

# SCHOOL LIVE

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FEBRUARY 2025

Monthly  
₹160



The Seller Of Monuments

How To Deal With Class Bullies

Land Of The Thunder Dragon



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## ed-note inside



**E**xam time is here again! This time of the year can evoke mixed feelings among students. While some may dread the exams, others look forward to the year ending and the promise of new beginnings. For some, preparation time is synonymous with exam time, while others who have kept pace with their studies throughout the year, may find it less stressful. And then there are those who thrive under pressure, catching up at the end of the year and achieving remarkable results.

In this issue of School LIVE, we acknowledge the examination season and offer a welcome break from the monotony of studies. Casual reading in between study sessions can be incredibly beneficial, and we're confident that our content will provide a refreshing respite. As always, School LIVE is designed to be a keepsake, with content that remains interesting and relevant long after the initial read.

We hope this issue gives you the much needed welcome-break from serious studies and we wish you all the best for your exams! May you stay focused, motivated, and confident. Remember, exams are not just about grades; they're an opportunity to learn, grow, and showcase your skills.

Happy reading, and good luck with your exams!

**Hariharan Balagopal**

### • Magic Of Velcro - Sticking Like A Burr

Get stuck on the amazing story of Velcro! From burrs to brilliance, discover the accidental invention that's got everyone hooked.

### • Feeling Bullied? Don't Worry, We've Got Your Back!

From calm comebacks to clever coping mechanisms, we'll show you how to take control.

### • Delhi Gets A New Chief Minister

Stay news-savvy with our latest Newsbytes! From Delhi's new CM to the hottest happenings, we've got the scoop.

### • Africa's Tree Girl - Meet Ellyanne Wanjiku Chlyatun

Meet the tree-mendous Ellyanne, Africa's green queen! With 250,000 trees planted, she's branching out to make a difference.

### • Social Media In Learning

Like, share, and learn? Explore the double-edged sword of social media in education. Does it help or hinder? Join the conversation.

### • Mrs. Packletide's Tiger - Classic By H. H. Munro Retold

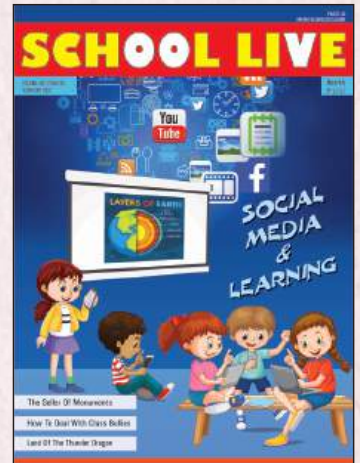
Get ready for a roaring good time with Mrs. Packletide's Tiger! This classic tale is retold with a twist that's sure to delight.

### • The Seller Of Monuments - Arthur Furguson

Meet the con artist who sold the Eiffel Tower... twice! Arthur Furguson's wild story will leave you monumentally amazed.

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

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



**Dr. Neeraj Awasthy, Principal  
Modern School, Noida**

**A**s I flip through the pages of the latest issue of School Live, I am once again impressed by the sheer quality and diversity of its content. This issue, like its predecessors, is a testament to the magazine's commitment to providing our students with a platform that is both informative and engaging.

One of the standout features of this issue is the article on dealing with class bullies. This is a topic that is both relevant and sensitive, and the authors have handled it with sensitivity and expertise. The suggestions and strategies outlined in the article are practical and effective, and I have no doubt that they will be of immense help to our students.

The "Eggs-trordinary" section is another highlight of this issue. The article on eggshell sculptures is a fascinating read, and the accompanying images are a testament to the creativity and skill of the artists.

*This section is a great example of how School Live encourages our students to think outside the box and explore their creative potential.*

*The 'Careers in Medicine' section is a valuable resource for our students who are considering a career in medicine. The article provides a comprehensive overview of the various career options available in the field, and the advice and insights from professionals are invaluable.*

*The Newsbytes section provides an objective and precise roundup of the month's news, and the coverage of the new Chief Minister of Delhi is a great example of how the magazine keeps our students informed about current events.*

*The Classics Retold section brings to life the timeless tale of "Mrs. Pickletide's Tiger" by the prolific storyteller, H.H. Munro. This section is a great way to introduce our students to the classics, and the retelling of the story in a modern context makes it accessible and engaging for young readers.*

*I would like to commend the School Live team for their efforts in ensuring that the magazine reaches our students at the right time, every time. We carefully plan the distribution of the magazine to coincide with the school's exam schedule and holidays, ensuring that our students receive their copies when they need it most. This thoughtful approach is a hallmark of School Live's commitment to supporting our students' academic journey.*

*As I reflect on the current education scenario, I am reminded of the rapidly changing landscape of education. The advent of AI and other technologies is transforming the way we learn and teach, and it is essential that we adapt to these changes. School Live is a valuable resource in this regard, providing our students with insights and information on the latest trends and developments in education from time to time.*

*The latest issue of School Live is a treasure trove of knowledge and information. I have no doubt that our students will find the articles and features in this issue to be of immense value and interest.*

**Dr. Neeraj Awasthy**



# Decoding Competence

ON April 19, 1995, the city of Pittsburgh in USA witnessed a bizarre crime. Brandishing a gun, McArthur Wheeler walked into two banks one after the other and robbed them in broad daylight. The gutsy man did not bother to mask his face. When the police came to arrest him, Wheeler simply protested, "But I wore the juice!"

Upon interrogation, Wheeler revealed that he had rubbed lemon juice on his face. He mistakenly believed that as lemon juice is used as invisible ink, it would render his face invisible to cameras!

Wheeler's foolishness formed the basis of a study on cognitive bias — the tendency of people to see information on the basis of their previous experience or knowledge, which results in them taking faulty decisions. In 1999, David Dunning and Justin Kruger published their study, 'Unskilled and Unaware of It: How Difficulties in Recognizing One's Own Incompetence Lead to Inflated Self-Assessments'. According to the study, people are overconfident about their ability though they are not knowledgeable in reality. Their ignorance prevents them from acknowledging their shortcomings even when they make mistakes and they harbour delusions of their own superiority. Simply put, fools are blind to their own foolishness.

This psychological phenomenon is called the Dunning-Kruger effect. For example, a bad singer who thinks he is good because he listens to many songs or a bad cab driver who thinks he is a good driver because of his driving experience. The Dunning-Kruger effect is commonly evident in class when students who fail an exam believe they deserve better marks because they overestimate their own knowledge and fail to understand that they have performed poorly.

To prove their theory, Dunning and Kruger first tested the skills of undergraduate psychology students in logical reasoning, English grammar and personal sense of humour.



Then the students were asked to assess their ability and test performance. It was found that those who scored low in the tests but believed that they were competent, overestimated their performance. They were also incapable of recognising the competent performance of others.

The test also found that at the other end of the scale competent students who scored high in the intellectual tests expressed less confidence in their skills and underestimated their performance.

Kruger and Dunning were awarded an Ig Nobel Prize in recognition of their work in 2000.

## STAGES OF COMPETENCE

In the 1970s, Noel Burch put forth his model which explained how a person learns and gains competence in mastering a new skill. It is called the four stages of competence.

### Unconscious incompetence

In the beginning, a person does not realise that he is incompetent at a particular skill, mostly because he is unaware about his lack of knowledge. He may even deny the importance of the skill. For example, a person who has never run a marathon will not understand the need to prepare for one. Unless he recognises his lack of skill, he cannot progress to the next stage of learning.

### Conscious incompetence

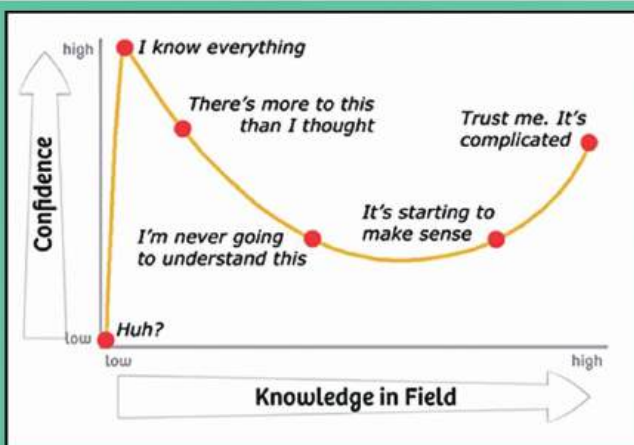
The person acknowledges that he lacks the skill and tries to acquire the expertise needed to make him competent. This is the stage in which learning takes place.

### Conscious competence

The person learns and acquires the needed skill, making himself competent. He gets the right training and practises continuously till he accomplishes the fourth stage.

### Unconscious competence

Rigorous practice and devoted learning makes the person so skilled that he is able to perform the task without much thought. This means he has acquired mastery in his skill.



# Knowledge Hub!



**1.** What is a pirate flag with the skull and crossbones known as?  
a. Jolly Sam  
b. Jolly Roger  
c. Jolly Pete

**2.** What is the favourite sport of cartoon character Fred Flintstone?  
a. Skiing  
b. Golf  
c. Bowling

**3.** Which of these is a tributary of the Brahmaputra?  
a. Dihing  
b. Son  
c. Tungabhadra

**4.** What is the hard deposit of minerals that accumulates on the teeth called?  
a. Tartar  
b. Plaque  
c. Dentine

**5.** What do you call a photographic copy of a plan for making a building?  
a. Greenprint  
b. Blueprint  
c. Greyprint

**6.** Which beach in Odisha is famous for the Olive Ridley turtles that return here every year to breed?  
a. Puri  
b. Chandipur  
c. Gahirmatha

**7.** Which body organ was the first to be transplanted successfully?  
a. Heart  
b. Liver  
c. Kidney

**8.** Which American city is famous for its automobile industry?  
a. Philadelphia  
b. Detroit  
c. Seattle

**9.** Who is the author of 'Boy' and 'Going Solo'?  
a. Roald Dahl  
b. William Golding  
c. Ernest Hemingway

**10.** What is the taxonomic name for modern human beings?  
a. Homo sapiens  
b. Homo erectus  
c. Homo habilis

**11.** Name the cloth paintings from Rajasthan that are used as aids by singers and narrators of folk epics.  
a. Patachitra  
b. Phad  
c. Warli

**12.** Which Indonesian island is rated as the world's most populous?  
a. Sumatra  
b. Borneo  
c. Java

**13.** How many lines does a sonnet contain?  
a. 14  
b. 12  
c. 10

**14.** Which is the hottest planet in our solar system?  
a. Mercury  
b. Mars  
c. Venus

**15.** How many bones does our foot have?  
a. 26  
b. 20  
c. 18

**Answers:** 1. Jolly Roger 2. Bowling 3. Dihing 4. Tartar 5. Blueprint 6. Gahirmatha 7. Kidney 8. Detroit 9. Roald Dahl 10. Homo sapiens 11. Phad 12. Java 13. 14 14. Venus 15. 26



*A glimpse of important inventions and discoveries in history.*

## Sticking Like a Burr

DID you know that the same Velcro that allows you to strap on your sports shoes in an instant, is also used in the Jarvik 7 artificial heart to attach the chambers? NASA astronauts find Velcro indispensable — it holds down objects which would otherwise float away in zero gravity.

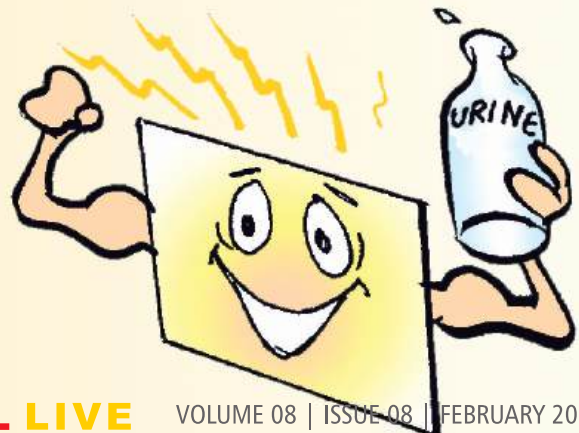
Swiss engineer Georges de Mestral got the idea for Velcro in 1955, when he was out on a hike with his dog. When he returned home, he found innumerable burrs stuck to his coat and socks and to the dog's fur. Curious, De Mestral examined a burr under a microscope. He discovered that it had tiny hooks on its surface that caught in the loops of the fabric (and animal fur). De Mestral devised a way of reproducing the hook and loop arrangement in woven nylon. He called it Velcro — from the French *velours* (velvet) and *crochet* (hook).

Velcro can be reused hundreds of times, sometimes outlasting the product to which it is attached! It is peelable and has enormous shear strength or resistance to sideways forces. A piece less than 1.2 cm square can support a load of 1 tonne! Today Velcro is used in an infinite number of products, comes in various colours and is made not only from nylon but also from steel and plastic.



## Zany Ideas

Researchers in Singapore were one of the first to invent a credit-card sized battery that runs on urine, in 2005. Urine contains ions (electrically charged atoms) capable of powering the battery to produce 1.5 volts. It lasts up to 90 minutes. The battery was meant to be used in low power consumption devices such as tests that analyse urine samples to detect illnesses.

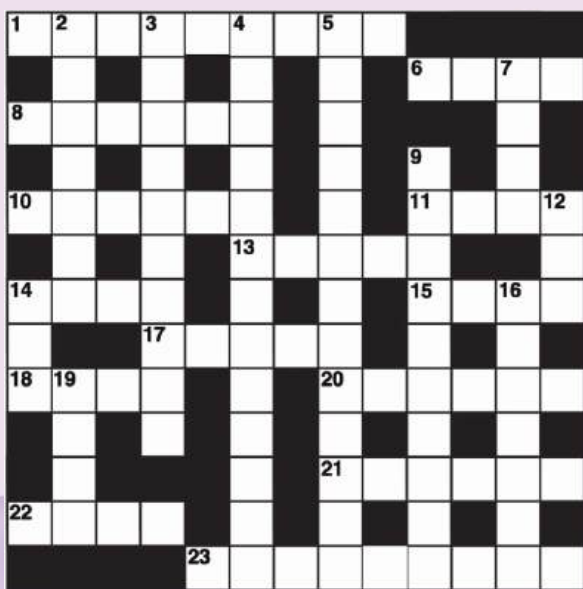


## Quiz

1. In what type of rock are fossil bones usually found?
2. An adult human has about 5 litres of blood circulating in his body. How many red blood cells or erythrocytes are there in a cubic millimetre of blood?  
a. 5000 b. 1 million c. 5 million

Answers: 1. Sedimentary rocks.  
2. c. 5 million.

## Crossword



### Across:

1. Suffering from insomnia (9)
6. Loving (4)
8. Spicy tomato sauce (6)
10. Out of breath (6)
11. Concept (4)
13. \_\_\_ twins: *Full House* actors (5)
14. Shivering fit (4)
15. Ill-humoured (4)
17. Hindu or Buddhist aphorism (5)
18. Language of Buddhist scripture (4)
20. Cared for (sick person) (6)
21. Shout loudly (6)
22. Break suddenly (4)
23. Halts in activity (9)

### Down:

2. Jumping (7)
3. Slow down! (4, 4, 2)
4. Butterfly expert (13)
5. Talent in wielding sharp weapons (13)
7. Intersection (4)
9. Girl of the glass slipper (10)
12. Atmosphere (3)
14. Venomous snake (3)
16. Small Hawaiian guitar (7)
19. Soon; shortly (archaic) (4)

**Answers:**  
 Across: 1. Sleepless 6. Fond 8. Catnap 10. Winded 11. Idea 13. Olsen 14. Ague 15. Dour 17. Sutra 18. Pali 20. Nursed 21. Holler 22. Snap 23. Stopages  
 Down: 2. Leaping 3. Easy does it 4. Lepidopterist 5. Swordsmanship 7. Node 9. Cinderella 12. Air 14. Asp 16. Ukelele 19. Anon

### A Quick Think

1. Ganpatrao has opened a new hotel. The rooms are numbered in an orderly fashion starting from 1. If he uses only 41 digits in all, how many rooms are there in his hotel?



### C Colour Pairs

Anjali has different coloured ribbons—blue, red, yellow and orange. For a craft activity, she must pair two ribbons of different colours to stick on greeting cards. No two cards can have the same two colours (e.g. only one card can have the blue and red ribbons).

How many cards can Anjali make?



2. I am there within you. Sometimes I make you happy. Sometimes I make you sad. What am I?
3. Aarya is the father of Surya, but Surya is not the son of Aarya. How is that possible?
4. Seema says, "I saw an ocean without water, and I'm not lying." Is Seema telling the truth?

### D Missing Number

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
11	12	13
18	30	?

What number should replace the question mark?

### B Time Check

A postal van rushes to the airport to pick up a delivery of mail. The cargo plane arrives ahead of schedule and an airport clerk takes the mail in his car and drives to the post office to save time. The clerk meets the van after half an hour and the mail is transferred to the van. The van returns to the post office 20 minutes earlier than expected. How early did the plane arrive?



**Answers:**  
 A. 1. 25 2. Your thoughts 3. Surya is a girl. 4. Yes, Seema sees the ocean on a map.  
 B. 40 minutes. As the postal van returns to the post office 20 minutes early, it would have taken it 20 minutes to go from where it met the car to the airport and back. That means the meeting point of the van and the car is 10 minutes away from the airport. Adding those 10 minutes to the 30 minutes the van had already driven before meeting the car means that the plane arrived 40 minutes ahead of schedule.  
 C. Six cards with the following combinations:  
 blue-red, blue-yellow, blue-orange, red-yellow, red-orange, red-yellow-orange.  
 D. 44. Solution Column 1:  $[1 + (4 \times 7)] - 11 = 18$  Column 2:  $[2 + (5 \times 8)] - 12 = 30$  Column 3:  $[3 + (6 \times 9)] - 13 = 44$ .



# HOW TO DEAL WITH A CLASS BULLY

GETTING bullied in class, or witnessing another child getting constantly bullied can trigger various emotions in a child's mind. Fear, low self-esteem, despair, lack of concentration, etc, can manifest in lifelong scars. Children can adopt different methods to counter a bully's antics in school, depending on the intensity of aggression.

- ◆ Ignore the bully. Go about doing your work or walk right past him/her.
- ◆ Don't show that you are upset since that's what the bully really wants. You can deal with your reactions later.
- ◆ Respond firmly without agitation. For example, look straight at the bully and say, "That's not funny!"

◆ Laugh it off. Turn the offending statement into a joke.

◆ Remove yourself from the situation. Walk away towards a public place where adults are present.

It is important to remember that YOU are not the problem. It is the bully who has a problem. Try imagining that the words the bully is saying are bouncing back to him/her. Most importantly, do not try dealing with the problem yourself by planning revenge since the problem will escalate beyond control.

The most effective way to deal with your reactions is to talk about them or write them down. Talking about a bully to your parents or teachers is not 'tattling'. Bullying is an anti-

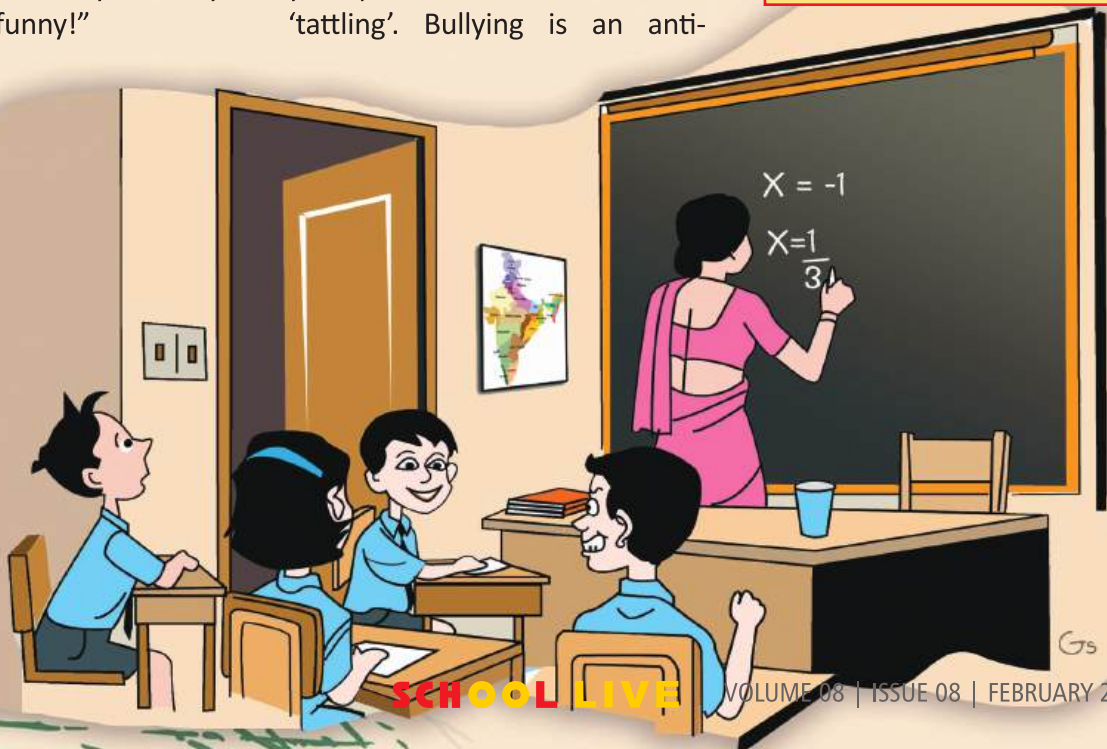
social behaviour that needs to be brought to the attention of your elders, so that they can help you if the situation is serious.

Some victims take the extreme step of dropping out of school altogether.

Both boys and girls bully but bullying by girls is often more subtle and harder to detect than bullying by boys. Boys tend to use more physical aggression than girls do. Bullying by girls more often takes the form of teasing and social exclusion.

## Factoid

According a report from the U.S.A, a major reason for absenteeism in schools could be unreported bullying.



# A Healing Touch

The second part  
of our series on careers  
in medicine...

## Bachelor in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (BASLP)

This is an undergraduate program that focuses on the diagnosis, evaluation and treatment of communication disorders related to hearing, speech and language. Professionals in this field work with individuals of all ages to improve their communication skills and enhance their quality of life.

### Entrance Exam

For eligibility, candidates need a minimum of 50 per cent in the Science stream with Physics, Chemistry and Biology (PCB). Some institutions conduct their own entrance exams, while others consider the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test — Undergraduate (NEET UG) score. Common Entrance Exams (CETs) include the All India Institute of Speech and Hearing (AIISH) Entrance Exam and various state-level entrance exams.

### Course Details

The degree course is for 4 years, including a year of internship and includes both conceptual and practical training. The field of study involves Anatomy and Physiology of the Ear, Audiology, Speech-Language Pathology, Rehabilitation Techniques, Communication Disorders and research methodologies. Students learn the concepts of communication, hearing and disability and are trained to diagnose and assess disorders related to speech, language, swallowing and hearing. They learn to provide therapy and intervention, fit hearing aids, conduct hearing tests and collaborate with other healthcare professionals.

## Job Opportunities

After graduating, candidates can work as audiologists, speech-language pathologists or speech therapists in hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation centres, and schools and in private practice.

## Bachelor of Science in Radiography and Medical Imaging (BSc RIT)

This is an undergraduate program that focuses on the use of advanced imaging technologies to diagnose and treat various medical conditions. Radiography professionals play a crucial role in the healthcare system by capturing and interpreting medical images such as X-rays, CT scans, MRI scans and ultrasounds.

### Entrance Exams

Students should have aggregate 50 per cent in Std. 12 in the Science stream with a PCB subject combination. CETs include state-level and university-level exams such as All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) entrance, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) entrance and All India Combined Entrance Test (AICET), while other institutions conduct their own entrance exams.

### Course Details

The duration of the course is typically 3 years. The curriculum includes subjects like Radiographic Techniques, Anatomy, Medical Physics, Image Interpretation, Patient Care, Quality



Control in Radiology and Radiation Safety. Students participate in lectures, laboratories, clinical rotations and workshops to gain hands-on experience. They learn to operate imaging equipment, capture high-quality images and collaborate with radiologists and other healthcare professionals.



## Job Opportunities

Graduates can work as radiographers, radiology technicians or medical imaging technologists in hospitals, diagnostic centres, clinics and research institutions.

## Bachelor of Optometry (BOptom)

The course focuses on the examination, diagnosis, treatment and management of diseases and disorders of the visual system and vision correction, enabling students to provide primary eye healthcare services and rehabilitation of conditions of the visual system.

### Entrance Exams

To apply, candidates need a minimum of 50 per cent in the Science stream with Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Biology (PCMB). Some universities and institutions conduct

their own entrance exams, while others admit students based on Common University Entrance Test (CUET) scores.

### Course Details

It is a 4-year undergraduate course that involves three years of teaching followed by one year of clinical training. The programme has an integrated interdisciplinary content with relevant aspects of General Anatomy and Physiology, Biochemistry, Pathology and Microbiology under Basic Sciences and Physical, Geometrical, Dispensing, Visual and Optometric Optics in the Core courses. There are practical training sessions in Basic Science, Dispensing Optics and Clinical subjects.

### Job Opportunities

Graduates can work as opticians, optometrists, ophthalmic assistants, eye care specialists, vision therapists, researchers, vision consultants or open their private clinics.



## NEWS BYTES



### Super Speed

IIT Madras has developed India's first hyperloop test track. The 422 m-long track is part of a project funded by the Ministry of Railways to create a high-speed 'fifth mode of transport' for long distance travel. A hyperloop system uses magnetic levitation to propel capsules through low-pressure tubes at high speeds. It eliminates friction, allowing it to reach speeds of Mach 1.0 or over 1,200 kmph. That would mean a journey of 350 km can be covered in just 30 minutes.

Elon Musk, the American billionaire, first came up with the idea in 2013.

### Tunnel Rescue

Eight workers were trapped when a section of a roof collapsed in the under-construction stretch of the Srisaillam Left Bank Canal tunnel on the morning of February 22. A concrete segment slipped causing the roof to cave in, trapping engineers and labourers inside. The rescue operation faced a number of challenges including accumulated water and mud, and zero visibility.

The rat-hole miners who spearheaded the rescue during the Silkyara tunnel mishap were called in. However, they too struggled to navigate the thick slush, and the continual flooding made removing the water difficult. The rescue team had reached the last 50 metres of the tunnel as of writing, but it was blocked by debris consisting of soil and metal parts of the tunnel boring machine.



### Finally Home

After being stranded in space for eight months, US astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore are scheduled to return to Earth from the International Space Station (ISS). The Crew-10 mission that will be launched in early March is expected to bring the two astronauts back on the Dragon spacecraft.

Due to technical problems with their Boeing Starliner spacecraft, the duo has been stuck on the ISS since June 5, 2024. They are expected to face challenges adjusting to Earth's gravity and will undergo extensive medical evaluation, physical therapy and rehabilitation programmes to restore strength and coordination.

On January 30, Williams broke Peggy Whitson's record for the most number of hours spent spacewalking by a woman astronaut. Her ninth spacewalk of 6.5 hours took her total to 62 hours and six minutes as against Whitson's 60 hours and 22 minutes.



### Meeting of Minds?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with US President Donald Trump at the White House for high-stakes discussions spanning various sectors.

The meeting happened just hours after President Trump announced a new reciprocal tariff policy targeting all US trading partners, including India. The meeting announced the COMPACT (Catalysing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce and Technology for the 21st Century), an initiative aimed at transforming bilateral cooperation across defence, investment, trade, energy, innovation and multilateral partnerships.







## New CM for Delhi

Rekha Gupta, first-time BJP MLA from Shalimar Bagh, was sworn in as Delhi's fourth woman CM in a grand ceremony at Ramlila Maidan on February 20. A six-member Council of Ministers also took the oath of office in the presence of PM Narendra Modi and other dignitaries who attended the ceremony.

Gupta, 50, has a law degree and began her career in student politics in the city.

She follows in the footsteps of Sushma Swaraj (the first female CM of Delhi), Sheila Dikshit (who won three consecutive terms) and Atishi (of the AAP, who replaced Arvind Kejriwal for a brief six months).



## Trembling Times

On February 17, a quake of magnitude 4.0 on the Richter scale hit the national capital in the early morning hours. As the city was the epicentre of the quake, the tremors were felt strongly and residents rushed out of their homes in panic.

An earthquake of 5.1 magnitude also struck Kolkata early on February 25. The Kolkata quake's epicentre was in the Bay of Bengal, off the coast of Puri, Odisha, at a depth of 91 km below ground level. No damage was reported.



## King Kohli

Virat Kohli broke Sachin Tendulkar's record to become the fastest to reach 14,000 ODI runs. Kohli completed his 287th innings in the Champions Trophy match against Pakistan in Dubai. The Indian bowlers restricted Pakistan to 241 runs to give the Indian side a manageable chase. Despite an early stumble, Kohli's unbeaten knock and steady presence, combined with Shreyas Iyer's composed performance, ensured a comfortable six-wicket victory for India.



## Planets in a Row

A month after a similar celestial event, seven planets lined up in the heavens once more on February 28. Saturn, Mercury, Neptune, Venus, Uranus, Jupiter and Mars aligned in a curved line called an ecliptic, visible just after sunset. Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Mars were visible to the naked eye though Neptune and Uranus required high-powered binoculars or a telescope to be seen. 'Lord of the rings' Saturn was the most difficult to see as its position was closer to the Sun than the others. This kind of alignment will next be seen in 2040.



# Mrs. Packletide's Tiger

**M**RS. Packletide wanted to shoot a tiger. It was not that she wanted to leave India a safer place than she had found it, by ridding its forests of one wild beast. Mrs. Packletide's sole aim was scoring a victory over Loona Bimberton.

That lady had recently flown 16 kilometres in an aeroplane piloted by an Algerian aviator and she could talk of nothing else. Only the skin of a tiger that Mrs. Packletide had personally killed would do to surpass that. Already, Mrs. Packletide imagined the grand luncheon she would give in her house in London. She had slyly decided that it would be thrown in Loona Bimberton's honour. The 'crowing' glory would be the tiger's claw brooch she would gift Loona on her birthday. In short, the whole world

might be moved by hunger and love, but Mrs. Packletide's chief motivation was her intense dislike of Loona.

She did not want to exert herself too much or put herself in undue danger. She made enquiries in a neighbouring village and luckily hit upon the ideal beast. It was a tiger in the last gasp of old age. As a result, it could not hunt and had become a marauder of goats and chickens. The villagers were only too happy to let Mrs. Packletide shoot the animal for a thousand rupees, bait extra.

With great enthusiasm, they set about the task of making Mrs. Packletide's venture a roaring success. Children were put on watch on the fringes of the forest to drive the animal back if it tried to make for newer hunting

grounds. The cheaper livestock was left untended with careless abandon. Everyone was anxious that the tiger should not die of old age before it could be shot. Mothers shushed their babies when coming home from the fields through the jungle, in case their crying disturbed the animal's beauty sleep.

Finally, the momentous occasion arrived. Mrs. Packletide sat on a machan that had been constructed on a suitable tree at a comfortable height. The bait, a goat with a particularly persistent bleat audible to even a half-deaf tiger, had been tied at the right distance and the rifle had been carefully sighted. Mrs. Packletide had brought along her travelling pack of playing cards and was engaged in a game of Patience.



Her paid companion, Louisa Mebbin asked, "Is it dangerous?"

Miss Mebbin was afraid, not of the tiger, but of doing even a tiny bit more work than she had been paid for.

"Not at all," said Mrs. Packletide yawning. "It is too old to jump up even if it wanted to."

"Why did you pay a thousand rupees for an old tiger? You should have got it cheaper."

Miss Mebbin was extremely protective of money. She had saved many a rupee, rouble and franc from becoming a tip in hotels and restaurants. Indeed, she seemed to have a magnetic allure for coins of all kinds, which stuck tenaciously to her.

She was prevented from further discussion of the tiger's worth, by the appearance of the animal itself. On seeing the goat, it flattened itself on the ground, more from exhaustion than any wish for camouflage. It was taking a breather before launching itself on the goat.

"I think it is sick," said Miss Mebbin loudly in Hindi for the benefit of the village headman who was hidden in a tree next to theirs.

"Shhh!" said Mrs. Packletide, for the tiger had begun strolling towards the goat.

"Shoot it now!" whispered Miss Mebbin urgently. "If it doesn't touch the goat, we need not pay for it!"

The tiger pounced and there was a flash of light and a loud bang. The tawny beast hung in the air for a second. Then it rolled over once and was still. Mrs. Packletide and her companion jumped down from the tree and ran towards it. The villagers gathered around, shouting their congratulations. The drums and bugles started up. It was like the celebration of a festival that night.

The only sour note, in Mrs. Packletide's opinion, was provided by Louisa Mebbin. She pointed to the goat. It had taken the bullet and was in its death throes. The tiger, it seemed, had been

so senile, that the loud report of the gun had caused it to fall dead of heart failure. Mrs. Packletide was irritated by this minor detail, but nothing could dim her moment in the sun. She had a dead tiger and the villagers were happy to confirm (for the thousand rupees) that she had shot the tiger.

Mrs. Packletide faced the battery of cameras with a brilliant smile. Her picture and story appeared in newspapers all over, from America to Russia. Loona Bimberton refused to even glance at a paper for weeks. Her response to the gift of the tiger-claw brooch was a barely perceptible tightening of the lips. The luncheon in London went off beautifully, and the tiger skin was oohed and aahed over by every single guest. Loona Bimberton politely turned down the invitation to be the guest of honour.

The tiger skin travelled to Mrs. Packletide's manor house and was much admired in the county. At the County Costume Ball, Mrs. Packletide came appropriately dressed as Diana the huntress.

A week after the ball, Miss Mebbin remarked, "How amused everyone would be if they knew the truth!"

"What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Packletide, turning pale.

"How the tiger died of a heart attack and you actually shot the goat dead," said Miss Mebbin with her unpleasant tinkling laugh.

"Nobody would believe you," said Mrs. Packletide in a faint voice, her skin changing to a greenish-white.

"Loona Bimberton will be very happy to hear of it," said Miss Mebbin with a smug expression.

"You wouldn't dare tell her," said Mrs. Packletide feebly.

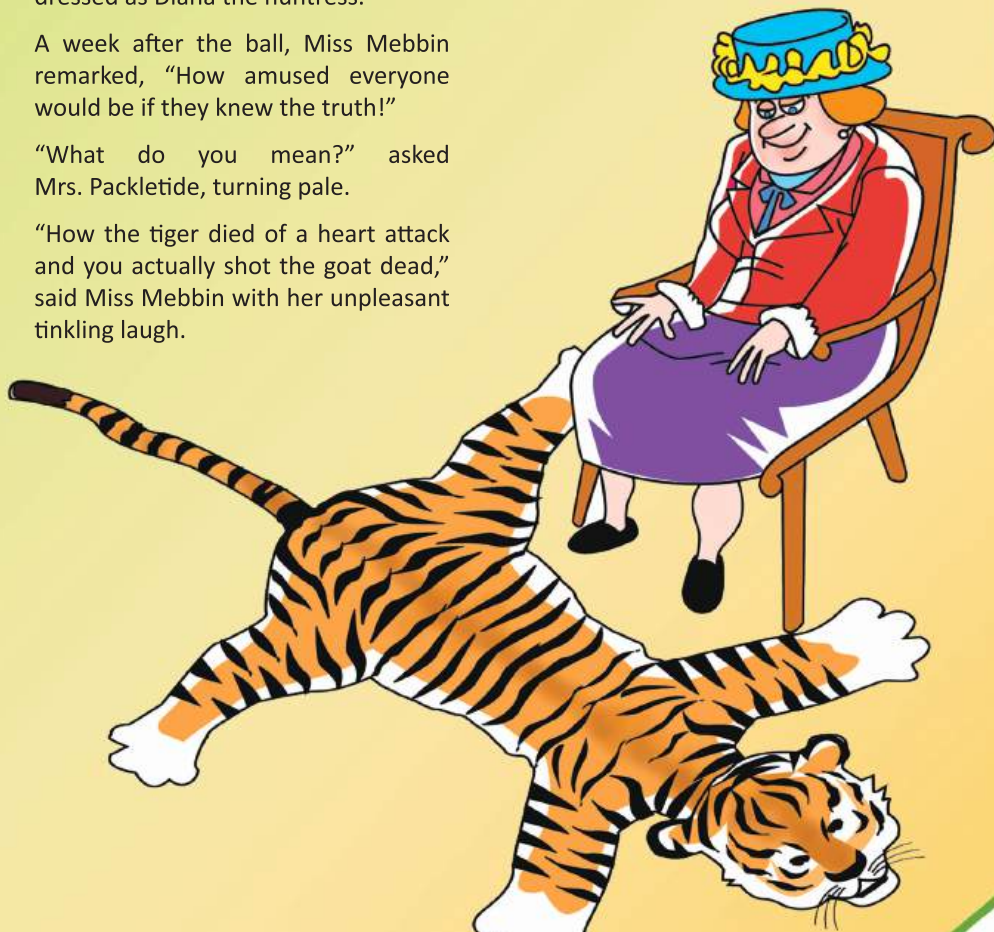
"A rather nice little cottage has come up for sale near Darking," said Miss Mebbin irrelevantly. "Six hundred and eighty pounds. Quite a bargain, only I don't have the money."

Friends marvelled at Louisa Mebbin's lovely weekend cottage which she named 'Les Fauves'. It had a little garden with tiger lilies blooming on the borders.

"It's really a wonder how Louisa manages to do it," remarked her friends.

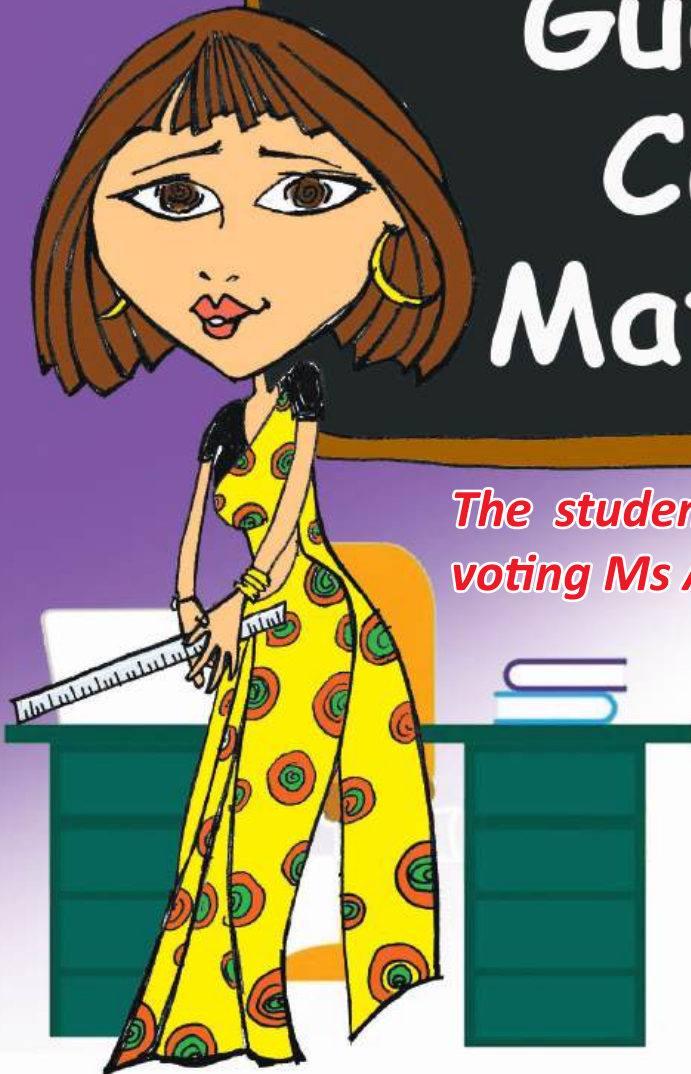
Mrs. Packletide has given up big-game hunting. When people ask her why, she says it is too expensive.

— A story by **H.H. Munro (Saki)** retold.



# Guess Who Came To Maths Class

*The students of 5-A had no hesitation in voting Ms Anju 'Teacher of the Year 2024'.*

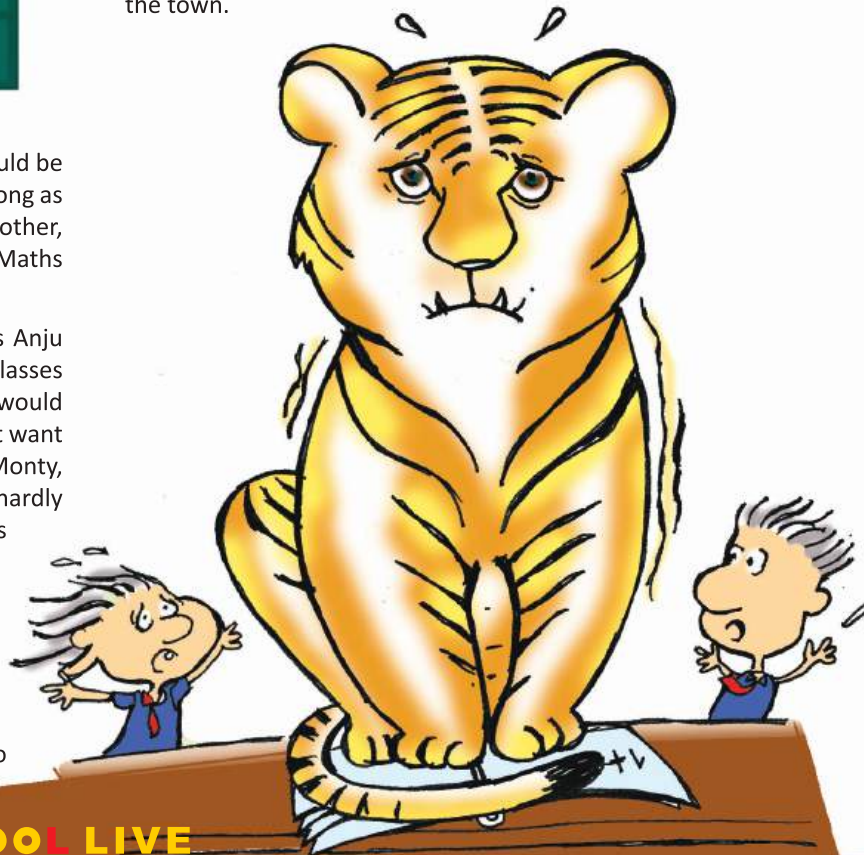


**M**S ANJU, they all agreed, was one teacher they could be comfortable with. She didn't mind their masti as long as they made no noise. They could throw books at each other, pull each other's hair and even read storybooks in the Maths class. Anju Miss did not seem to care.

What the kids of Class 5-A did not know was that Ms Anju was terribly short-sighted. Her mom insisted she wear glasses but Anju wouldn't touch them. She felt spectacles would make her look older than she was. Moreover, she didn't want Monty to see her wearing glasses. She had a crush on Monty, the only son of the headmaster. Monty, however, hardly looked at her whenever he visited the school. He was a Formula 1 driver and he was looking for an ideal mate, someone cute and brave. He had no patience with timid girls. And Ms Anju was indeed timid. She was so timid that she refused to go with the class to the circus in town. She got away by giving some lame excuse, but the truth was she was afraid of wild animals — whether they were in the wild or in the zoo or in a circus.

The main attraction of the circus was Bikal the tiger. People came from far and near to watch the brave ringmaster put his head into the tiger's open mouth.

The audience would start clapping the moment Bikal padded onto the stage. He would leap onto the small stool kept in the centre of the ring, and the performance would begin. But Bikal was getting bored with his daily routine: crowds everyday, shows everyday, deafening applause after every performance... Bikal wanted a change. He wanted to see the town.





His chance came unexpectedly one morning. The man in charge of feeding him was just about to close the cage after placing the food in it when his cell phone rang. The man dug into his pocket to take out the screaming mobile, and while his attention was diverted, Bikal seized the opportunity to slip out. He got into a courier delivery van just as it was about to leave, and in this way, he not only got out of the circus unnoticed but also got a comfortable ride to the town.

When the van stopped, Bikal jumped out. As he crossed the road, the morning crowd suddenly realised that there was an unusual stranger in their midst, possibly a dangerous one. Screams and shrieks rent the air and people ran helter-skelter in panic. Bikal was surprised and hurt. He was used to applause and admiration but here, people were running away from him. He put it down to the fickleness of the human race. "Humans are unpredictable," he mused.

He darted across the road and entered a compound. Then he heard a familiar sound — the ringing of a bell. He thought it was time for his act. He was a bit confused as the ringmaster was nowhere to be seen. He strode across the quadrangle and entered the first room he saw. That was 5-A. And a Maths lesson was in progress.

The children of Class 5-A gasped when they saw a tiger at the door. Ms Anju turned to see who was distracting them. She saw someone standing at the door. Short-sighted as she was, all she could see was a fuzzy shape. She thought it was a latecomer.

"You are disturbing the class," she said sternly. "Go to the last row and stand on the bench."

She started moving towards the 'latecomer', menacingly shaking a long ruler.

Bikal was not at all perturbed. He was used to the ringmaster ordering him around with a whip in hand. This ringmaster looked different but, "All ringmasters are the same," he told himself as he moved in the direction pointed out to him.

"Up, up on the bench!" screamed Ms Anju, waving the ruler up and down. Bikal clambered on to the bench.

The students gaped in admiration. Their teacher, usually so mild-mannered, was actually ordering a ferocious tiger around as if this were an everyday occurrence!

Soon the bell rang. The tiger's low growl sounded like a boy making a rude noise, and Ms Anju didn't like it. She didn't like it at all! If there was one thing Ms Anju could not stand it was impertinence.

"I'll take you to the Headmaster," she said sternly, waving her ruler again. "Follow me!"

Bikal meekly got off the bench and followed the new but strict 'ringmaster'. Behind him came the children, awestruck by their teacher's daredevilry. They kept a safe distance between themselves and the tiger.

Meanwhile news had spread about the runaway tiger. The police and fire brigade had been alerted. TV channels had sent their cameramen to different parts of the city so that they wouldn't miss the action. The tiger's trail led them all to the school where they were greeted by the extraordinary sight of a petite teacher admonishing and haranguing a fearsome-looking tiger as if it were a naughty schoolboy.

The headmaster's office lay across the quadrangle. The procession led by Ms Anju was almost there when a van from the circus braked in front of it. The doors of the van opened directly in front of Ms Anju, and she, thinking that she had reached the headmaster's office, clambered into it, absent-mindedly wondering what had happened to the steps. The tiger leapt in after her.

Cameras flashed. A TV reporter thrust a mike in front of Ms Anju through the window. Ms Anju suddenly became aware of the hullabaloo around her and realised that something was amiss. Just then a young man came racing in his Ferrari. It was Monty, back from Kenya where he had won the first prize. He was driving home from the airport when a friend phoned to inform him that a tiger had taken refuge in his father's school and that a brave teacher had taken charge of the situation. He had immediately turned the car around and raced to the school. When he saw Ms Anju being helped down from the van, his heart missed a beat.

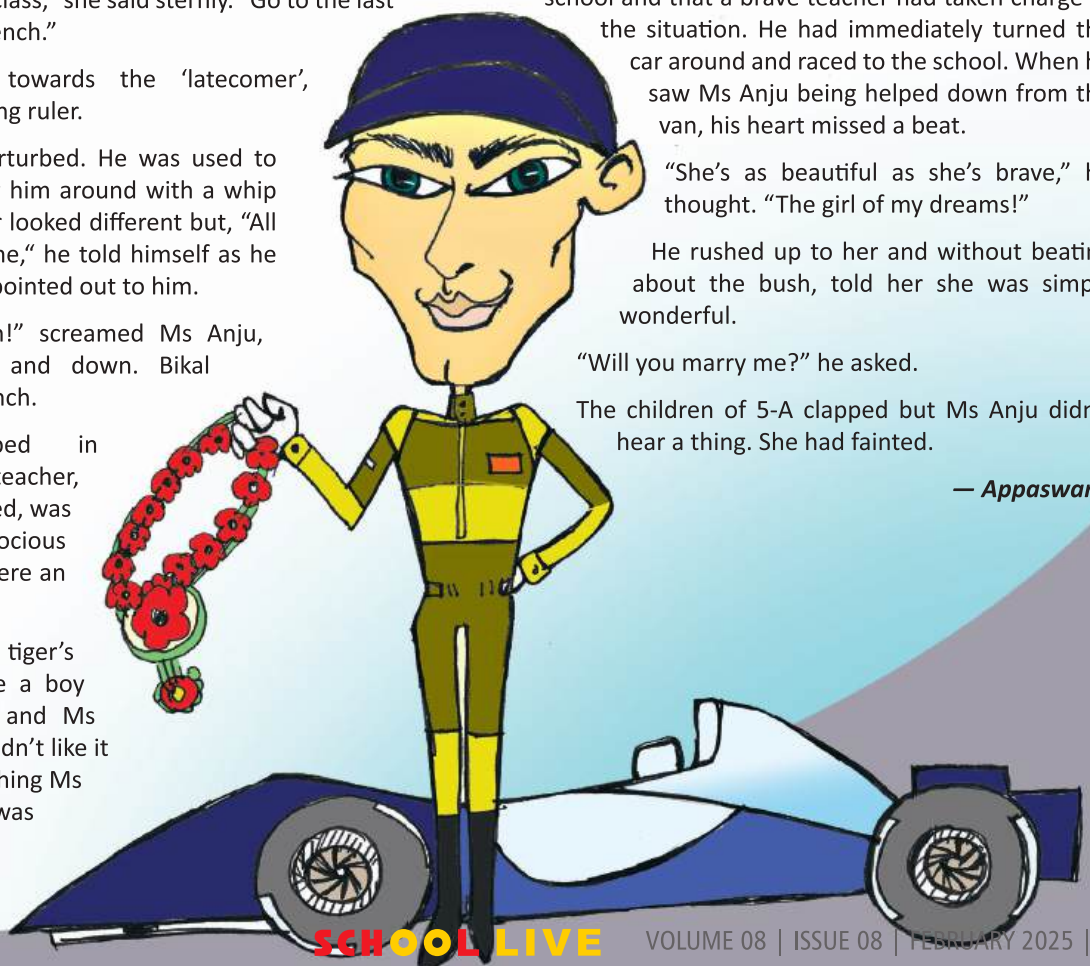
"She's as beautiful as she's brave," he thought. "The girl of my dreams!"

He rushed up to her and without beating about the bush, told her she was simply wonderful.

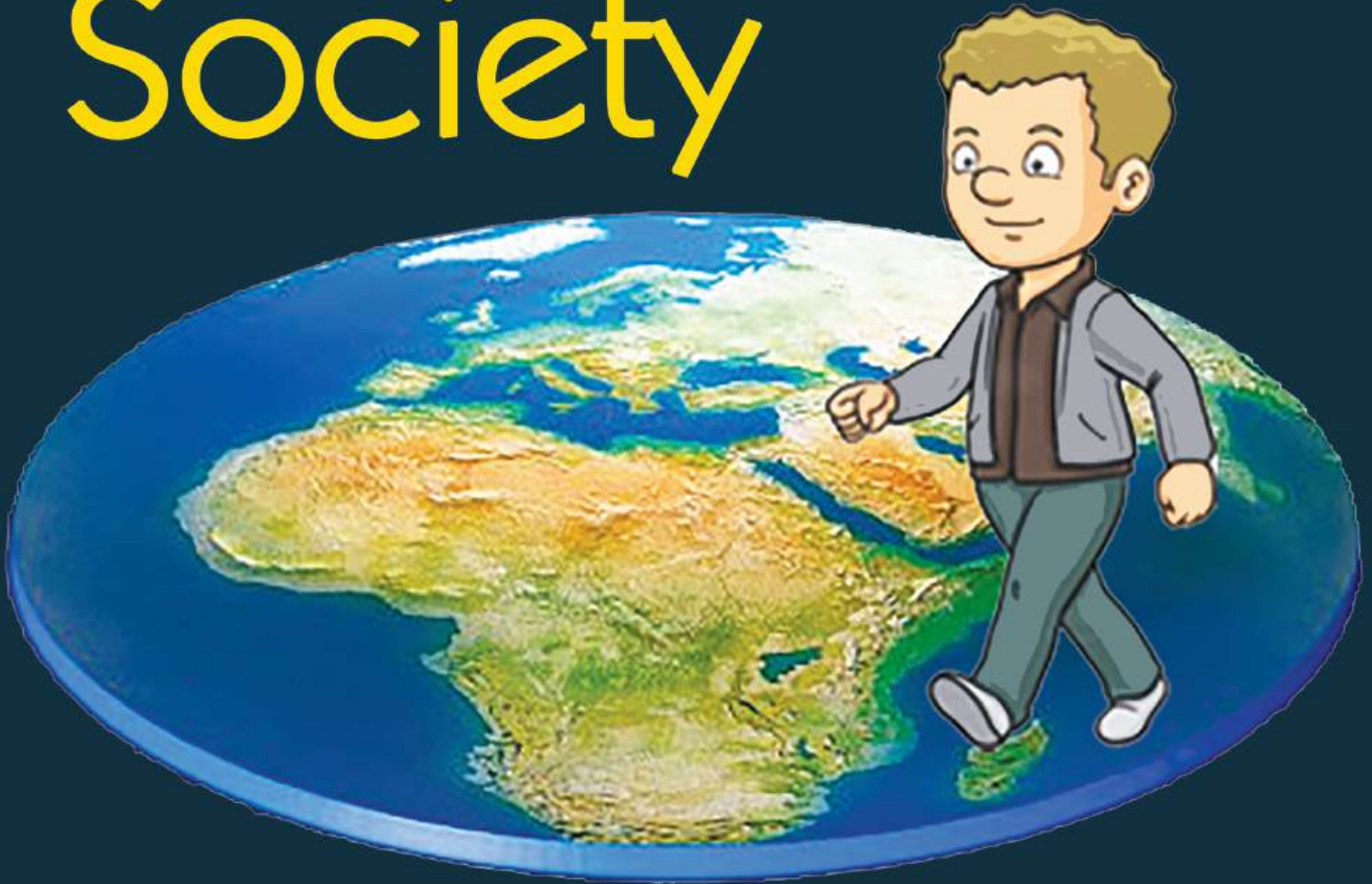
"Will you marry me?" he asked.

The children of 5-A clapped but Ms Anju didn't hear a thing. She had fainted.

— Appaswami



# The Flat Earth Society



SAMUEL SHENTON reasoned that if the Earth were spinning on its axis like everybody said, it should be possible to transport goods from one point on the globe to another by taking them up in a balloon, waiting there and lowering them to Earth when their destination came into view below.

The fact that goods cannot be transported in this way, he said, was proof that the Earth was not revolving — that it was, in fact, stationary.

In 1956, he became secretary of the Zetetic Society, founded in 1823. The members of the society believed that the Earth was a circular disc, that it was stationary and that the Sun (which they claimed was only 51 km in diameter) revolved around it.

Shenton renamed the society 'The International Flat Earth Society' and kept himself and the society in the limelight with such pronouncements as "...the Americans and the Russians are so cunning — they have jointly conspired to have us believe that the Earth is round..." and '... can you imagine what sort of summers we would have if the sun were really 155 million km away?!'

Once when somebody asked him why photographs taken from outer space showed a round Earth, he replied: "They must be studio shots."

Shenton died in 1971 but the Flat Earth Society is still in existence.

The society, according to a member, "aims to encourage people to think for themselves and to be prepared to question traditional scientific views."



# The Seller of Monuments



SCOTSMAN Arthur Ferguson saw an American tourist admiring Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square in London and going up to him introduced himself as a guide.

The American listened attentively to Ferguson's account of the life and times of Admiral Nelson.

"Oh, yes," said Ferguson, finally. "He was one of Britain's greatest heroes and now he has to come to his country's rescue once again."

"How's that?" asked the American.

"Britain is selling this monument to raise money to pay off some of her debts," said Ferguson, sadly.

"Selling Nelson's Column?!" asked the American, amazed. "For how much?"

"£6000."

The American decided to buy the monument himself, and when Ferguson told him he was the sales agent, gave him the cheque for £6000.



By the time the tourist realised he had been tricked, Ferguson had cashed the cheque and disappeared.

Emboldened by his success, the Scotsman began looking around for more American tourists to dupe and within days, found two.

From one he collected £1000 for the famous clock 'Big Ben' and from the other £2500 as down payment for Buckingham Palace!

When the police started breathing down his neck he emigrated to the United States in 1925. There, he 'leased' the White House to a cattle rancher for \$100,000 a year, the first year's rent payable in advance and almost sold the Statue of Liberty to a visiting Australian. The Australian, however, got suspicious at the last moment and went to the police — and Ferguson's career came to an abrupt end.

After his release from prison he settled down in Los Angeles where he died in 1938.



# Social Media & Learning

Today, there is no escaping social media, but does it help or hinder learning?



## PROS

### Active Learning

One is not merely a passive onlooker. When new information is posted, people respond quickly, sometimes by asking questions. This makes for active participation. Even introverted students are comfortable learning online and respond better than in a classroom full of people.

### Information Highway

It is easier and faster to transfer information. Notes, links, videos, and other educational content can be sent by the teacher or shared among students. This helps those with poor research skills, because it makes genuine information more readily available.

### Communication Skills

Exposure to diverse sets of people teaches one to communicate with different kinds of people and makes one more familiar with jargon — words and phrases specific to a particular field. For example, when learning a new language, a student can interact with native language speakers.

## Out of the Classroom

One is introduced to people from various regions who can enrich and enhance classroom learning by widening one's horizons and providing new insights. As opposed to textbook learning, one can get in touch with experts from manifold fields and learn directly from the source.

## Educational Access

Online educational content very often trumps textbook knowledge. Online information is updated often, so knowledge is always current. Additionally, all of this information is available free of cost.

## Awareness and Activism

More awareness is raised about important issues whether social, psychological or environmental. This helps in clearing prejudices, understanding sensitive issues and in developing a healthy mindset.

## Building Networks

Social media helps you connect with professionals in a field, who can be mentors as one navigates the learning curve. One builds confidence, gets reliable career advice, and even access to desirable job opportunities.

## Benefit to Parents and Teachers

Teachers can keep their knowledge always updated. They can easily share multimedia and other content related to the syllabus to keep their students engaged. Parents can join hands with teachers in this learning experience. This 'virtual PTA' provides all three — teachers, parents and students — a safe place to share ideas, ask questions and request help.







## CONS

Though social media can be helpful if used in the right way, it can be harmful if misused.

### False Information

As social media platforms are free for all, it is easy to spread false and biased information. If 'fake news' is promoted by persons of influence, it is accepted without question.

### Cyberbullying

Social media users resort to threatening, embarrassing, or harassing a person they don't agree with. This is called 'trolling'. Since grownups can't always be watching, children and teens who are subjected to online abuse and bullying, should report it immediately to a responsible adult.

### Distraction

Social media makes it easy to disconnect from reality and become immersed in living a fantasy existence online. Most people withdraw from real-life duties such as household chores, studies, jobs and even family, when they become addicted to social media.

### Addiction

Social media platforms are deliberately designed to get the user addicted. Every new notification, new video or new post, triggers a dopamine release in the brain just like an opioid. Positive comments, 'likes' and 'loves', create a heady 'rush', keeping you craving for more.

### Short Attention Span

The aim of social media is to grab as many eyeballs as possible in the shortest time possible. So videos become 'shorts' and 'reels'. One loses the ability to focus on any task for long. Few these days like to listen, read books, or do extensive research.



### Sleep Deprivation

Mobile and computer screens emit blue light that tricks the brain into thinking it is daytime. The body's natural sleep-wake cycle is largely determined by the colour of the sky — blue in the daytime and dark at night. Exposure to cell phones and computers after sunset cause a drop in melatonin, the sleep hormone. Continuous sleep deprivation can harm you physically and mentally.

### Mental Health Impact

Viewing others' posts and photos of their 'never-a-dull-moment' lives, causes envy in those who feel their lives are boring in comparison. Many develop low self-esteem and become depressed.

Negative news and tragedies are presented in a bland manner. This leads to indifference and a lack of empathy.

### Violation of Privacy

One of the biggest dangers of social media is that personal information — profile details, photos, relatives, places you visit — can be viewed by people online and abused. One should avoid sharing personal info online.

Remember, social media can be a boon or bane depending on how knowledgeable of, and alert one is, to its use and abuse.



— Josephine Moses

# My Adventures in Zoology



*I ended up nicknamed as 'The Executioner' because my classmates were too squeamish to do their own killing for animal dissection...*

When they hear that I am a Zoology postgraduate, people normally ask me about the 'gross' experience of dissecting earthworms and frogs! To me however, it was fascinating to learn that a frog's heart continues to beat for a while even after it is completely removed from the body...

That was just one of the many experiences that I had in five years of studying the subject. As enjoyable as junior college and being a part of the Nature Club was, the real fun began when I joined the degree course.

The Zoology Department staff were brilliant and I loved every lecture. Many of them were also quite zany. That meant even the other lecturers in the college enjoyed their company. Gales of laughter usually erupted from the staff room. We saw professors from the Chemistry, Physics, Maths or other (boring) departments come sit with them for a while. I guess that was their pick-me-up for the day!

My younger brother studied in the same college, but in a different department. The first time he came to see me in the Zoology lab turned into quite an unforgettable experience for him. I still remember him standing open-mouthed as one professor chased another with a ruler in hand down the lab and into the staff room. He was dumbfounded when I told him they were the head and deputy head of the department!

The time I spent in that lab was equally memorable for me. One time we had to do an ECG on a garden lizard. I ended up with a particularly large fellow that I felt had not been chloroformed sufficiently to knock it out. Despite my protests, the peon insisted it was out like a light. When the lizard was spreadeagled on the dissecting board and I cut into its chest to access the heart, its eyes suddenly popped open and it began struggling to escape!

Another time, we were checking on the effects of vitamin B deficiency in pigeons. We had two cages of birds. One group was fed polished rice and the second, unpolished rice. One morning, we entered the lab to the sight of one of the birds on its back, evidently in distress. What set us giggling was the behaviour of its companions. They were gathered solemnly around it, wings tucked in like grave professors with their hands behind their backs. We revived the bird immediately of course (we weren't monsters!), but the memory of the incident brought a smile to our faces for days afterwards.

There were many times we were running around the lab chasing escaped mice or cockroaches, but it was not all fun and games. Some encounters were quite macabre. There were a lot of little and not-so-little creatures that we had to sacrifice in the name of science. A lot of my course mates were squeamish when it came to the killing fields. The job fell on me so much of the time that I ended up with the nickname 'The Executioner'! The worst was the process of preserving the skeletons of newly-hatched chickens. I still cannot look at one without shuddering, because I had to drown so many of them in chloroform to provide everyone in class with the specimens they needed.

My fondest memories are of all the field trips we took to various wildlife sanctuaries. I got to see some gorgeously plumaged birds, dainty spotted deer or chital, a herd of bison and my one and only sighting of a leopard in the wild. It leapt right across the road in front of our safari vehicle and hid in the bushes for a while before slinking off into the forest. Its enchanting hazel eyes are still etched in my memory.

My 21st birthday ended up being the best ever! We were in the Gulf of Kutch to study the coral reefs. I will always remember walking in waist-deep water that was so crystal clear we could see all the way down to our feet! We saw a small octopus that squirted ink at us as if to say 'Keep off!' A puffer fish blew up like a balloon when someone grabbed it with gloved hands. When our professor was gesticulating near its mouth with a ballpoint pen, it grabbed the pen in its mouth and snapped it in two!

—Esther Kurien

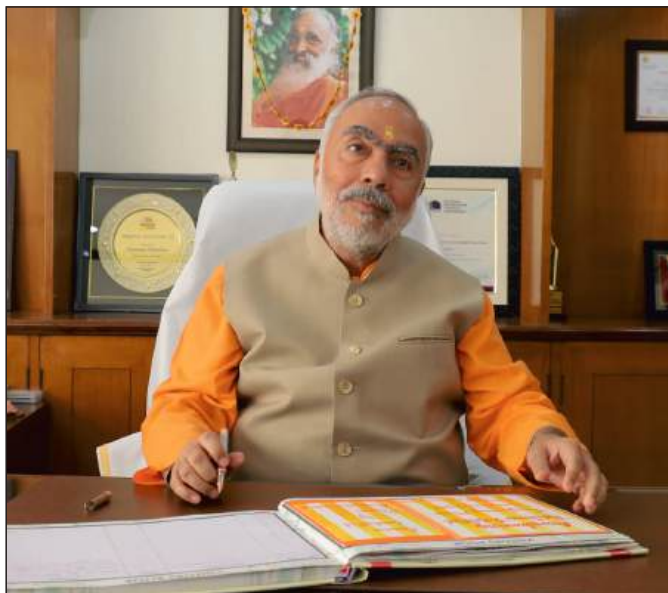






# OF KNOWLEDGE, VALUES AND INDIAN CULTURE

The recent visit of the Global Head of the Chinmaya Mission, Swami Swaroopananda, at Chinmaya Vidyalaya, New Delhi, was a momentous occasion that infused new energy and enthusiasm among the students, teachers, and staff. The air was electric with excitement as the Vidyalaya community geared up to welcome the revered head of the global organisation.



The day began with a series of events that showcased the Vidyalaya's commitment to knowledge, values, and Indian culture. The highlight of the day was the address by Swami Swaroopananda, who shared his wisdom and insights with the teachers. The interactive session was designed to educate and inspire the teaching fraternity of the school and share thoughts on empowering them to meet the challenges of the new-age education dynamics.

The event began with the traditional Poorna Kumbh ceremony, adding a touch of traditional sanctity to the occasion. Swami Swaroopananda inaugurated the newly established Dhwani Studio, a state-of-the-art sound studio that will serve as a platform for creative expression and cultural enrichment.

In his address, Swami Swaroopananda emphasized on the importance of resilience, compassion, and continuous

learning. He drew from the vast reservoir of ancient Indian wisdom, illuminating the profound meaning of the Sanskrit shloka Samatvam Yoga Uchyate, which advocates equanimity as the cornerstone of Yoga. He also shared his insights on Artificial Intelligence (AI), urging ethical engagement guided by the timeless principles of The Art of Right Contact.

The event was attended by distinguished guests, including the Chairman of the Managing Committee, Anil Sachdev, and the Manager of the School, Shibani Khorana. The Vidyalaya band welcomed Swami Swaroopananda with a musical homage, while the teachers offered their heartfelt devotion through a soulful song.

The session was marked by a sense of tranquility and cultural connection, leaving everyone feeling enriched and renewed. The Principal, Archana Soni, delivered the vote of thanks, acknowledging Swami Swaroopananda's profound impact and reaffirming the Vidyalaya's unwavering commitment to Pujya Gurudev' and founder Swami Chinmayananda's timeless teachings.



In the words of Swami Swaroopananda, "Education should be a transformative experience that shapes the mind, heart, and soul." The visit of the revered spiritual leader was a reminder of the importance of values, Indian culture, and knowledge in shaping the future of our children.

The occasion was a testament to the Vidyalaya's commitment to providing a holistic education that combines academic excellence with Indian culture and values.

# Study Now, Pay Later!



## *Can't afford the fees for a top-notch college or course? Take a loan!*

AN education loan or student loan provides financial support to students who are eligible for admission to different courses in colleges or institutions, but are unable to pay the fees required for the course.

Students can apply for an education loan to study in India or abroad. The loan amount can range from one lakh rupees to one crore rupees or more, depending on the course applied for and the institution that is lending the money.

An education loan can be applied for to gain admission to an undergraduate course after high school or for a postgraduate course.

Several banks and financial institutions offer education loans. The application process is simple — it is online in banks, and can be offline in other lending institutions.

When sanctioning an education loan, the lender takes into consideration the course, the institute, the family's repayment capacity, annual income and other factors.

An education loan provides students with money for tuition fees, accommodation, living expenses, books, laptops, one-way airfare (if studying abroad), etc. The funding continues till the borrower finishes the course.

### **Eligibility**

- ◆ An Indian citizen aged between 16 and 35 years, if unemployed, is eligible for an education loan. If the applicant is employed, the age limit is 45 years.
- ◆ The applicant must have a letter of admission to a college or university.
- ◆ The applicant must have scored above 50% in Class 12 (for undergraduate studies) or at graduation (for postgraduate studies).
- ◆ If applying for a loan to study abroad, the applicant must have a valid passport.





## Other Requirements

The requirements for an education loan will depend on the amount applied for and may vary from bank to bank or financial institution. These usually include:

- ◆ A guarantor, meaning a credit-worthy person, such as a parent, who is legally obliged to repay the loan if the borrower defaults on it.
- ◆ Collateral security, such as property, that has to be mortgaged to the lender to cover the loan amount.
- ◆ Co-borrower: Parents may have to co-sign the loan.

The RBI has made it mandatory for scheduled commercial banks (State Bank of India, e.g.) to waive collateral for education loans below ₹4 lakh.

## Documents Required

- ◆ A correctly filled out application form.
- ◆ Proof of Identity, such as a Passport, Aadhar Card, etc.
- ◆ Address proof (PAN Card, Aadhar Card, Voter ID)
- ◆ Birth Date Proof (Passport, Aadhar, Voter ID)
- ◆ PAN Card

## What Happens Next?

Once the education loan is sanctioned, the fees will be paid directly to the college university.

The money for other expenses such as hostel fees, library fees, books, supplies, etc will be deposited directly into the borrower's account. Sometimes, the amount may be reimbursed on the production of bills.

The loan does not have to be repaid immediately. The repayment will start a few months or a year after completion of the course. It may also be extended by a few years, in special cases. Repayment is flexible and can be up to 15 years.

Interest rates can range from 8 per cent to 13 per cent per annum depending on the loan scheme, amount and the bank/financial institution.

## Vidya Lakshmi Scheme

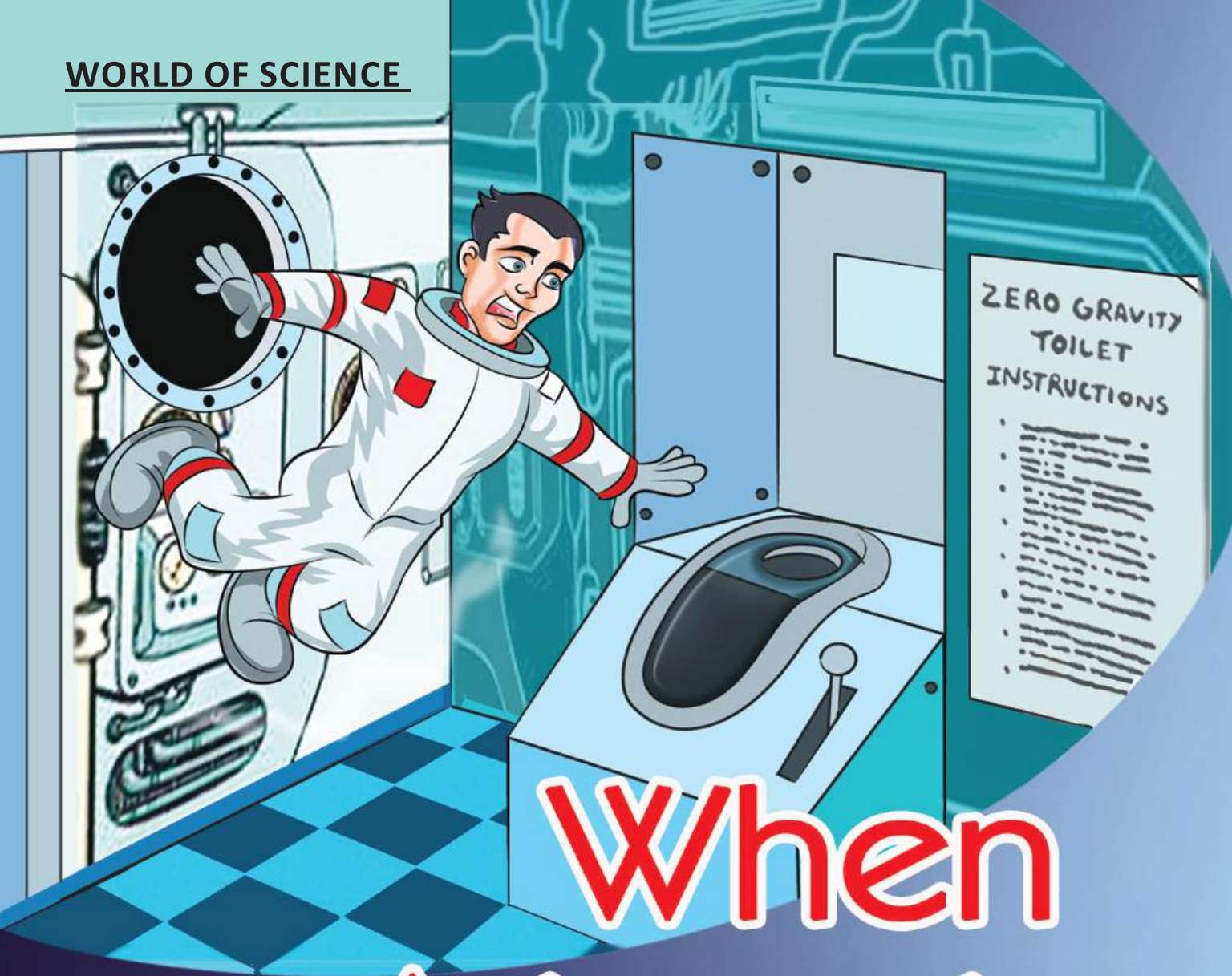
Vidya Lakshmi is a unique portal for students seeking education loans. It is a joint effort of the Department of Financial Services (Ministry of Finance), the Department of Higher Education (Ministry of Education), and the Indian Banks Association (IBA). Students seeking education loans from banks will get complete information about education loan schemes. To access this information, students must register on the portal and fill in the Common Loan Education Form (CELAF). After filling out the form, you can search and apply for an education loan as per your requirements. The CELAF is the only form you will need to fill in and is available to banks from the portal. You need to apply separately to the banks. Currently, you can apply to three banks at a time. The banks will contact you for further details.

## Benefits of an Education Loan

- ◆ It is the easiest available way to fund your education.
- ◆ Sometimes, 100% funding is provided.
- ◆ Other expenses apart from tuition fees are covered.
- ◆ There are tax benefits available on the interest paid.



—Renuka Vishwanathan



# When Astronauts Need to Go...

*NASA's Lunar Loo Challenge, which ran from June to August 2020, invited designs from the public for compact toilets that would work well in both microgravity and lunar gravity.*



ON May 5, 1961, barely three weeks after Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin's historic orbit of the Earth, NASA astronaut Alan Shepard waited, strapped into the Freedom 7 spacecraft. He would become the first American in space. What NASA officials hadn't anticipated was that Shepard would have to endure five hours of delay cocooned in his shiny silver spacesuit before his 15-minute orbit!

"Man, I got to pee," he frantically radioed launch control.

Allowing Shepard to urinate in his suit would destroy the medical sensors he was wired with, but eventually launch control had no option but to let him go. Shepard had to suffer the discomfort of a 'wet suit' till the cooling system inside evaporated the liquid!

## Early Efforts

NASA hadn't solved the problem entirely even in 1963 when Gordon Cooper blasted off on the last Project Mercury flight. There was a urine collection device inside the suit, but the urine leaked out of the bag and the droplets seeped into the electronics, leading to a systems failure towards the end of the mission!



If wayward pee was a problem, think of what its twin, poop, could do in the cramped quarters of a spacecraft!

The Gemini project was launched to prepare men for the Apollo moon mission. In 1965, Jim Lovell and Frank Borman spent 14 days flying in Gemini 7, the longest manned mission at the time. They had to poop into a cylindrical plastic bag and add a substance to kill the bacteria and odours. Though the pee could be sent out directly into space through a valve-operated hose, the poo bags had to be stored in the craft till they landed!

By the time the Apollo missions came around, the system hadn't improved much. The Moon men's toilet ordeal lasted 45 minutes to an hour. They had to undress completely in a corner of the spacecraft and stick a faecal collection bag to their bottoms. Low gravity meant that the poop wouldn't fall down. The astronauts had to manually help it along with a 'finger cot', a glove-like covering for a single finger. They also had to knead a germicide into it to prevent the growth of gas-forming bacteria which could cause the bags to explode.

## Hit and Miss

Accidents did happen. Houston once heard the commander of the 1969 Apollo 10 mission Tom Stafford say, "Give me a napkin quick. There's a turd floating through the air!"

On the first Space Shuttle mission in 1981, astronauts had to unclog smelly blocked toilets. Frozen urine ejected from the Russian Mir space station damaged the station's solar panels over time, reducing their effectiveness by around 40 per cent. Today, on the International Space Station (ISS), each astronaut is given his or her own funnel for peeing. It attaches to a hose. Urine is sent through a filtration system and recycled into drinking water. There is a proper sit down toilet for more serious business. The waste is sucked into a canister, which is stored and later shot back towards Earth along with other trash, where it burns up in the atmosphere.

## Did You Know?

- ◆ Astronauts go through 'positional training' on Earth to perfect their aim since the toilet on the ISS has a narrow opening. The mock toilet has a camera at the bottom.

Astronauts don't actually go, but watch a video screen in front of them to check that their alignment is spot on. The toilet costs millions of dollars, so missing the target is not an option.

- ◆ During a spacewalk or an EVA (extravehicular activity), astronauts wear a maximum absorbency garment, which is essentially a large diaper.

# BHUTAN

## LAND OF THE THUNDER DRAGON

*After assuming office in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made his first visit abroad to Bhutan, a tiny Himalayan country that nestles between India and China. India is Bhutan's largest trading and development partner.*

ITS native name is Druk Yul or 'land of the thunder dragon' because it is often battered by violent storms that arise in the Himalayas. Assam and West Bengal border it to the south, while Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim lie on its eastern and western fringes.

For a century, Bhutan was a traditional monarchy, ruled by the Wangchuk dynasty. In 2008 it became the world's youngest parliamentary democracy.

### Aim and Shoot

Archery is Bhutan's most popular sport, followed by basketball. Bhutan's national championship, the Yangphel Archery Tournament, is held on an archery pitch that is centuries old. The archers are decked out in the customary robe and knee-high dark socks, but Nike and Adidas shoes adorn their feet.

Basketball was, till recently, the exclusive preserve of members of the royal family, but now a South Korean

coach has been tasked with building up a national team. He faces two challenges: the lack of height (it is a rare Bhutanese who is 6 feet or over) and the reluctance to defend, or tackle the opposition. Commoners are forbidden to touch royals, even in a game, so they are used to letting them have a free run right up to the basket.

### Takin Tale

There is a quaint story told of how Bhutan's national animal, the takin, or goat antelope, came into being. Lama Drukpa Kuenley, also called the 'Divine Madman', visited Bhutan in the 15th century. The locals clamoured for a miracle. The Lama asked for a meal of a cow and a goat. After feasting on them, he took their skeletons, placed the goat's head on top of the cow's body and breathed a spell over it. It came alive as the takin!

This unusual animal, which is listed as vulnerable by the IUCN, can be seen in Thimphu's Motithang Takin Preserve.

### Tiger's Nest

Paro is a fertile valley that lies in the shadow of Mount Chomolhari, source of the Paro Chhu River. Paro town has Bhutan's only airport and lies 55 km from the capital. Old temples and monasteries dot its landscape, including the famous Tiger's Nest or Taktshang Goemba.

Tiger's Nest is Bhutan's most visited site. The temple with its glittering golden roofs and whitewashed walls clings to an impossibly sheer cliff face 700 m above the valley floor. Visitors have to climb the steep pathway on foot or ride on a mule to reach the monastery.

#### FACT FILE

Capital: Thimphu  
Population: 7.92 lakh  
Currency: Ngultrum







## Thimphu

The capital of Bhutan is Thimphu. It is the only capital in the world that has no signals, but only policemen to direct the traffic.

Tashichho Dzong (fortified monastery) is located on the western bank of the Wang Chuu River in Thimphu. The original *dzong* was constructed in the 13th century but it has been rebuilt

many times. It is both a religious and administrative centre and currently houses the throne room, the king's offices, the secretariat and two ministries.

The Buddha Dordenma is a massive bronze statue gilded with gold that towers 51.6 m above the river bed. It houses 1.25 lakh smaller Buddha statues inside it.

## How Green is My Valley

In 1991, the royal government formally decreed that Bhutan must preserve 60 per cent of its forest cover at all times. The government takes ecological protection seriously; so seriously, that it created the Sakteng Sanctuary for protecting the Yeti, known locally as 'Migo' or strongman!

Besides mythical creatures, Bhutan is also home to some very real fauna, such as the beautiful golden langur, golden mahseer, snow leopard, the white-bellied heron, the black-necked crane and red panda. There are over 600 species of birds, making it a birdwatcher's paradise.

## Festive Fun

Tshechu is a festival celebrated at monasteries, dzongs and temples throughout Bhutan on the tenth day of the lunar month, on the birthday of Guru Padmasambhava. There are mask dances based on the life of the Guru and other colourful Bhutanese folk dances held on the occasion. It is believed that all Buddhists must attend a Tshechu at least once in their lifetime to wash away their sins.

## Gross National Happiness

Bhutan is best known for its official philosophy of Gross National Happiness, or GNH. The government believes that economic growth without contentment is not worth having. All government policies and laws have this aim in mind.

## Stamp of Uniqueness

Stamps were once the country's main source of foreign exchange. Bhutan produced the world's first 3-D stamp in 1967. It has since brought out other unusual stamps including a 78-rpm vinyl record that plays the national anthem, stamps made of steel and silk, and a CD stamp.

## Food, Food!

Red rice is the staple food. *Ema Datshi* is the national dish made of spicy chillies garnished with yak or cow cheese. Butter tea and momos also figure high on the menu.

## Did You Know?

National dress is compulsory for the locals for formal occasions — the knee-length wrap-around 'gho' for men and the ankle-length dress known as the 'kira' for women.



# FUNNEL PROBLEM

Your mum has bought a 5-litre oil can. She asks you to pour some of it into a bottle through a funnel. Now when you are pouring the oil into the bottle through the funnel, does it flow smoothly and continuously?

## Let's find out.

### Things you need:

A funnel, an oil can and a bottle

### Here's what you do:

1. Place the bottle on a table.
2. Insert the funnel in the mouth of the bottle.
3. Pour the oil from the can through the funnel into the bottle.

### What do you observe?

At times the oil accumulates in the funnel instead of flowing down through it. It starts flowing again when you lift the funnel a little.

### Why does this happen?

This happens because the funnel with oil in it, blocks the mouth of the bottle completely. The 'empty' bottle has air in it and oil can occupy the space in the bottle only if this air goes out. As the mouth is now completely blocked, air has no way of going out and hence the oil does not fall into the bottle. By lifting the funnel, space is created between the funnel and the bottle for the air inside to escape, and so, the oil begins to flow again.



### Try This!

Insert the handle of a spoon in the funnel. Now pour the oil through one side of the spoon. What do you observe?

You will find that the oil flows continuously without accumulating. Can you explain why?



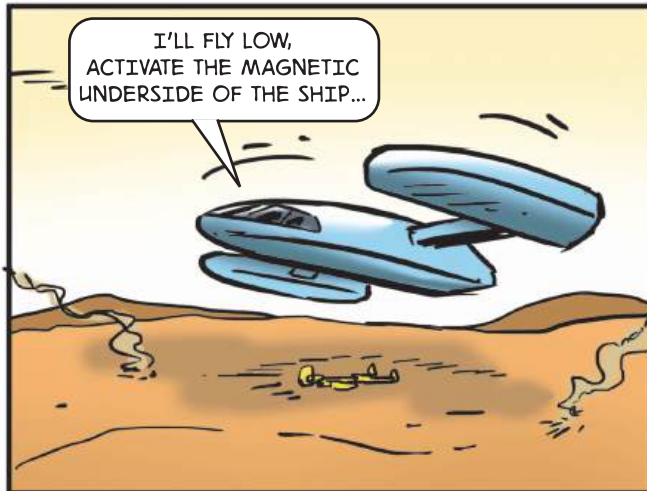
# Escape From Oryzya

— A Captain Shiva Adventure

Story: Luis Fernandes

Artwork: Abhijeet Kini

**STORY SO FAR:** WHILE JAMBO HOLDS OFF THE DUMBOTS, SHIVA AND DJOR BOARD THE SPACESHIP AND TAKE OFF WITH SECONDS TO SPARE. BUT JAMBO IS HIT AND CAPTAIN SHIVA WON'T LEAVE WITHOUT HIM...





# FULL COMPENSATION

Script & Illustrations:  
Prasad Iyer







# Africa's Tree Girl

*"I was brought up to believe that everything is possible, especially for me as a young person."*

ELLYANNE WANJIKU CHLYSTUN is Africa's youngest climate finance, biodiversity and health champion. She has personally planted about 250,000 trees, while also building a community of tree-lovers in Kenya as well as in many other countries. Together, they have crossed the 1.3-million tree mark, funded by her own personal savings and seedling donations. All this by age 14!

Ellyanne was just four years old when she did a project in kindergarten about heroes who made a difference in the world. She was most inspired by Prof Wangari Maathai, Kenyan environmental activist, prolific tree planter and Nobel laureate, who had planted millions of trees in her community and spread awareness about how tree planting can help a country develop.

Fixated on the thought of carrying forward the work started by Maathai, the pre-schooler began pestering her mother Dorothy about tree planting and was told to focus on her studies. Ellyanne planted an orange seed, and watching it sprout and grow caused her to fall in love with the process. She would visit Karura Forest, an urban forest in Nairobi, with her mother and buy seedlings to plant there. This motivated her to learn about the science behind trees. She learnt from the Kenya Forestry Research Institute

about species site matching, which is choosing the most suitable species for growing conditions in different areas.

With the help of her mother and her family, in 2017 Ellyanne launched Children with Nature (CWN), a non-profit organisation, to connect with other children with similar interests. CWN is led by young people and aims to teach children about how they can make a difference where they live.

This young girl is a published author of three books and is writing her fourth on Artificial Intelligence and Technology for Good. In partnership with Africa AI, Ellyanne has trained over 200 youngsters in basic AI, ChatGPT and Microsoft DALL-E skills.

Ellyanne's contributions have been recognised in the numerous accolades she has received, including Kenya's prestigious Mashujaa (Hero) Award in 2018, the Eco-Warrior Award and the title of Youngest Rotary Paul Harris Fellow in 2019 for her #endplasticsoup campaigns with Rotary International to rid water bodies of plastic pollution. She was nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize in 2023.

In the same year Ellyanne was named the Youngest Global Malaria Ambassador and became a public health champion, speaking at events for the UN and the World Health

Organisation. She has visited malaria-affected communities in Zimbabwe and Kenya, highlighting the role of climate change in the spread of the disease.

Together with a team of 17 members from around the world, Ellyanne led a children's committee in putting together the first ever Global Children Climate Summit, which ran from August 31 to September 2, 2023, just before the Africa Climate Summit. She wanted to draw attention to the fact that children and young people can contribute to tackling environmental issues and should be included in the solutions being implemented. Her passion for the environment has also seen her address high-profile global leaders, demanding the right to participate fully in matters of climate action.

Juggling her time between school and being a globetrotting campaigner is not a problem for the self-assured and confident girl since she has excellent grades. She wants to get into high school and then college and specialise in Economics.

Ellyanne's greatest dream is to plant trees as part of Africa's Green Belt, the reforestation initiative to halt the advancing Sahara Desert. Her goal is helping plant a trillion trees by the time she is 18!

# HI TECH HAT

USE the EcoFlow Power Hat that comes in two sizes, for protection from the sun, as well as an on-the-go source of renewable energy! Solar panels made from thin, flexible PERC silicon are integrated into the hat. It offers 12-watt charging via USB-A and UCB-C connectors on the underside of the brim. Weighing a comfortable 370 gm, the hat can charge a smartphone with a 4,000 mAh capacity in 3 to 4 hours, and two devices at a time. The sun hat is resistant to dust, sand and water — ideal for wearing outdoors.



# SMART FISH TANK



DO you want a home aquarium without the headache of maintaining it? Look no further! The smart home aquarium features an LED strip with seven adjustable colour options to ideally illuminate the tank. The integrated automated feeder and smart app ensure optimal care of your fish buddies. The tank is self-cleaning with a 3-in-1 ultra-quiet water pump that combines filtration, oxygenation and circulation. High-quality float glass gives you a 360-degree view. The anti-slip base and adjustable water temperature ensure the fishes' safety and comfort. You can keep both saltwater and freshwater fish in the aquarium.





# BRIGHTEN YOUR SMILE!

THE unique U-shaped design of this electronic sonic toothbrush allows all the teeth to be cleaned at the same time, and in just 30 seconds. It has silicone bristles oriented at a 45-degree angle that is effective in removing plaque and biofilm. It wraps around each tooth and cleans better than a manual toothbrush. Gentle sonic vibrations make it ideal even for people with sensitive teeth and gums. The cold light whitens the teeth over time. Lightweight and portable, a single charge lasts four hours.

## ROBOT BARISTA

HAVE a yen for fresh, customisable speciality beverages at home made by just pressing a button? Unlike other in-home beverage machines that are drink specific, FrazyBot offers a choice of different drink modules for coffee, tea, mocktails and even boba. The robot creates a user's favourite drinks from fresh ingredients, down to the smallest detail including presentation. The base module has a touch panel and water reservoir. Ingredients come separately in airtight boxes. Once the requisite drink module and ingredient box are snapped into place, it merely requires the press of a button to make the drink. It also boasts of being self-cleaning. The waste is ejected into a single-use box, keeping the countertop tidy.



# Solutions for a Warming World

*Global warming has led to some out-of-the-box ways of combating it...*

## Mining Clean Energy

Coal is a fossil fuel that is largely blamed for the current climate change crisis. Now, in a seeming paradox, energy experts are turning to long-abandoned coal mines as a source of carbon-free power! These mines are estimated to contain millions of gigawatt hours or GWh of heat, with the potential to store more. Today, there are many ongoing projects across the UK and in Europe to tap this energy source, especially in places where plants that treat toxic mine water from closed mines already exist.

Once a mine is shut down, the shafts fill with water. The water may be surface water (from rainfall or flooding), or groundwater that seeps up from below. The water is naturally warm as it's deep underground, with temperatures ranging from 15°C to 20°C. It is hot enough to heat homes in winter and cool enough to keep them mild in summer. Mine water energy is also 10 per cent cheaper.

It's not a new idea. In 1989, a packaging firm in the town of Springhill, in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, dug the world's first borewell to draw up water from dormant coal mines near it to heat its office building.

## Futuristic Fabric

An American apparel startup called LifeLabs Design set up by a research team from Stanford University, has created clothing from polyethylene (PE) that keeps the wearer's skin cool in

the heat and warm in the cold. The first is called CoolLife and the second, you guessed it, WarmLife!

Polyethylene is the type of plastic found in cling wrap and the thin, transparent bags used by grocery stores to pack items. The inventors discovered that the plastic allowed infrared radiation to pass right through it. Most fabrics trap infrared radiation or heat generated by the skin. CoolLife fabric lowers the wearer's skin temperature by at least 1° C when compared to cotton.

The company's WarmLife fabric works on the principle of reflectivity. The side that touches the skin has a 'nano coat' or a microscopic aluminium layer that reflects the body's infrared radiation and traps that heat inside an inch-thick layer of insulation. The fabric is 30 per cent warmer than clothing of similar weight and bulk.

Energy from mine water



Polyethylene is the most sustainable among synthetic and natural textiles. The fabrics made from PE are ecologically friendlier than other synthetic and even natural fabrics. Polyester, wool and cotton use large amounts of fuel and water in their entire production process. WarmLife jackets and vests use much less fuel and water in their manufacture. The fabric is 97 per cent recycled material from single-use plastics.



**WarmLife jacket**

## Rigs to Reefs

There are more than 12,000 offshore oil and gas platforms worldwide. There comes a time when the rigs produce too little oil and gas for extraction to be profitable.

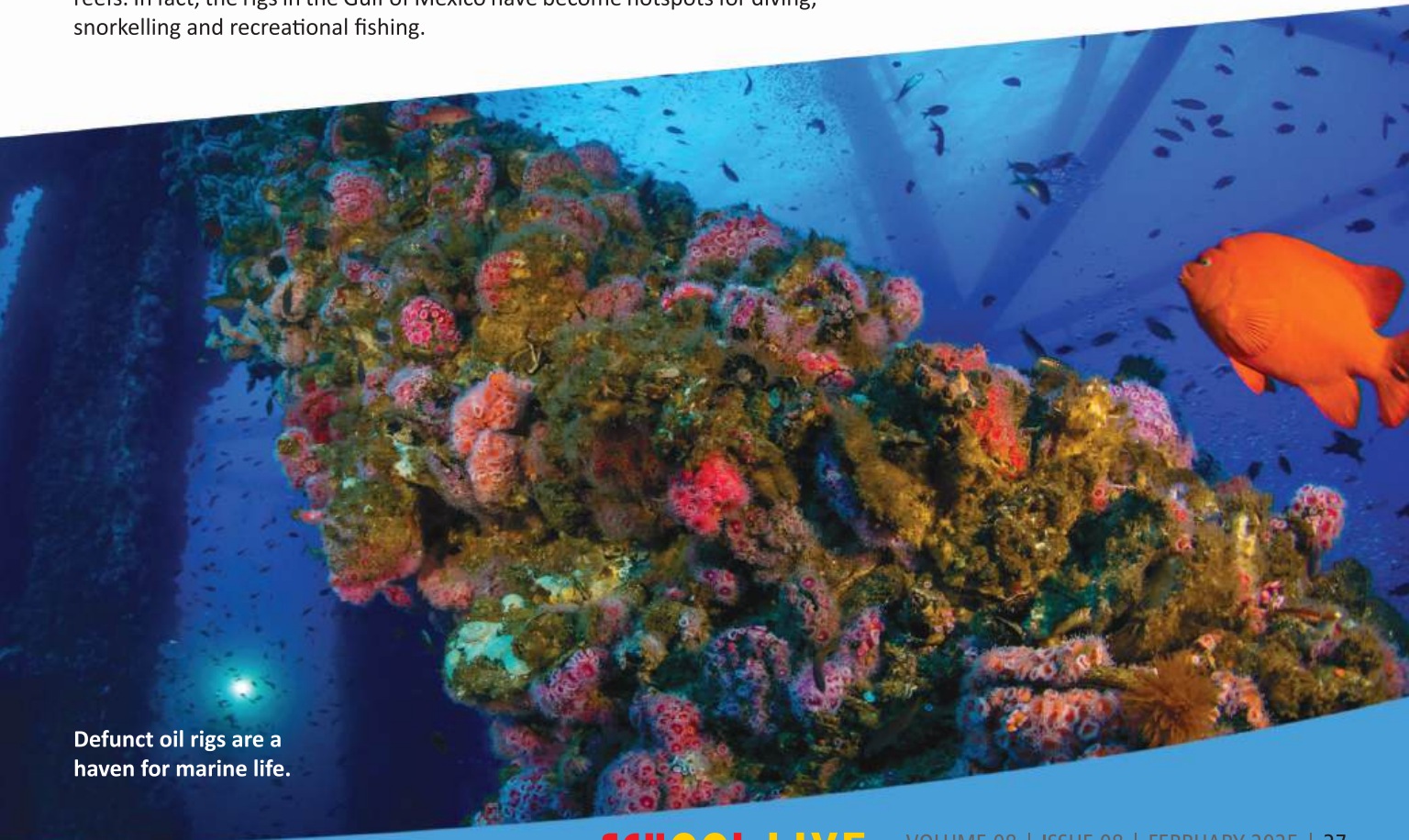
The well is sealed off, but it is too expensive to dismantle the massive structure entirely. The platform which is above the surface is easier to cart away, but the huge steel pylons below it are not. One would expect these rusting hulks to damage marine ecosystems but surprisingly, they have had the opposite effect!

Offshore oil and gas rigs that have been decommissioned have become safe havens for a variety of marine life! The subsurface rig (the part below the water) provides the ideal skeleton for coral reefs to build on! Decommissioned oil rigs in America are the most productive man-made marine habitats in the world. They provide marine wildlife with food, shelter from predators and a safe breeding ground.

Since 1984, the US government has encouraged states to turn defunct rigs into reefs. Oil companies on the east coast in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas, have converted more than 500 rigs into artificial reefs. In fact, the rigs in the Gulf of Mexico have become hotspots for diving, snorkelling and recreational fishing.



**CoolLife nightwear**



**Defunct oil rigs are a haven for marine life.**



# Kenya Snapshots

*In August 2018, I went on a two-week vacation with my family to Kenya, one of the greatest safari destinations in the world. We visited a number of nature reserves, from Amboseli in the south, to the beautiful Lake Naivasha and the drylands of Samburu in the north. We saw all the big game animals as well as the amazing sight of the wildebeest crossing the Mara River.*



The gerenuk is an unusual antelope, unique to that part of the world. It is known for standing on its hind legs to reach leaves.



This little elephant is less than a year old, and is well protected by its herd.



This striped hyena is a very unusual sighting during the day. It is different from the more common spotted hyena.



The warthog (Pumba from *The Lion King*) is a common sight. They are shy animals at a distance but can be dangerous in close quarters.





The beautiful grey crowned crane is the national bird of Uganda.

This northern white rhino is one of the last two of their species, both female. There is a huge conservation effort to save them using frozen male sperm.



This young male lion still has his spots. The spots disappear as they grow into adult lions.



Every evening led to a spectacular sunset, visible for miles on the flat plains.



This majestic lion is the oldest of three brothers in a pride.

A beautiful reticulated giraffe stands tall with an oxpecker bird riding its back.



— Photographs and text by **Dr Indrajit Bardhan**, Managing Partner, Panoramix Partners, New York City, New York, USA.



# A TO Z OF HOCKEY

## **AERIAL:**

A pass across the field where the ball is lifted above the players' heads with a scooping or flicking motion.

## **BREAKAWAY:**

When an attacker beats the last defender and goes one-on-one against the goalkeeper.

## **CHANNEL:**

A defensive tactic used to force an opponent away from the goal and towards the side-line.

## **DRIBBLE:**

Moving while alternating the ball from the right side of the body to the left side to elude defenders.

## **FLAT PASS:**

A pass that travels straight to the right or left of a teammate parallel to the sideline.

## **GIVE-AND-GO:**

If a player receives a pass from his teammate and passes it back to that teammate, then this tactic is called 'give-and-go'.

## **HIGH STICK:**

A foul called for raising the hockey stick above shoulder level.

## **INDIAN DRIBBLE:**

A type of dribble which includes moving the ball left and right by turning the hockey stick over the ball.

## **JAB:**

A defensive technique in which the defender (or any other player) continuously pokes at the ball to force the attacking player to lose possession.

## **LEADING PASS:**

A type of pass in which the player sends the ball a few yards ahead of his teammate to signal him to run towards the open area.

## **MARKING:**

Tracking individual players and covering the space through which passes can be made. It is the main defensive tool in the game.

## **OBSTRUCTION:**

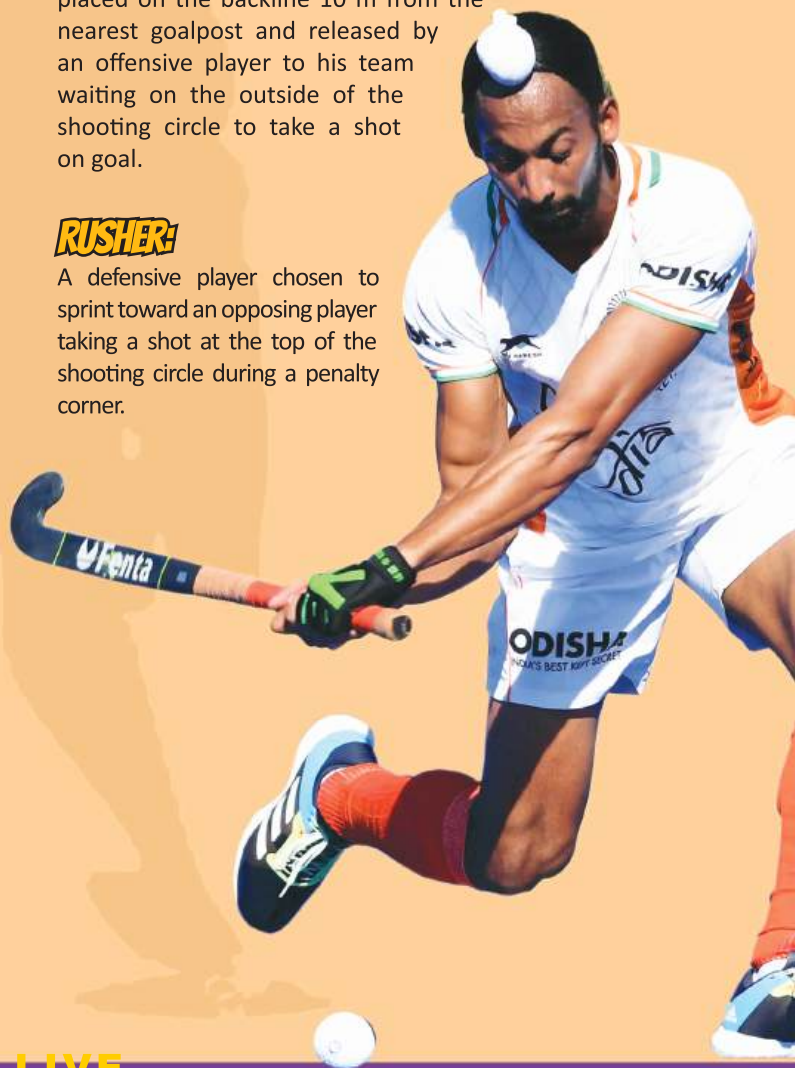
A foul called by the referee if a player uses either the stick or the body to block or keep another player from hitting the ball.

## **PENALTY CORNER:**

A play awarded to the offensive team if a foul is committed by the defensive team within the shooting circle. The ball is placed on the backline 10 m from the nearest goalpost and released by an offensive player to his team waiting on the outside of the shooting circle to take a shot on goal.

## **RUSHER:**

A defensive player chosen to sprint toward an opposing player taking a shot at the top of the shooting circle during a penalty corner.







### ***SQUARE PASS:***

A pass across the field meant to change the team's overall point of attack.

### ***THIRD-PARTY OBSTRUCTION:***

A foul that is called when one player blocks an opponent so that a teammate can play the ball.

### ***UNDERCUTTING:***

Penalty for a hard swing of the stick under the ball to raise it into the air.

### ***WINGS:***

A position at which the players play near the side-lines.



THE game of hockey was included in the Olympic Games in 1908.

Only men's hockey was played, with England winning the gold medal after defeating Ireland. India's hockey team began participating only from the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam, when she won the gold medal. India won six successive Olympic gold medals between 1928 and 1956 and two golds in '64 and '80.





## Eyrie and Eerie

An 'eyrie' is the nest of a bird of prey, especially an eagle, built high up in a cliff.

The eagle pounced on the little rabbit and took it to its eyrie where its hungry chicks were waiting.

'Eerie' means something which is strange, weird and frightening.

Shikha panicked when she heard eerie sounds coming from the empty room upstairs.



## Laugh & Learn

**Why didn't the teacher succeed at the interview?**  
She hadn't done her homework!

'To do one's homework' is to plan beforehand or prepare oneself for a debate, etc. by studying hard. This is a case of a teacher getting a dose of her own medicine!

## Picture Puzzle

Look at the picture and guess the phrase.

Hint: it refers to an extra player chosen to enter a competition at the selectors' discretion.

Answers: wild card



## New Phrases

### 1. Shanks's Pony

One's own legs as a means of conveyance.

When our car broke down, we decided to go to the party by *Shanks's pony*.

### 2. In camera

In a judge's private room; not in public.

The testimony of the minor witness was recorded *in camera*.



## More or Less!

a. The fashion show introduced new faces on the ramp.

b. The hotel staff did a head count before serving lunch.

c. Bollywood supported Aamir Khan when the release of *Fanaa* was stalled in some places.

d. USA asked Pakistan to counter terrorism in the state.

Faces walking down a ramp, only heads eating lunch...is that possible? Of course not! This is simply a figure of speech. In the first example, it is understood that the new faces refer to models while heads stand for people in the second sentence. A part is used to mean a whole.

On the other hand, Bollywood refers to Mumbai's film personalities while USA and Pakistan in the fourth example stand for their respective governments. Here a whole is used to mean a part.

This figure of speech is called *synecdoche*.

## Going Places

What did Peter do when he wanted to visit Paris?  
He took *French leave*!

To take French leave is to be absent from work or duty without permission.

How could Shyam dare his bullies at the New Year party?

Because he had *Dutch courage*.

Dutch courage is courage induced by alcohol.

Meenu said that the politician's speech in Marathi 'is all Greek to me!'

The informal phrase, 'It's (all) Greek to me' means 'I can't understand it at all.'







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# Your Skin Needs to Drink!

When it comes to skin care, one of the most important things you are asked to do is moisturise...

THE outer layer of skin contains small molecules called natural moisturising factors (NMF) — a mixture containing urea, pyrrolidone carboxylic acid (PCA), glutamic acid, fatty acids, lactic acid, hyaluronic acid, ceramides and peptides. The NMF draw moisture from the air into the skin and keep it protected.

### Why Moisturise?

Though the skin is able to moisturise itself, environmental factors, such as harsh weather and exposure to pollution and sunlight, are harmful. As the skin is the body's first 'line of defence', it bears the brunt of the assault. The production of NMFs is not enough. Worse, even a simple cleansing can wash off the skin's NMFs as they are water soluble. This is why applying a topical moisturiser is important as it helps restore the skin's health.

### Kinds of Moisturisers

Moisturising elements in skincare are referred to as emollients. These are ingredients that soften and replenish the skin. They are classified according to texture as ointments, creams and lotions. Ointments tend to have more oils in comparison to water soluble ingredients, creams have a balanced proportion whereas lotions are predominantly water based.

Emollients are of two kinds — humectant and occlusive.

Humectants are hygroscopic — they absorb water. When the weather is humid, they draw moisture from the air into the skin keeping it hydrated. If the air is dry, they draw water from the deeper layers of the skin to the top layer, so that it remains moisturised. Glycerine, hyaluronic acid and urea are humectants.

Occlusives are hydrophobic or water repellent. They trap the moisture within the skin and keep it from evaporating. They are always applied on top of damp skin or on top of other moisturisers to seal them in. Petroleum jelly, lanolin, oils, waxes and butters are occlusives.



Both kinds of moisturisers use water to replenish skin and are best used on damp skin. Humectants work best when the air is damp, otherwise, they can make the skin drier by drawing up water from deeper skin tissues.

### Choosing a Moisturiser

The choice of moisturiser depends on your skin type and the weather.

Dry skin produces fewer natural oils that reduce water loss, so they require both humectants and occlusive moisturisers for healthy skin. While humectants draw water into the skin, a fatty occlusive will keep it trapped within.

Oily skin over-produces sebum, an oily substance that keeps skin hydrated naturally.

This skin type benefits from using more water-based humectants. An occlusive would tend to clog the pores, increase sebum production and make skin oilier. Remember, oil and water don't mix, so an oily skin does not mean the skin is hydrated — it still needs to be moisturised.

As the skin's natural moisturising factors react differently in different kinds of weather, its needs also change. In summer, as humidity soars, the skin is encouraged to produce more sebum, so a light-weight moisturiser containing humectants is enough to do the job. People with extremely oily skin can even skip a moisturising cream and apply a few drops of glycerine diluted in water to the face to keep the skin well hydrated.

In winter, the skin is less active and produces less sebum. While an oily skin can benefit from this change, dry skin can become worse as it loses more water with lesser sebum. So both humectants and occlusive moisturisers are needed to keep the skin healthy.

### Be a Pro!

Familiarise yourself with humectants and occlusive ingredients to choose the right product for your skin, rather than rely on popular brands.



Eager educators enthusiastically endorse educational excellence. Educational excellence elevates enthusiastic explorers, empowering elevated expectations. Expert educators establish esteemed educational environments, effortlessly elevating eager educators.

1. Educational	14. Explorers	27. Environments
2. Excellence	15. Enabling	28. Energize
3. Elevates	16. Elevated	29. Exploratory
4. Eager	17. Expectations	30. Establish
5. Educators	18. Erudite	31. Esteemed
6. Energetic	19. Employ	32. Establishments
7. Experts	20. Eclectic	33. Educationists
8. Earnestly	21. Experiences	34. Enthusiastically
9. Engage	22. Emotional	35. Endorses
10. Enthusiastic	23. Empathy	36. Expertise
11. Effective	24. Examinees	37. Endorse
12. Education	25. Expertly	38. Empowering
13. Empowers	26. Evaluate	39. Effortlessly

**LET'S FIND OUT!**

# How is a new country formed?

THE world's newest country is South Sudan in Africa, which declared its independence in July 2011.

How do new countries come into existence? The Montevideo Convention of 1933 defined a country as a sovereign unit that fulfilled four criteria: a permanent population, clearly defined territorial boundaries, a functioning government and the ability to enter into agreements with other independent countries.

However, even when the four criteria seem to have been met by a newly-declared nation, international recognition is not automatic. The country from which a region wants to secede may be unwilling to recognise its independence. Other countries may also hesitate to recognise the new nation. For example, Kosovo declared its independence from

Serbia in 2008 but till today, many countries such as Russia, China, India and several European Union members refuse to recognise it.

South Sudan was once part of Sudan, which gained independence in 1956. Sudan's north was dominated by Muslims, while the south had more followers of traditional African religions and Christianity. The people of southern Sudan were distrustful of an administration dominated by northerners. After an armed resistance and two prolonged civil wars, a peace agreement was signed in 2005. A referendum was held in 2011, with 99 per cent voting to break away and form South Sudan.

# How are perfumes made?

PERFUMES are created from a mixture of natural or synthetic oils. Natural oils are obtained from flowers like the rose and the jasmine — about 1,225,000 roses are needed to make one pound of pure oil!

Cheap perfumes lose their fragrance after some time. Manufacturers of expensive perfumes add materials that preserve the fragrance and thus extend the life of the perfume. These materials are obtained from animals.

In ancient times, it was discovered that the civet cat produces a waxy substance which has a nauseating smell but when blended with perfume essence, produces a lasting heavenly fragrance.

Civet cats are now a protected species. The perfume industry obtains civet from civet farms where the secretions are collected from the animals twice a week.

Musk is another ingredient used in many expensive perfumes. It is produced in the musk gland of the male musk deer. The musk is so much in demand that the male musk deer are poached mercilessly for it.

Some perfume manufacturers use a substance called castoreum to hold the fragrance. Castoreum is obtained from a species of beaver found in Canada and Russia.

A smelly, waxy substance called ambergris forms in the intestines of sperm whales. The animals sometimes spew out the substance and it floats on the surface of the sea. Ambergris preserves the fragrance of perfumes and is in great demand. Sperm whales have been hunted for centuries to acquire ambergris, making it a vulnerable species. Now, fortunately synthetic ambergris is available.





# C FOR CULTURE

Cultivating cultural curiosity, creative citizens converge. Celebrating cultural complexity, communities come closer. Cultural consciousness captivates curious citizens, catalyzing constructive conversations. Creative cultural collaborations captivate contemporary crowds. Cultural connoisseurs critically curate captivating collections. Celebrating cultural heritage, communities conserve cherished customs. Cultural competence cultivates compassionate citizens. Cultural curiosity compels citizens - connect. Celebrating cultural contrasts, communities create cohesive cultures. Creative cultural creations captivate curious citizens. Cultural creativity catalyzes constructive change. Celebrating cultural character, communities confidently cultivate cohesion. Cultivating cultural cohesion, citizens conscientiously contribute. Celebrating cultural camaraderie, communities create captivating cultures. Celebrating cultural clarity, communities converge creatively.

1. Cultivating
2. Cultural
3. Curiosity
4. Creative
5. Citizens
6. Converge
7. Celebrating
8. Complexity
9. Communities
10. Come
11. Closer
12. Consciousness
13. Captivates
14. Curious
15. Catalyzing

16. Constructive
17. Conversations
18. Collaborations
19. Captivate
20. Contemporary
21. Crowds
22. Connoisseurs
23. Critically
24. Curate
25. Collections
26. Cherished
27. Customs
28. Competence
29. Compassionate
30. Compels

31. Connect
32. Contrasts
33. Cohesive
34. Cohesion
35. Conscientiously
36. Contribute
37. Camaraderie
38. Captivating
39. Character
40. Clarity
41. Creativity
42. Creations
43. Confidently
44. Cultivate



# Eggs-traordinary!

TO celebrate their twentieth anniversary on Easter in 1885, Czar Alexander III had a young jeweller, Peter Carl Fabergé design an unusual gift for his wife — a jewelled Easter egg.

So enchanted was the Czarina that the Czar commissioned Fabergé to create a unique egg for the Czarina every Easter — a tradition followed till the fall of the Czarist regime in 1917.

Fabergé eggs were priceless jewelled masterpieces. It took several expert craftsmen and almost a year to create one egg.

Fabergé used a complex enameling process which has not been duplicated to this day! He worked with different metals in varying combinations to get unusual colours. Precious stones like sapphires, rubies, emeralds and diamonds were used for decoration.

The Imperial eggs documented Russian history as Fabergé always incorporated elements of Czarist achievements in the egg's design.  
E.g. the Trans-Siberian Railway egg and



the Romanov Tercentenary egg honouring 300 years of Romanov rule.

Each egg's ornate exterior always hid an equally ornate surprise — the Coronation egg opened to reveal a detailed miniature working replica of the coach that Nicholas II and Alexandra rode to their coronation ceremonies.

## Eggshell Sculptures



EGGSHELL sculptors specialize in transforming the humble eggshell into an exquisite sculpted wonder.

To make an egg sculpture, the artist first drains the egg's liquid content through a tiny hole. The egg shell is cleaned thoroughly and then dried until the shell hardens. Using different engraving tools, the artist delicately carves out the design, which can range from sceneries and human figures to ornate filigree work.

Artists work with a variety of bird eggs — duck, ostrich, chicken, etc. Ostrich eggs have the thickest shells, making them easier to carve as compared to the more fragile varieties.

Eggshell sculpture requires not only artistic talent but also oodles of patience and a steady hand. It takes hours of practice to master the craft — it is not unusual for even experienced craftsmen to see their labour of love crack under pressure!





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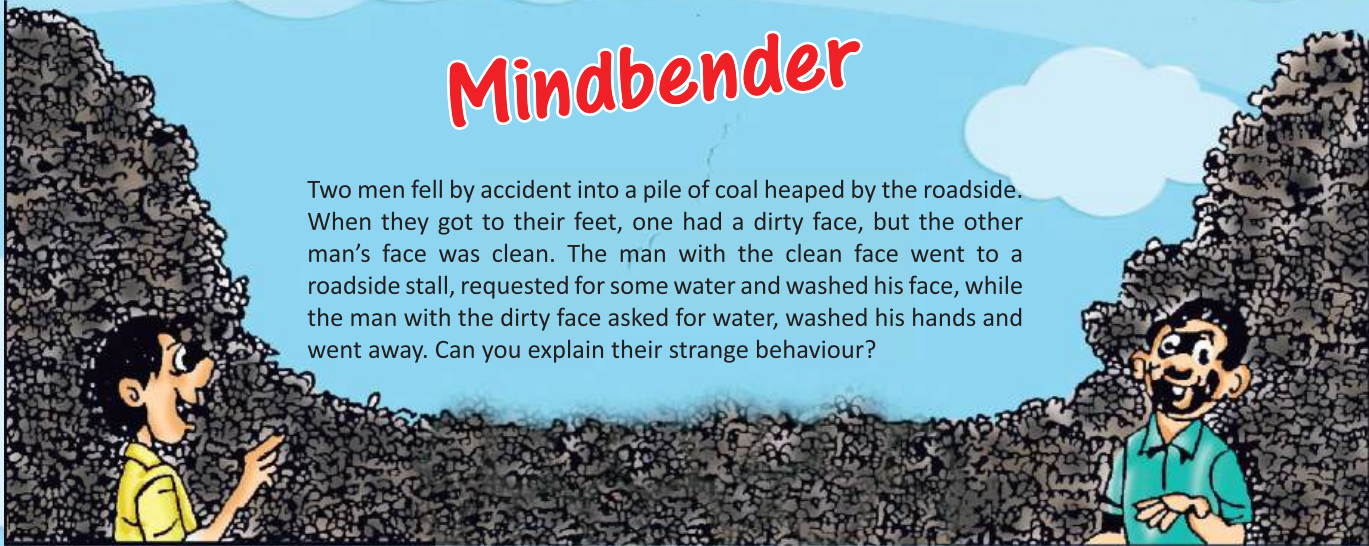
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# Mindbender

Two men fell by accident into a pile of coal heaped by the roadside. When they got to their feet, one had a dirty face, but the other man's face was clean. The man with the clean face went to a roadside stall, requested for some water and washed his face, while the man with the dirty face asked for water, washed his hands and went away. Can you explain their strange behaviour?



Answer: The two men looked at each other when they got up. Each man assumed that his own face was in the same state as the other's. So the man with the clean face assumed his was dirty, while the man whose face was actually dirty, thought it was clean!

## 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.

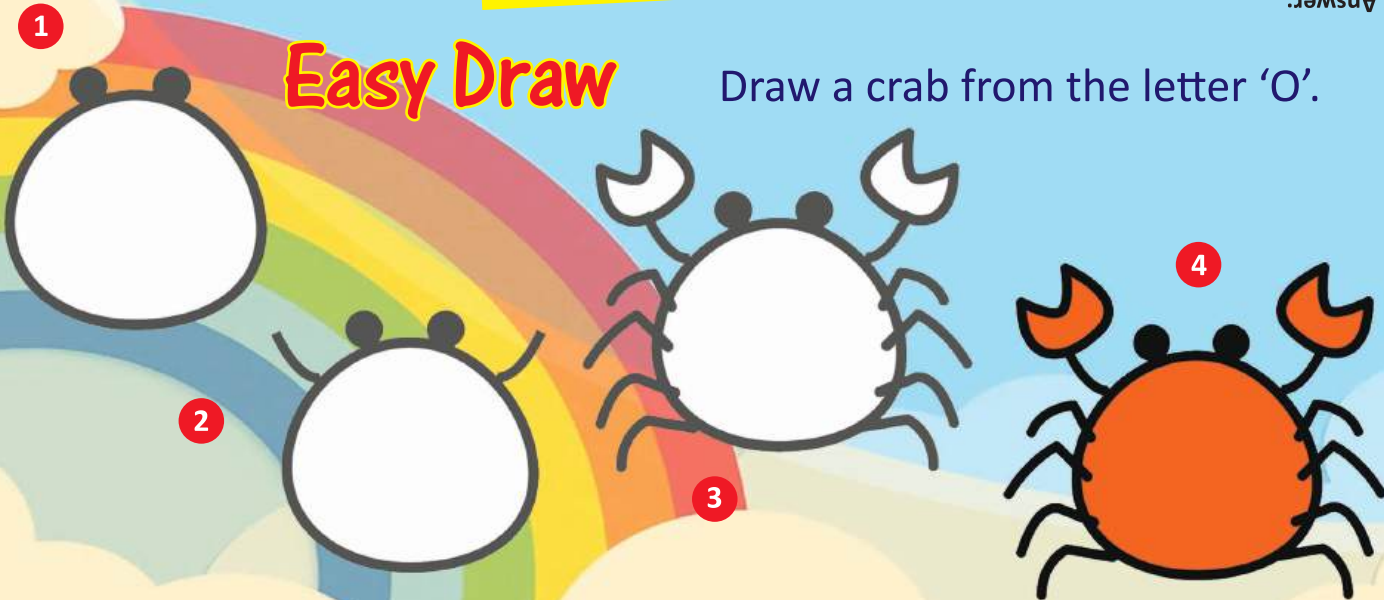
6	1		2		5
			1	2	
	4	3			
5				6	
	2			4	
			3		1

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

Answer:

## Easy Draw

Draw a crab from the letter 'O'.





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# OUTLANDISH ARTISTS

*It takes serious eccentricity to produce timeless works of art!*



While American artist Georgia O'Keeffe is famed for her vast, open desert landscapes, she painted these in her cramped Ford Model A car!



Although Henri Matisse was a visual artist, music influenced his works greatly. In fact, he learned to play the violin to work as a street musician in case he lost his sight and was unable to paint!



Spanish architect Antoni Gaudí disliked straight lines and angles. He believed the egg was the ideal of perfection. So his buildings have curvy lines and egg-shaped windows. He always carried raw eggs in his pockets for inspiration!



Surrealist artist Salvador Dali portrayed the workings of the subconscious mind as manifested in dreams. He even gave lectures in a diving suit, saying that this made it easier for him to swim in the ocean of his subconscious!



Cubist artist Pablo Picasso always carried a revolver loaded with blank cartridges, i.e. cartridges without bullets. If anyone asked him about the meaning of his paintings, his theory of aesthetics or 'bored' him in any other way, Picasso would fire at him!

German pianist Beethoven would dip his head in cold water before composing and pour water over his hands while practising. He did this until his clothes got wet, so much so that water would leak onto the ceiling of the room below his, to his neighbours' annoyance!







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# The Super Nut

**Scientists say that walnuts are the superheroes of the nut world.**

WALNUT trees are native to Central Asia. The walnut tree has been cultivated for more than 7000 years, first in Persia, from where it spread to China, Eurasia, Europe and then North America. The Persian walnut became known as the English walnut after British merchants popularised it in the New World.

California grows almost all of the walnuts produced in the USA. A native American species, a hybrid grown from the original Persian or English walnut, is the black walnut. Today, China leads the world in walnut production followed by the US and Iran. Most of the walnuts produced in India come from Jammu and Kashmir. Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh are also walnut-growing states.

## What's in a Name?

The Latin name for the walnut tree, *Juglans regia*, has a quaint origin. The Romans consecrated the tree to Jupiter, their king of gods. As the shape of the nut resembled glands, they called

it *juglans* or 'glands of Jupiter'. *Regia* also means royal so sometimes the walnut is called the 'royal acorn'.

The Greeks had a theory — a plant resembling a particular organ of the human body was good for that organ. They called walnuts 'karyon' or head because the shell was hard like the skull and the wrinkled kernel looked like the brain! Walnuts were thus considered brain food.

Fresh walnuts have a green husk which contains a brown shell that is made up of two halves. The kernel, divided into four by a woody membrane, nestles inside. The raw nut has a sweet taste.

## Bodyguards

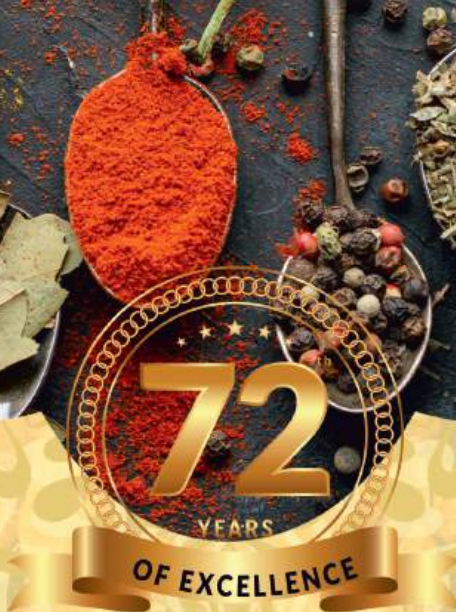
The Greeks were right! A professor of chemistry at Scranton University, USA, Joe Vinson, reported that walnuts contain powerful antioxidants like polyphenols which are more potent than those found in any other nut. Antioxidants reduce the damage to the body caused by free radicals. (Free radicals are molecules that are created when the body metabolises oxygen.)

All nuts contain antioxidants and so do fruits like apples and vegetables like spinach. However, the quality of antioxidants in walnuts is far superior. It also contains lots of minerals (like potassium, magnesium, calcium and phosphorus), vitamins and protein, besides fibre.

People avoid nuts because they are high in fat, but according to Dr. Vinson, they are good fats which are heart-healthy. A small handful of nuts eaten every week is better than tucking into meat, dairy products and processed foods which contain high amounts of unhealthy saturated fats.

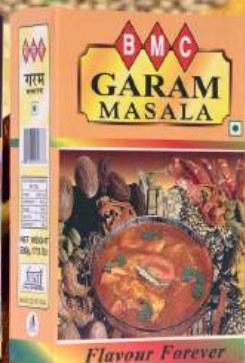
He ranked nuts in order of nutritive value as follows: walnuts, Brazil nuts, pistachios, pecans, almonds, peanuts and macadamia nuts.





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## THE LIGHTER SIDE

"What happened?" a hospital visitor asked the heavily bandaged man sitting up in bed.

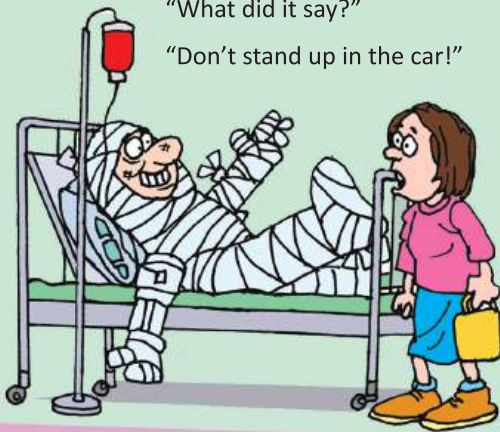
"Well," sighed the man. "I went to a fair this weekend and decided to take a ride on the roller coaster. As we came up to the top of the highest loop, I noticed a little sign near the track. I tried to read it but it was too small. I was so curious that I decided to take a second trip, but we went so quickly that I couldn't see a thing. By then, I was determined to read that sign so I went round a third time. And this time, as we reached the top, I stood up in the car to get a better view."

"And did you manage to read the sign?" asked the visitor.

"Yes."

"What did it say?"

"Don't stand up in the car!"



A big, burly college freshman wanted to join the football team.

The coach asked him, "Can you tackle?" And the freshman ran into a telephone pole, shattering it to pieces.

"Wow!" said the coach, impressed. "Can you run?"

"Of course," replied the freshman. He was off like a shot and, completed a hundred yard dash in just over nine seconds.

"That's simply great!" exclaimed the coach. "But can you pass a football?"

The freshman hesitated for a few seconds. "Well, Sir," he said, "if I can swallow it, I can probably pass it too."



A young naval student was being tested by an old sea captain.

"What would you do if a sudden storm sprang up on the starboard?"

"Throw out an anchor, Sir," the student replied.

"What would you do if another storm sprang up?"

"Throw out another anchor, Sir."

"And if another huge storm sprang up, what would you do then?" asked the captain, irritably.

"Throw out another anchor, Sir."

"Hold on a minute," said the captain. "Where are you getting all those anchors from?"

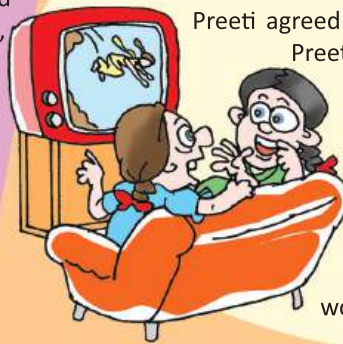
"From the same place you are getting your storms, Sir."

One day Sonia and Preeti were watching a soap opera on television. When they reached the part where the heroine was standing at the edge of a cliff, Sonia said, "I bet you Rs. 20 that she's going to jump off that cliff."

Preeti agreed to the bet. The heroine jumped off the cliff, and Preeti gave Rs. 20 to Sonia.

A few minutes later, Sonia returned the money confessing, "Preeti, I had seen this show before and so I knew she was going to jump. I am sorry I cheated you."

"Actually," said Preeti, "I had also seen the show earlier, but I didn't think that the heroine would be stupid enough to jump again!"



A police officer stopped a motorist who was speeding.

"Officer," the man began. "I can explain."

"Be quiet," snapped the officer. "I'm going to put you in the lockup until the chief gets back."

"But, officer, I just want to say.."

"I told you to keep quiet! You're going to jail!"

A few hours later, the officer went to the lockup and said to the motorist, "You are lucky because the chief is at his daughter's wedding. He'll be in a good mood when he gets back."

"Don't count on it," replied the motorist. "I'm the groom."





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