Esther Kurien

Bottle Magic

CAN you pull a ₹100 note from under an upturned bottle without toppling it? Try this experiment.

You need:

A ₹100 note and an empty glass bottle with a narrow neck and mouth (such as a soft drink bottle).

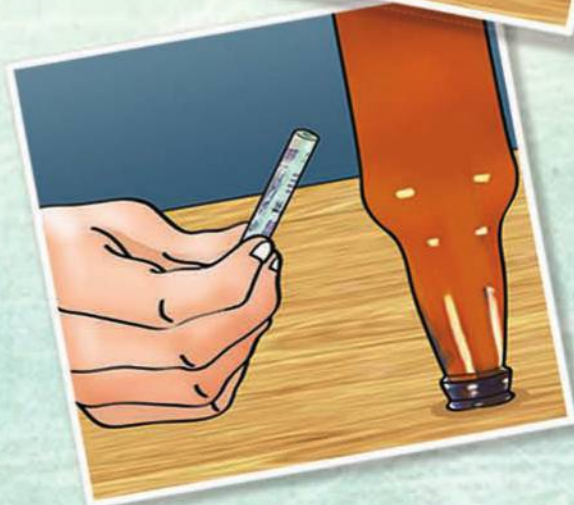
What you do:

1. Place the ₹100 note flat on a smooth surface, such as a table.
2. Balance a glass bottle upside down as shown over the middle of the note.
3. Tell your friends that they can have the note if they can pull it out from under the bottle without making the bottle fall.
4. Watch them fail to do it, then show them how it's done!
5. Carefully roll the note from one end towards the bottle as shown in the picture.
6. When the rolled-up note gets to the mouth of the bottle, continue rolling, but carefully nudge the bottle towards the opposite edge of the note.
7. Once the bottle is off the edge... you can remove the note!

How does it work?

The scientific principles at work here are friction and inertia. Newton's first law of motion states that an object in motion (or at rest) tends to stay in motion (or at rest). This means the bottle wants to stay where it is. When you attempt to remove the note sharply, the force topples it over.

There is also friction between the paper and bottle. There is so much friction that the note pulls the bottom of the bottle with it. To overcome the friction, you gently roll the note to the edge of the bottle and then tug it out.



The Vehicle of Gods and Warriors

Odisha's famous Rath Yatra, which was on 16 July this year, involves the procession of idols on majestic chariots from the Jagannath Temple at Puri to the Gundicha Temple.



The chariot originated in Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq) around 3000 BCE. Although chariots were usually horse-drawn, these early chariots were drawn by donkeys and wild asses. In ancient Rome, a few chariots were even drawn by dogs or ostriches!



Chariot races were the most popular and dangerous sporting spectacles in ancient Greece and Rome. In one form of the race, the driver had to leap from the moving chariot, run beside it and then leap back in while a second driver held the reins!

The scythed chariot was a modified war chariot with long blades that stuck out from the wheel hubs. First used by ancient Persians, scythed chariots could mow down enemy foot soldiers by the hundreds.



The magnificent Sun Temple at Konark (Odisha) is dedicated to Surya, the Sun God, and designed like his chariot drawn by seven horses. Its 24 intricately-carved wheels represent the 24 hours in a day and are actually sundials which can accurately calculate time.



'Chariot graves' are found in many parts of Britain. In ancient times, Celts (early Britons) buried their chieftains in chariots, complete with their sword, shield, spears and drinking vessels!

The largest chariot battle was the Battle of Kadesh, fought between Egyptians and Hittites (who lived in modern Turkey) in 1274 BCE in present-day Syria. Around 5,000–6,000 chariots were employed. The Egyptians' lighter chariots helped them win the battle.





From Criminal to Criminalist

It took a lawbreaker to revolutionise police investigation in 19th century France.

HE was only 13 when Eugène François Vidocq got his first taste of prison. His own father turned him in for stealing from his bakery, hoping that two weeks in jail would set him straight. That did not work because not long after, the teen stole money from his parents to try and run away to the Americas. Vidocq then joined the army, only to desert two years later. Meanwhile, he racked up a notorious record of sauntering in and out of prison, once even escaping dressed as a nun! After multiple arrests and escapes and many years on the run, Vidocq finally decided to call it a day and cooperate with the police.

Vidocq became an informant for the police while in prison and helped expose criminals operating under false names. A master of disguise, he went undercover and joined crews only to turn them in after they committed their crimes.

In 1811, he established France's first plainclothes unit called Brigade de Sûreté and gained a reputation as a cop who gave criminals another chance. In fact, his unit was almost exclusively staffed with ex-criminals! He employed tactics like preserving footprints with plaster of Paris casts,

comparing handwriting samples against forged notes, keeping detailed written records, comparing used bullets to guns, etc. These techniques went on to become the bedrock of forensic investigation.

Despite its success, Brigade de Sûreté was later disbanded as the French police frowned upon the criminal backgrounds of its agents. Vidocq took the opportunity to pen his memoirs, describing his numerous sensational escapades.

Vidocq was not one to let his experience go to waste and he opened his own detective agency in 1833, the world's first! His squad mostly comprised ex-convicts, and their methods were not always above board. It was not long before Vidocq and his agency ran afoul of the law and he was back behind bars.

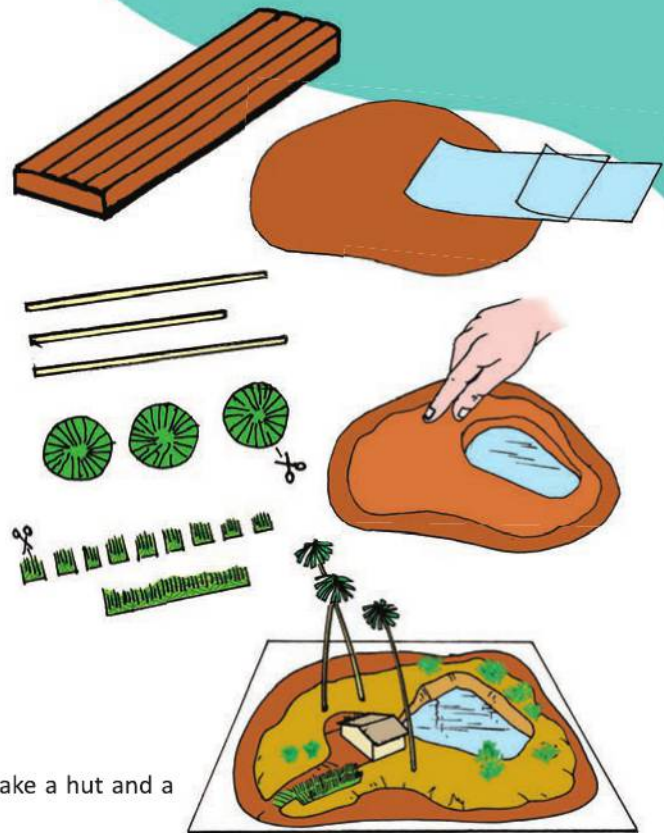
Though Vidocq spent much of his life on the wrong side of the law, his contribution was significant. His idea of plainclothes police officers is used all over the world even today. He was consulted when Scotland Yard, the London police headquarters, was founded in 1829. His colourful life also inspired writers like Victor Hugo and Edgar Allan Poe.

An Oasis

Things required: Brown modelling clay, green and blue marble paper, a piece of transparent plastic, square piece of cardboard, 3 toothpicks, paints, scissors and glue.

Method:

1. Place the brown clay on the square cardboard base and shape it to resemble a slightly raised, irregular land form. Leave a hollow space within for the water body.
2. Insert a piece of blue marble paper in the hollow and cover it with the transparent plastic sheet. Cover the edges of the plastic sheet with clay for a smooth finish.
3. Cut out three rectangular pieces from the green marble paper. Make slits on one side (see illustration). Stick the ends of each piece to form the fronds of the palm tree. Glue them to one end of the toothpicks. Fix the toothpicks to the clay surface.
4. Slit a few pieces of green marble paper to make the grassy patches and fix them on the clay.
5. Paint the base a dull yellow to resemble sand. You could also make a hut and a pathway from cardboard and fix it to the model of the oasis.

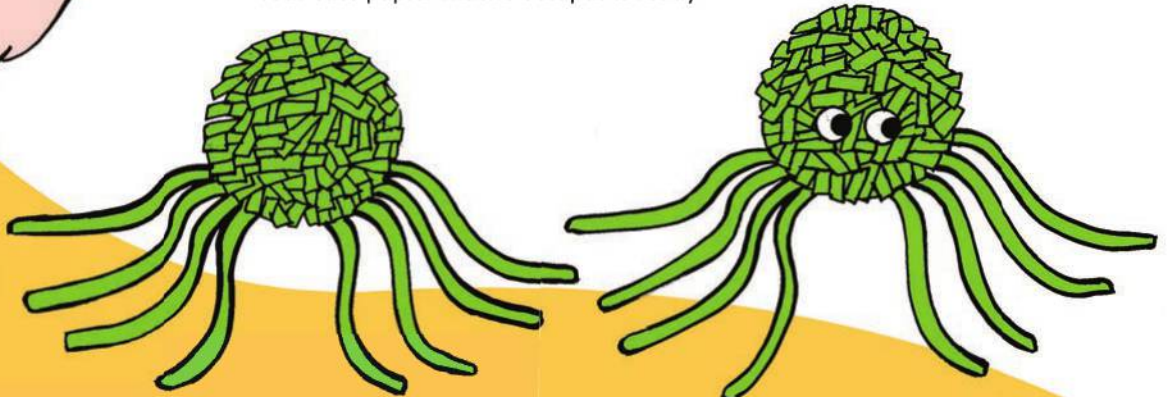


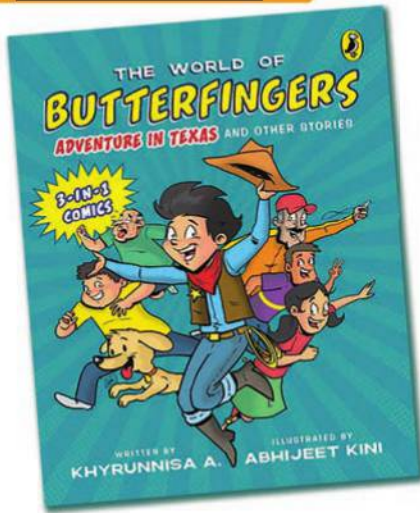
Papier-mâché Octopus

Materials required: A balloon, old newspapers, glue, black marker pen or googly eyes, scissors, green paint and glue.

Method:

1. Blow up the balloon and tie it.
 2. Tear out long strips of the newspaper and stick them on the balloon so that it is covered completely with newspaper.
 3. Stick one more layer of newspaper over the balloon and let it dry thoroughly for a day or two. Apply green paint all over it.
 4. Cut out eight long strips from the newspaper. Paint them green and stick them to the base to make the arms of the octopus.
 5. Stick the googly eyes or draw them using the black marker pen.
- Your cute papier-mâché octopus is ready.





READERS who are familiar with the Butterfingers series by popular writer Khyrunnisa A. will know that Butterfingers, aka Amar Kishan, first came to life as a comic book character in *Tinkle* magazine. He then appeared in three novels and three collections of short stories before returning in his

IT'S A FUNNY WORLD!

Title: *The World of Butterfingers: Adventure in Texas and Other Stories*
Author: Khyrunnisa A.
Publisher: Puffin Books (2023)

original comic avatar in *The World of Butterfingers*.

The 100-page book has three stories: 'Butterfingers and the Baby Shoes Mystery', 'Adventure in Texas' and 'Butterfingers and the Quarter Marathon.' In the first story, Amar and his friends play detective and work to solve the mystery of the brand-new baby shoes discovered in a pile of garbage at the beach. The second story is about Amar's family trip to the land of cowboys and adventures, i.e. Texas. Through a series of happy coincidences

and accidents, Amar stumbles upon some lost treasures. The third and the funniest tale sees Amar participating in a quarter marathon with his grouchy headmaster, Mr Jagmohan, all for the noble cause of raising funds for the school! But considering the ups and downs in this partnership, will the two win the race?

Besides his ability to leave everyone in splits, Amar's nicest quality is his enthusiasm to help people. This, of course, often lands him (and others) in more trouble, but fortunately it always works out well in the end.

Scripted by Prabha Nair and illustrated by the gifted Abhijeet Kini, *The World of Butterfingers* is full of fun, laughter and yes, action. Your only complaint will be that it all gets over too quickly!

— Shweta Mittal



BRIGHTER THAN THE STARS

He came to teach, but left having learned the most important lessons of all.

WHAT happens when you put a disgraced coach in charge of an intellectually challenged team? Crackling comedy, for sure!

Sitaare Zameen Par tells the story of an arrogant assistant basketball coach Gulshan Arora, played by Aamir Khan. Suspended for misbehaviour, he gets arrested for drunk driving and is sentenced to community service. His task—coach a basketball team of youngsters with developmental disabilities.

Despite having Down syndrome and autism, the cheery bunch has an unflagging spirit. While Gulshan looks down on them, the team too is not shy about expressing their poor opinion of him. As he grudgingly begins to understand their lives and struggles, Gulshan starts whipping them into shape. This also becomes a journey of self-growth as he confronts his own fears and relationship issues. The finals of the basketball tournament and the eventual parting of ways are



heartwarming moments that show just how far Gulshan has come and how much he has changed.

The true stars of this feel-good underdog story are undoubtedly the 10 players who struggle with intellectual disabilities. Their unapologetic attitude towards their condition brings laughter as well as tears as we learn how much they must overcome just to try and live a regular life. Dolly Ahluwalia as Gulshan's mother is a fabulous mix of fierce and filial, while Genelia D'Souza as Gulshan's long-suffering yet supportive wife and Gurbal Singh as the ever-patient director of the disability centre nicely round off the cast.

Though the script and songs lack the same poignancy as its predecessor *Taare Zameen Par*, this remake of the 2018 Spanish film *Campeones* nonetheless brings home the message of moving beyond labels and seeing people for who they are. As the movie repeatedly states, everyone has their own normal.

THE WEAK SQUARE

The hall had the same unforgiving brightness and the same disciplined arrangement of tables and chairs. The atmosphere however, had changed by the final round.

The air felt heavier, more attentive, as though every square on every board had absorbed the awareness that something irreversible was approaching. Instead of routine, even the most ordinary movements seemed to occur with more care.

At the front, the top board waited patiently. No banners hovered above, and no screens were present to frame the game with commentary or graphics. The simplicity felt intentional, almost severe, as though the game required distance from distraction and decoration of every kind.

This was a decisive encounter. The reigning Champion entered the round with a measurable advantage. A draw would secure the title with efficiency, while a loss would register as a modest numerical shift, the kind that would disturb lists for a brief period and then fade into background. The Challenger entered with a different burden. He required a full point. Any other result would leave him where he had often stood before, close enough to observe history yet still outside it. A draw meant only half a point, while only a win would secure a full point. A loss would obviously mean a zero.

That imbalance marked the Challenger's bearing. His posture leaning forward, his attention sharp, and his movement precise while carrying a charge that was visible even from a distance. Behind him sat his father, positioned close enough to offer presence and sufficiently far to respect the rules. It embodied experience, and belonged to someone who had once faced similar boards with similar hunger, and who now relived that intensity through another pair of hands; his son's.

The Champion arrived early and took his seat with a certain dignity. His gaze scanned the hall briefly, but sought no acknowledgment. It rested on the board with the familiarity that comes from long repetition. He had learned that excess

emotion drains energy that is rarely returned. The board offered no intimidation, and the occasion held no spectacle that he had not encountered earlier in his career. He adjusted a piece slightly, more from habit than necessity, and waited for the clocks to start.

When the clocks began, the hall slipped into a sudden silence and transformed to attentiveness. There was no visible strain or pressure. The opening progressed throwing no

surprise or sudden deviation. The Champion placed his pieces with care, guiding the position into a structure as opposed to volatility.

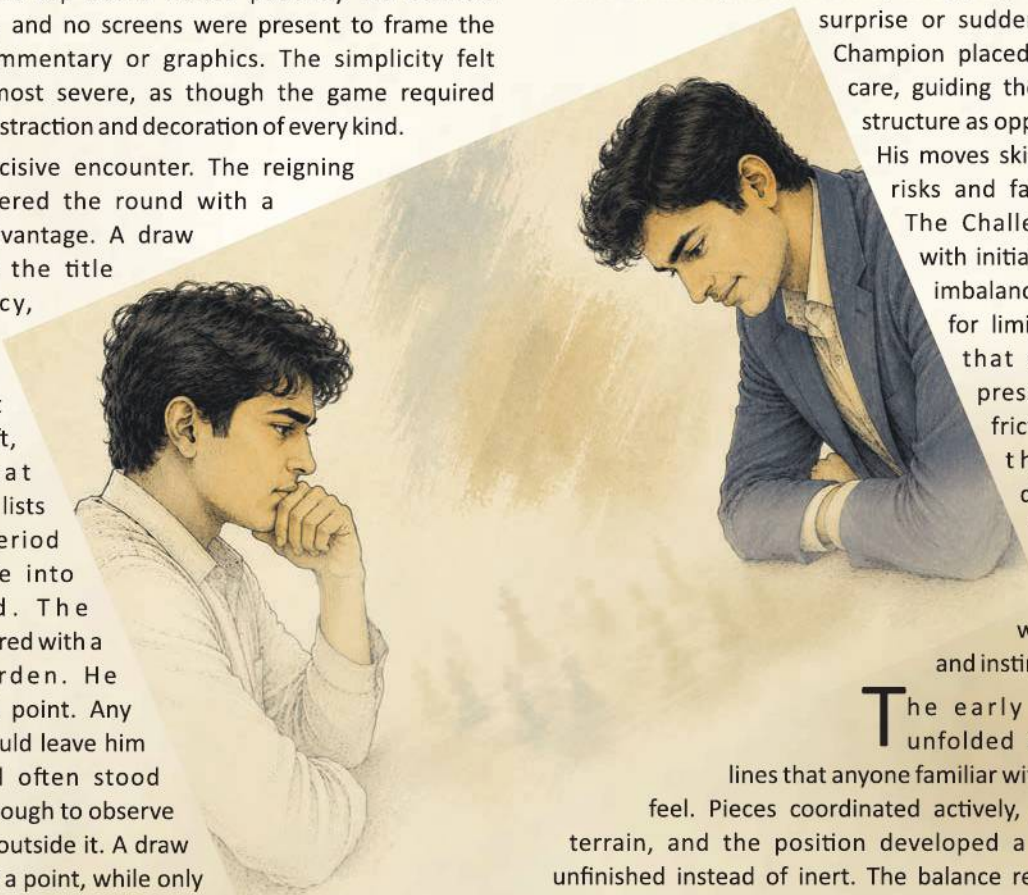
His moves skirted unnecessary risks and favoured stability.

The Challenger answered with initiative, encouraging imbalance and searching for limited asymmetries that might later be pressed. He wanted friction. He wanted the Champion drawn away from tested lines of comfort and into areas where preparation and instinct could collide.

The early middle game unfolded along expected lines that anyone familiar with the game could feel. Pieces coordinated actively, pawns fixed the terrain, and the position developed a shape that felt unfinished instead of inert. The balance remained delicate. At precisely this stage, when possibilities remained available and no side had fully declared its intentions, the Champion looked up and offered a draw.

The offer came almost like a practical remark made during a pause in conversation. Those watching closely understood its significance. The champion risked very little by proposing peace. Retaining the title required no further adventure. Even an unfavourable result would register briefly in charts and tables and then enter the archive of statistics, not even disturbing the lasting impression of his stature. The offer functioned not as a retreat, but it worked as a test, placed outside the sixty-four squares while remaining inseparable from them.

The Challenger paused and let his eyes return to the board. He examined the position again and allowed the position to



stretch slightly.

Then he looked up and said *"Let's see after four-five moves."*

The response was with clarity and reached the nearest rows with ease, spreading quickly among those who had been following every move. It suggested confidence, and it suggested a desire to claim responsibility for the direction of the game.

The Champion accepted the reply with no apparent reaction, and play resumed with the same formal calm that had preceded the offer. Several moves passed. The Challenger pressed forward with energy, sharpening the position and introducing tension. He created threats that demanded accuracy and appeared willing to accept complications. His pieces became increasingly active, his intentions more visible, and observers responded with low murmurs of appreciation as the balance appeared to tilt, subtly, yet unmistakably.

After this phase of pressure and activity, the Challenger spoke and extended his hand across the board, his expression composed, the timing presented as a right exercised.

"Ok, Draw" he declared.

The statement suggested an echo of control, as though he wished to show that the outcome still passed through his decision.

Then the surprise came, and it was a veiled retaliation. A strong statement that came from experience, expertise and superiority.

"Let's see after four-five moves". Exact words repeated, meant to convey a lesson.

His refusal was even and measured. He had indicated clearly that the opportunity had already been presented and declined earlier, and that he now wished to withdraw that opportunity that was extended by him. The tone remained procedural, yet the emotional geometry of the hall changed almost immediately. Those watching adjusted their minds to what was at stake.

The Challenger withdrew his hand as if he had touched a live wire, and leaned back, irritation visible in the set of his shoulders and the way his eyes returned to the position. The game moved beyond pure calculation into a zone where pride and perception played inter-woven with analysis. His moves gained force. He introduced ideas that drew admiration, some bold enough to inspire whispers about the possibility of a reversal that might live in memory for years. To many observers, the Champion appeared to be at a disadvantage.

The Champion responded, patience personified. He accepted awkward positions when they served resilience and allowed structural imperfections. He played for continuity, choosing lines that preserved internal coherence even when they appeared uncomfortable on the surface. His pieces retreated when they needed to, and his king accepted responsibility for weak squares that others might have abandoned.

The second offer of a draw from the Champion was not made from a position of weakness. He had willingly given up a pawn in return for a positional advantage, though many around the board saw it only as being a pawn down. His expression reflected the assurance of a player who had seen possibilities invisible to others, not of one confronting defeat or discomfiture.

Most of the spectators, however, reached a different conclusion. To them, the extra pawn was sufficient evidence that the Challenger held the upper hand.

The Champion also had a practical consideration. A draw at that stage would spare both players of an adjournment and another day of competition. It would also preserve the Challenger's unbeaten run throughout the tournament, an achievement that deserved respect irrespective of the final standings. The Champion knew that for the Challenger, remaining undefeated carried rewards beyond personal satisfaction. It protected valuable rating points, secured the Challenger's clear second place, and ensured that the cash prize attached to that finish remained beyond doubt. A defeat would erase those advantages at once, leaving him vulnerable to slipping to a lower position on the basis of median scores.

The Challenger misread the magnanimous offer. He was almost unable to contain his excitement. He had already begun to see himself as the new Champion. In his mind, the second offer of a draw could only have come from a position of weakness. The material advantage had convinced him that victory was only a matter of completing the formalities.

Instead of simply declining the offer, he declared, *"It is a clear win for me. I think you should resign if you do not wish to play tomorrow."*

The Champion smiled.

It was a smile that revealed very little and understood far more. There was neither irritation nor surrender in it, neither approval nor protest. It acknowledged the Challenger's confidence with the courtesy due to every opponent, while leaving the final verdict to the sixty-four squares.

Wishing him a pleasant evening, the Champion agreed to an adjournment.

The Challenger recorded the *sealed move* with steady hands and rose from his chair with assurance that needed no added gesture. He did not offer a handshake. The absence of that formality conveyed its own meaning, an announcement that he saw the position as essentially resolved in his favour. His father followed him out of the playing area, satisfied with the picture on the board and with the mood that accompanied it.

As he turned to leave, the Champion looked at the board again. He showed no signs of stress. His cool countenance coupled with the position on the board was misread by some as a losing position.

CHECKPOINT

The Challenger on the other hand turned slowly with an air of someone in an authoritative position, his expression guided by confidence that bordered on certainty. He nodded his head towards a group of onlookers, no one in particular, conveying an unspoken claim.

That night, the Challenger and his father examined the position deeply. They examined lines across the board, one variation leading to another, reinforcing continuations, neutralising defensive ideas, and strengthening their belief that the game moved in a single direction. The material advantage appeared stable across most of their analysis. The Champion's resources seemed limited and reactive. Their confidence grew as numbers and lines repeatedly matched their expectations.

The Challenger slept with the assurance of someone who believed that the most demanding part of the struggle lay behind. Morning would bring the formal confirmation of what had already, in his mind, been achieved. The pride in him of having conquered something, allowed him a sound, relaxed sleep.

The next morning, the Champion arrived early again. He took his seat with the same composed presence as on the previous day and settled into his position as though the intervening night had altered nothing. His stillness made a few spectators wonder, as they gathered near the board. It implied a deliberate countenance that was far from resignation.

When the Challenger entered, the hall tightened once again. He walked into the hall with ease, confident both in the position and in the storyline he believed was under way. His father placed himself behind the barrier, fully attentive and ready to witness the consolidation of their mutual expectation. The pieces waited between the contestants, frozen in the arrangement where analysis had ended and uncertainty was believed to have diminished.

The sealed move was played, and the game resumed along anticipated lines. For several moves, the continuation followed expected territory. The Challenger recognised landmarks from the previous night's exploration and felt reassured by their presence. His moves flowed with the comfort of prior rehearsal, and the board seemed to respond by echoing his expectations.

Then a new move entered the game. *The Champion introduced a second pawn sacrifice !*

It was unexpected, but made with a calm confidence of a Champion, set on the board with the same outward calm as many of his earlier moves. Yet it transformed the position immediately. The sacrifice enforced a sequence that could not easily be evaded. Declining it would weaken the Challenger's structure and hand over control of critical points. Accepting it would also involve risks. The choice existed inside a narrow

corridor, and every path within that corridor led to compromise. This was a line that was totally missed by the Challenger and his father in the rehearsals the previous night. This was also missed by every other distinguished player in the hall; some of them former Champions.

The Challenger felt the change before he fully understood it. He bent on the board, and looked at it with a different quality of attention. The more he thought over it the more he realised that this line had remained outside their previous analysis. It defied convention while still obeying logic. A second sacrifice from an already compromised material situation stepped away from the calculations he had relied upon. It had not fitted into the framework they had used through the night.

He accepted the pawn eventually, compelled by necessity. The move felt forced instead of triumphant. On the scoresheet, it added to his material count. On the board, it altered the balance in ways that became visible only slowly to the players of some standing, while most others did not comprehend it at all.

Encouraged by the numbers and misreading the deeper shift, the Challenger rose from his chair and stepped away from the board. The gesture came from habit and belief. He considered the sacrifice a sign of pressure on the Champion's side, a last attempt to complicate an unfavourable situation. He walked a short distance, glanced at the position from afar, and then returned.

During that interval, the next move shook the entire hall. *A third pawn sacrifice !*

The lines that opened proved another point. The Champion was what he was for a reason. Not a single player or chess analyst in the entire hall, had anticipated the line that opened up after the third sacrifice !

The move reorganised the position entirely. Defenders stood in altered relation to one another. Coordination emerged where scattered efforts had previously appeared. The sacrificed pawn had cleared a critical route, and the following king's step allowed latent possibilities to align. What had seemed like ordinary was turning out to be preparation that had waited for the right time.

The Challenger sat down again with head bent into the board more than ever before with both his hands on his head, and studied the position for a longer stretch. The path of a *passed pawn* became visible as something more immediate than a distant idea now. His material advantage no longer translated into control. The structure had changed dramatically. His extra pawn count felt less relevant.

He calculated again, this time with more application that edged toward strain. Alternatives appeared and dissolved. Each line he traced eventually required further dilation, either of squares or of time. Attempts to reposition defenders

weakened other areas. Attempts to hold one file abandoned another. No clear route returned him to the secure impression of the night. The beads of sweat on his forehead revealed the predicament he was in.

The room sensed the reversal before it fully clarified itself. Observers leaned closer, aware that they were watching something unfold that exceeded a single tactic. They saw evaluation on faces as much as on the board. The atmosphere changed from expectation of a clean conclusion to a kind of awe and unease.

The Challenger sat with his head lowered and his shoulders tight, stress replacing the relaxed certainty of the previous evening. His earlier confidence had not vanished; it had been rearranged by an idea that refused to conform. He adjusted pieces, recalculated, and tried to rebuild a sense of direction inside a position that no longer obeyed his earlier reading. He made his move, which was as expected and anticipated by most present.

The Champion's king in turn, moved forward again, continuing its path. It was to aid his pawn to reach the eighth square. By this time the result was already clear to top order players in the hall. Admiration appeared in different forms. Some in stunned silence.

Defensive moves that followed delayed but failed to alter the underlying reality. Each delay sacrificed something else. Each small gesture deepened the new pattern that dominated the board.

The transformation of the pawn into a stronger piece felt less like a single strike and more like the natural completion of a process that had begun several moves earlier. Those who understood the position recognised that the essential turning point had already passed. The Challenger was either one move short, or had one weak square, and the reality of it had dawned on him by now.

The final moment had to arrive. The Challenger remained seated for a while, absorbing the result. His breathing slowed, and the strain in his posture eased gradually. He extended his hand in a measured way, this time in resignation. The Champion accepted it with equal simplicity, meeting formality with formality and allowing no further drama to attach itself to the outcome.



The title remained in the same place. Records would capture the result in symbols and numbers, and future summaries might reduce the game to a few annotated lines. They would display the critical moves and mention the surprise. Very few would carry the full sense of how a prepared belief had been displaced by an unexpected move of a Champion who could calculate the same things differently.

"You did not expect the third pawn sacrifice," the Grandmaster said in a low tone, standing beside the cleared board, his voice steady and unhurried. "You trusted what you had already seen."

"Yes," the student replied, keeping her eyes on the empty squares "In fact I did not see the second in the first place"

she confessed. "I trusted the analysis we had followed. I trusted the numbers. Once the material advantage appeared, I believed the rest would dictate itself."

"You stopped questioning," the Grandmaster said. "That matters more than the move itself."

"But the position looked secure," she said, turning toward him. "It felt earned. Everything pointed in one direction, and nothing suggested that direction needed revision."

"That is often when a second revision becomes most necessary," he said. "Tell me, where do you think the game turned?"

"I keep returning to the sacrifice," she said. "I keep thinking that if I had anticipated it, the rest would have followed

differently. Yet even now, it feels like something else had already altered before that."

"You are closer than you think," he replied. "The turning point did not begin with the sacrifice. It began with belief. The weak square lay in passive arrogance."

She reacted immediately. "Arrogance does not feel accurate," she said. "The Challenger was active. He pressed. He took initiative. There was nothing lazy or careless in his play."

"I did not say loud arrogance," the Grandmaster said. "I said passive arrogance. The kind that dwells inside confidence, not showing itself openly. The kind that assumes strength no longer needs imagination or anyone else's validation."

She paused before responding. "You mean the elation when

CHECKPOINT

advantage begins to feel sufficient by itself to secure victory."

"Yes," he said. "The weak square lay in the arrogance of a perceived position of strength. When advantage starts dictating expectation, curiosity begins to narrow. Then one is blind to possibilities."

"I recognise that," she said slowly. "Once the pawn advantage appeared, I relaxed. I stopped looking for any surprise. I assumed new ideas would only complicate matters unnecessarily."

"And that assumption," he said, "is where deviation gains power. When preparation becomes confirmation instead of inquiry, imagination withdraws. Unfamiliar ideas begin to appear as errors instead of new avenues."

"Then preparation itself becomes dangerous," she said. "Is that what you are suggesting?"

"No," he replied. "Preparation remains essential. What changes is how you hold it. Preparation must remain flexible enough to absorb disturbance, and must remain open to receive unexpected ideas. Interpreting a changed line as collapse can be disastrous. Strength demands responsibility, and part of that responsibility lies in imagining that your understanding may still be incomplete."

She looked back at the board, now entirely bare. "What took me by surprise the most was how ordinary the sacrifice looked when it appeared," she said. "There was no drama in it. Yet everything changed around that one decision."

"That is how displacement often works," he said. "It does not have to be loud. When it comes with dignity, it rearranges the

ground beneath confidence more effectively. Here it came with dignity, magnanimity and confidence. The Challenger saw it as weakness. That was his undoing."

"I think I will remember this game differently than I expected," she said. "Not as a loss of advantage, but as a point when certainty stopped listening."

"That is a useful way to remember it," the Grandmaster said. "Learning often enters through disorientation. It continues through reflection. It returns later when confidence begins to feel complete."

"So the weak square," she said, "was never just on the board."

"No," he replied. "It lived in the refusal to imagine a second sacrifice, leave alone a third. It lived in the comfort of preparation. It lived in the trust placed in expectation once it felt aligned. When one starts believing he knows it all, he is more vulnerable to surprises and shocks."

They remained silent for a while after that, neither reaching for another explanation. The sounds of the hall returning to routine moved around them, unnoticed.

"You will see this again," the Grandmaster said finally. "Whenever advantage feels too orderly. Whenever alignment begins to feel unquestionable. Whenever strength starts to resemble certainty."

"Yes," she said. "I think I will."

They walked out together into the afternoon, mentally attempting to summarise what had been said. The exchange remained open, ready to surface again when confidence grew too clean to examine.

WhatsApp Humour

An old woman and a lawyer are seated next to each other on a flight.

The lawyer asks if she would like to play a fun game. The woman, tired, just wants to take a nap.

She politely declines and rolls over to the window to catch a few winks.

The lawyer persists and explains that the game is easy and a lot of fun.

He explains, "I ask you a question, and if you don't know the answer, you pay me Rs. 50, and vice versa."

Again, she declines and tries to get some sleep. The lawyer, now agitated, says, "Okay, if you don't know the answer you pay me Rs. 50, and if I don't know the answer, I will pay you Rs. 500."

This catches the woman's attention and, figuring there will be no end to this torment unless she plays, agrees to the game. The lawyer asks the first question.

"What's the distance from the earth to the moon?"

The woman doesn't say a word, reaches into her purse, pulls out Rs.50 note and hands it to the lawyer.

"Okay," says the lawyer, "your turn."

She asks the lawyer, "What goes up a hill with three legs and comes down with four legs?" The lawyer, puzzled, takes out his laptop computer and searches all his references. No answer. He taps into the air phone with his modem and searches the net and the library of congress. No answer.

Frustrated, he sends e-mails to all his friends and coworkers, to no avail.

After an hour, he wakes the woman, and hands her Rs. 500. The woman says, "Thank you," and turns back to get some more sleep. The lawyer, who is more than a little miffed, wakes the woman and asks, "Well, what's the answer?"

Without a word, the woman reaches into her purse, hands the lawyer Rs. 50, and goes back to sleep.



Name

NIKOLA TESLA (1856–1943) was a Serbian-American engineer and scientist who made many breakthroughs in the production, transmission and application of electric power. He designed the alternating-current (AC) electric system, the predominant electrical system used across the world today. He also created the 'Tesla coil', an induction coil widely used in radio technology. He pioneered the field of radio communication and was granted more than 100 US patents.



Place

TIMBUKTU, an ancient city in Mali (West Africa), was historically important as a trading post on the trans-Saharan caravan route and as a centre of Islamic culture. It is famed for its Djinguereber Mosque and Sankore University, both of which were established in the early 1300s. A unique feature of the mosque is that it has been built with earthen bricks, which serves as a natural insulator to keep the inside walls of the mosque cool during the summers.

Timbuktu was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1988.



Animal

TAPIRS are large mammals that look like wild hogs with anteater snouts. But tapirs are actually most closely related to horses and rhinos. Their body is tapered in the front and wider at the rear, designed to walk through thick vegetation. Tapirs spend a lot of time in water, eating aquatic plants, cooling off or washing away skin parasites.

There are five types of tapir. Of these four are found in Central and South America, and one in Asia. Male tapirs are slightly smaller than females.



Thing

A TRACTOR is a vehicle that is used on a farm or work site, usually to pull a trailer or other equipment. In place of horses and other large animals, a modern-day farmer uses a tractor to pull a plough through his or her field before planting. Tractors are also used in construction work, road building, etc. in the form of bulldozers, scrapers and diggers.

Tractors typically have large rear wheels. The cab of a tractor, where the driver sits, is sometimes open at the sides.



HADDIRAJ



Ashwin & Abhijeet



Penguin Puzzler

The penguins Noah, Gloria, Mumble and Lovelace, were on a picnic. They had packed fish sandwiches of different kinds such as tuna, sardine and mackerel. However, Lovelace preferred to eat his own snack. What did he eat?

Answer: Pasta, because he was a macaroni penguin!



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.

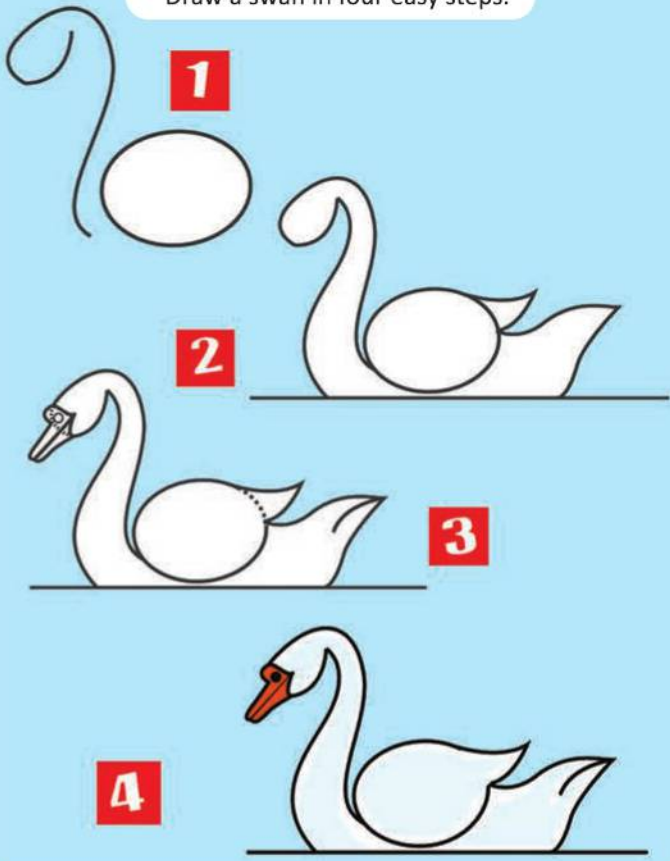
	6	5		3	4
			6		
1	3				
	2	1			5
4				6	
					2

3	5	6	4	1	2
4	1	2	5	6	3
6	2	1	3	4	5
1	3	4	2	5	6
5	4	3	6	2	1
2	6	5	1	3	4

Answer:

Easy Draw

Draw a swan in four easy steps.



Bhootnath and Vetāl

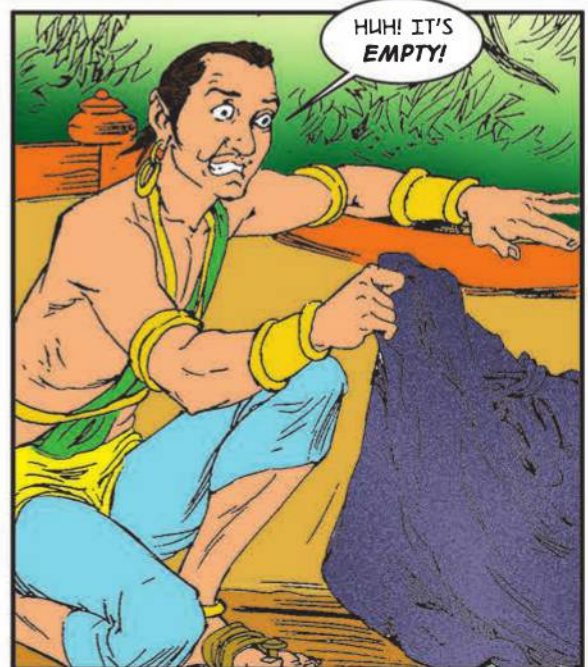
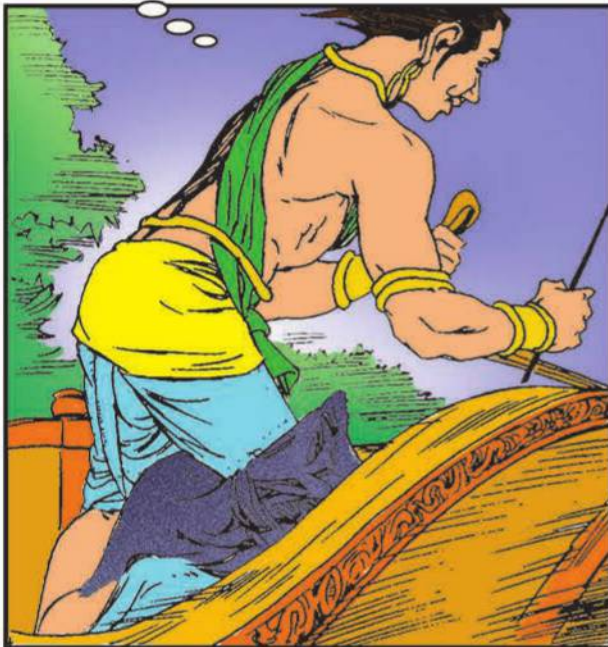
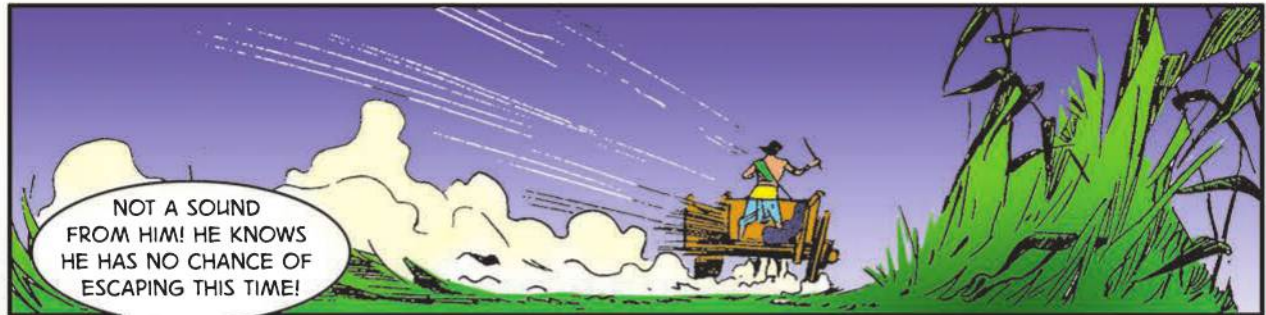
The Three Dolls

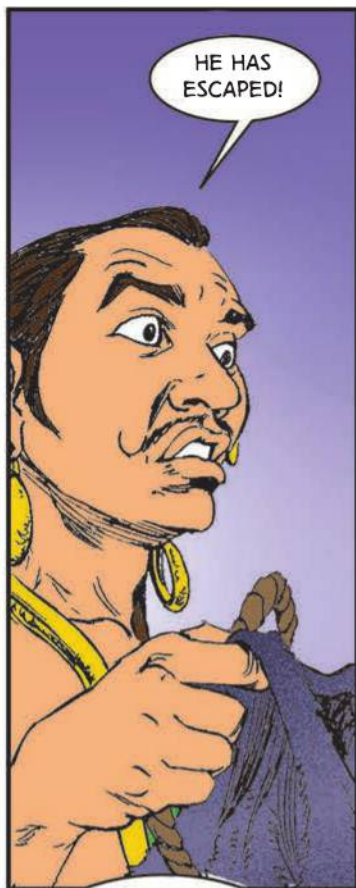
— A take-off from the Vikram-Vetāl stories (Baital Pachisi).

Developed by Luis Fernandes

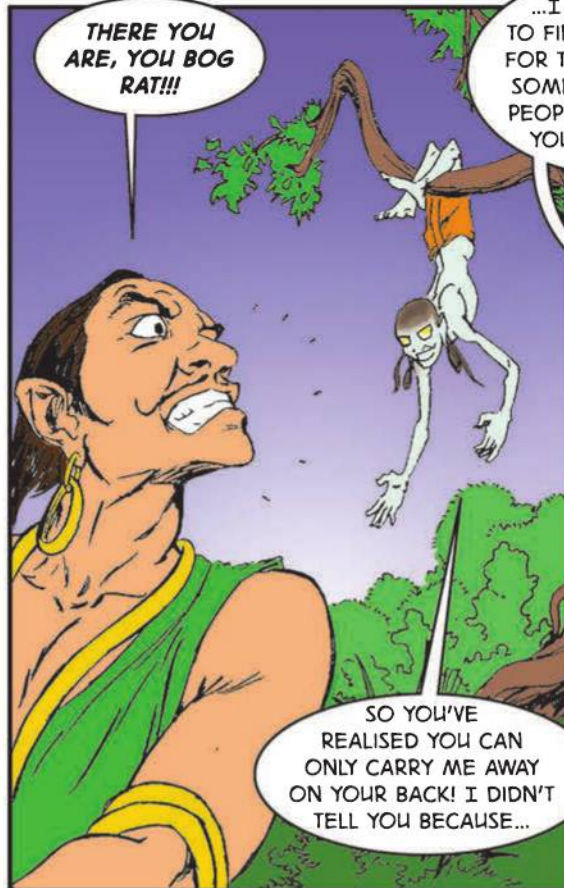
Artwork: Durgesh Velhal

Colour: Snehangshu Mazumder





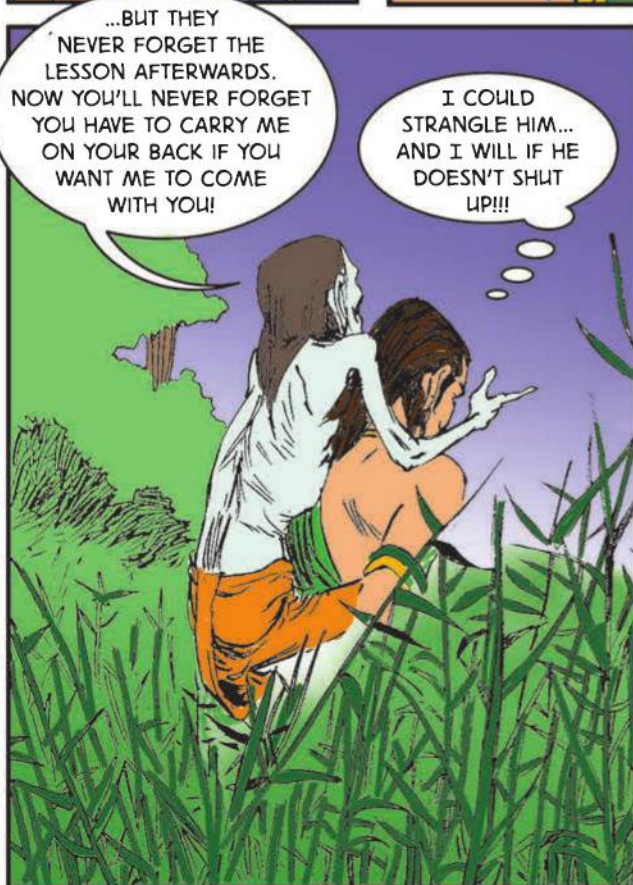
HE HAS
ESCAPED!



THERE YOU
ARE, YOU BOG
RAT!!!

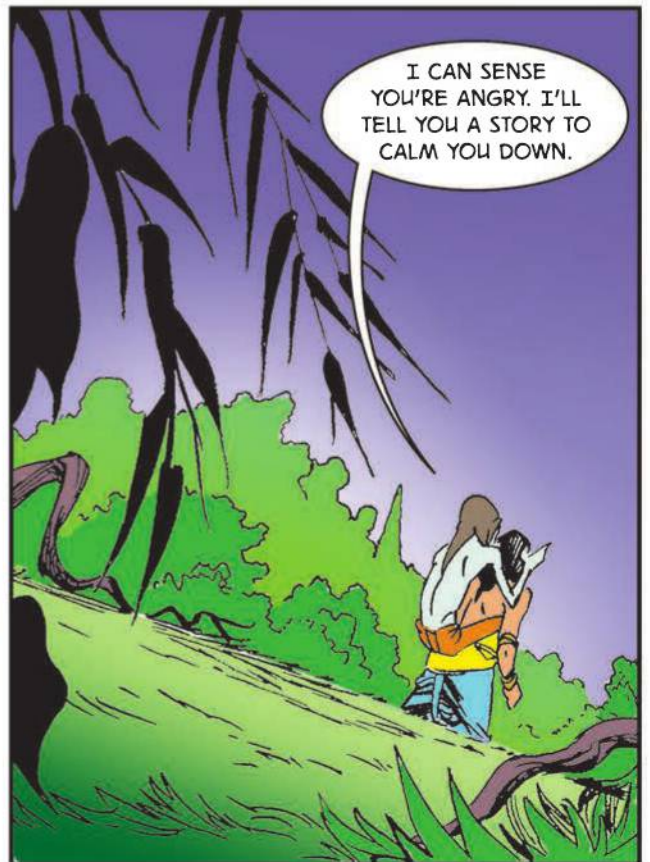
SO YOU'VE
REALISED YOU CAN
ONLY CARRY ME AWAY
ON YOUR BACK! I DIDN'T
TELL YOU BECAUSE...

...I LIKE PEOPLE
TO FIND OUT THINGS
FOR THEMSELVES. IT
SOMETIMES MAKES
PEOPLE ANGRY, LIKE
YOU ARE NOW...



...BUT THEY
NEVER FORGET THE
LESSON AFTERWARDS.
NOW YOU'LL NEVER FORGET
YOU HAVE TO CARRY ME
ON YOUR BACK IF YOU
WANT ME TO COME
WITH YOU!

I COULD
STRANGLE HIM...
AND I WILL IF HE
DOESN'T SHUT
UP!!!



I CAN SENSE
YOU'RE ANGRY. I'LL
TELL YOU A STORY TO
CALM YOU DOWN.

TO BE CONTINUED

The Herb Garden

Among the most useful plants in a garden are herbs. While some are used in cooking, some have medicinal uses, others are holy and some others are used to make perfumes. Here are some of the most well-known herbs.



Basil

BASIL is used all over the world in many dishes, predominantly in Italian and Asian cuisine. Its unique flavour and aroma make it a welcome addition to many soups, salads, gravy-based dishes, pizzas and sandwiches, cold drinks and tea. It is often used as garnish. It is sometimes referred to as the 'tomato' herb because it complements the taste of tomatoes in food.

There are many forms of basil such as sweet basil, holy basil, Thai basil, etc. In India, the most commonly used form of basil

is holy basil, which we call tulsi. It is a traditional Indian practice to grow a tulsi plant in the courtyard outside one's home, where it occupies a pride of place. It is regarded as the holiest of plants as it is seen as a manifestation of the goddess Lakshmi. Hindus also celebrate *Tulsi vivah*, a wedding ceremony of Tulsi and Lord Vishnu.

Basil has several medicinal properties. The leaves are commonly used as a traditional cure for cough and cold, gastro-intestinal problems, as a dressing for insect bites and ringworm, to control blood pressure and as anti-oxidants, and they are also known for their ability to fight bacterial infections. A pot of tulsi is also supposed to serve as a mosquito repellent.

Mint (pudina) is one of the most versatile herbs. Its distinctive and sweet taste and its 'cool' aftertaste makes it a key ingredient in many food items. It is used as garnish in main courses of Indian, Asian, Mediterranean and European cuisine, chutneys and sauces (mint chutney is almost a staple in Indian homes and makes any food taste better!), desserts (chocolates, ice creams, cakes, jellies) and beverages (teas and juices).



Mint

As a medicinal herb, its use for stomach ailments is most popular. It is also used as a breath freshener and is an ingredient in toothpastes.

Given its aroma because of the core ingredient menthol, it is used in various perfume-based products. In fact, mint was once used as a room freshener in Greece, where people had to step on the leaves to release the fragrance.

Patchouli is primarily used for its sweet-spicy musk like aroma. This herb is of Indian-Asian origin, and the word *patchouli* comes from the Tamil word *pachilai* meaning 'green leaves'. The oil from the plant is used to make perfumes, soaps and cosmetics. The leaves are also used for their fragrance, and are incorporated in potpourri (potpourri is a term used to refer to dried aromatic leaves that are kept together in a bowl or a sheer bag and used to spread fragrance in the house). It is believed that the aroma of patchouli has medicinal properties. It rejuvenates you, helps the body to relax, and it increases the feeling of happiness and peace.



Patchouli



Curry leaves

Curry leaf (kadipatta) is used as flavouring in a number of Indian preparations, specifically in curries, which is how it gets its name.

Carom (ajwain) used in Indian cuisine, has a pungent flavour. It has a lot of medicinal properties.

Among the common culinary herbs used outside India are rosemary, sage, parsley and thyme. They have distinctive flavours and are used in specific cuisines.



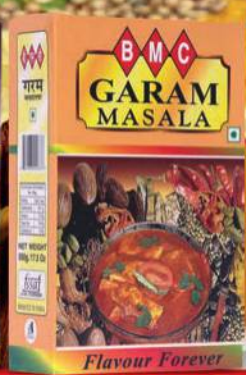
Carom



- ◆ Herbs are different from spices. Herbs used in food are fresh leaves of plants whereas spices are often dried and come from other parts of plants such as seeds and bark.
- ◆ Herbs are among the simplest plants to grow, and hence, growing a small herb garden would be a good idea to start your gardening adventures.
- ◆ The first perfumes were made from burnt wood and gums mixed with herbs. This is why scent is called perfume, which literally means 'through smoke'.



The Taste of Tradition



BAWA MASALA COMPANY

B-11, Lawrence Road, Industrial Area, Delhi-110035, Ph. : +91- 9911180751
E-mail : ips@bawamasala.com | Website : www.bawamasalacompany.com

THE LIGHTER SIDE

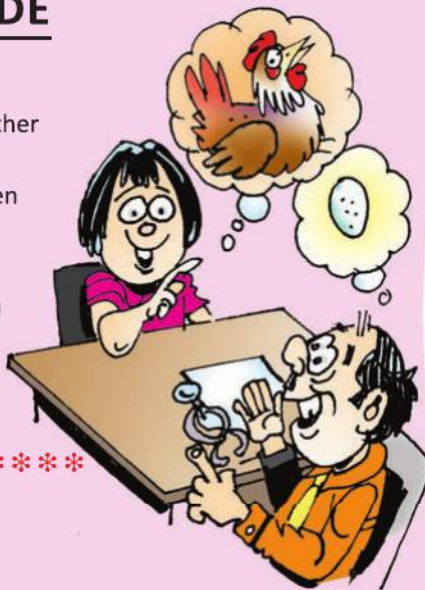
Girl: Doctor, Help! My brother thinks he's a chicken!

Doctor: How long has this been going on?

Girl: About a year.

Doctor: Wow! Why didn't you tell me sooner?

Girl: Because we needed the eggs!



Soman got an SMS from the bank. "Your credit card bill payments are outstanding."

"Thanks for the compliment," replied Soman.

A couple was driving through Worcestershire, England. They began arguing about the pronunciation of the name of the county. When they stopped at a café for lunch, they were still arguing.

The husband went up to the counter to order and asked the waitress, "Can you please settle an argument for us? Please pronounce the name of the place where we are very slowly."

The waitress leaned over the counter and said, "Pii-t-zaa Hu-ut."



Tinku: They are planning to send a man to the sun within ten years!

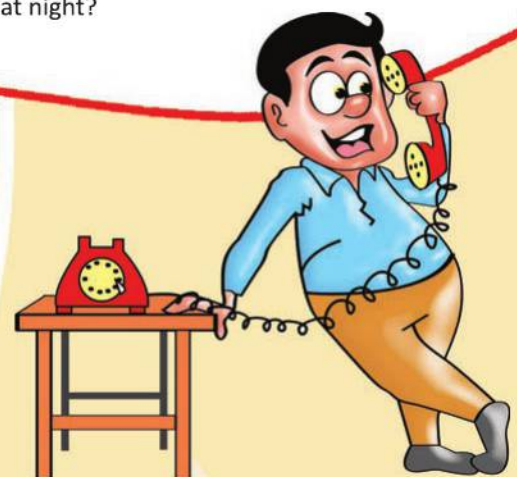
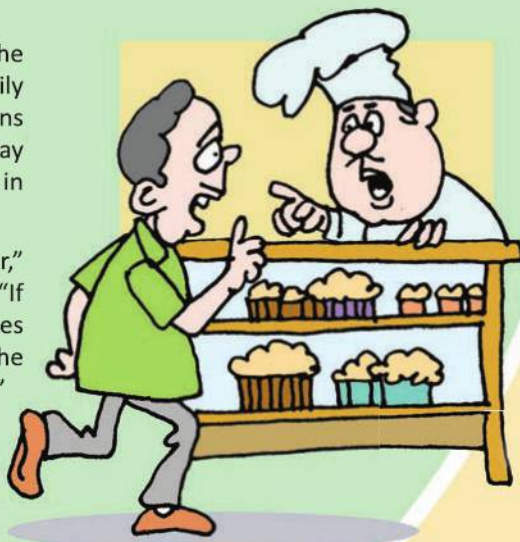
Pinku: But the sun is very hot. How can man land on the sun?

Tinku: I'm sure they'll make him land at night.

Pinku: What fools! Don't they know that there is no sun at night?

A man walked into the bakery and said angrily to the baker, "Those buns you sold me yesterday had three cockroaches in them!"

"I'm sorry about that, Sir," said the baker politely. "If you bring the cockroaches back, I'll give you the three raisins I owe you."



A man called up his doctor and said frantically, "Doctor, I've got a button up both my nostrils. What can I do?"

"Try breathing through the little holes in the buttons," the doctor advised.



**Chinmaya
Vishwa Vidyapeeth**
Deemed to be University

Deemed to be
University
with a legacy



ADMISSIONS OPEN 2026
UG | PG | B.Tech. | MBA | Ph.D.



Partnerships



Ports and
Logistics



80%

Faculty are
Ph.D. Holders

49%

Students are on
Scholarship

600⁺

Students Graduated

1800-270-4888 | +91 75588 96000

admissions@cvv.ac.in | apply.cvv.ac.in



SAGE
UNIVERSITY
INDORE • BHOPAL

NAAC A+
GRADE

Accreditation In It's First Cycle



Times Higher Education
Impact Rankings 2025
University Global Ranking



YOUR FUTURE STARTS HERE

Sarvagun Sampann
CAREER

Industry Ready Education
with Real Career Outcomes!

60K+
ALUMNI

45K+
PLACEMENTS

1700+
RESEARCH
ARTICLES

350+
PHD
FACULTIES

30+
LPA HIGHEST
PACKAGE

250+
PATENTS

150+
MOU'S

**ADMISSIONS
OPEN**

SESSION 2026-27

ENROLL NOW

SEE
SAGE ENTRANCE EXAM



For more
information
Please Scan

PROUD ALUMNI



GAUTAM
SHARMA
salesforce



PRAJYOT
KHARE
Google



DEEPANKAR
PATERIYA
Deloitte



SHIVIKA
KHARE
Walmart



Bhopal Campus:
Katara Ext., Sahara Bypass Road, Bhopal
7880199961 / 7880199962
www.sageuniversity.edu.in



Indore Campus:
Kailod Kartal, Rau Bypass Road, Indore
9522578382 / 9522578482
www.sageuniversity.in



SIRT SAGE GROUP
OF INSTITUTIONS
Engineering • Management • Pharmacy



SAGE
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL

